

University of Vermont

**UVM ScholarWorks**

---

UVM Honors College Senior Theses

Undergraduate Theses

---

2022

## Settler, Ancestor, Eastern White Pine: Living Histories in Northern "New England"

Emily J. Wanzer

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/hcoltheses>

---

### Recommended Citation

Wanzer, Emily J., "Settler, Ancestor, Eastern White Pine: Living Histories in Northern "New England"" (2022). *UVM Honors College Senior Theses*. 606.  
<https://scholarworks.uvm.edu/hcoltheses/606>

This Honors College Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Undergraduate Theses at UVM ScholarWorks. It has been accepted for inclusion in UVM Honors College Senior Theses by an authorized administrator of UVM ScholarWorks. For more information, please contact [schwks@uvm.edu](mailto:schwks@uvm.edu).

**Settler, ancestor, eastern white pine**  
**Living histories in northern “New England”**

Emily Joelle Wanzer (she/they)

Honors Thesis in the Department of Geography and Geosciences  
College of Arts and Sciences  
University of Vermont  
Burlington, Vermont  
December 2022

Thesis co-advisor: Dr. Ingrid L. Nelson  
Thesis co-advisor: Dr. Abigail McGowan  
Committee chair: Maria Hummel, MFA

**Abstract:** Eastern white pines (ewps) (have) grow(n) through the temporal and physical landscape now known as northern “New England” along with settlers who (have) shape(d) this place with the violence of settler colonialism and white supremacy. Settlers have severed and exploited human-tree relationships throughout the threads of revolution, wealth accumulation, industry, conservation, and death entangled in today’s political ecology. Using methods from history, autoethnography, and more-than-human/plant geographies, I position myself and case studies of two colonial settler ancestors in relation to ewps, focusing on places in Littleton MA, Burlington VT, Dover NH, Manchester VT, and Gilford, NH. I find that a “place praxis” which involves time, attention, and love in relationship with more-than-human beings can transform ways of being on and with land.

## **Acknowledgements**

The first thing I am always grateful for these days is my home and the people that make my home a home. To residents of Pigeon House past, present, and future – to Chloe, Mads, Bri, Nat, Meryl, Eleanor, Eliza, Emily, Jonna, Jane, and Cam – you support me in being myself; you are my best friends. I love you. Thank you also to the black locust tree and the maple tree that flank our house, and to the pigeons, squirrels, bats, racoons, and others who are our neighbors.

I have so much gratitude for my co-advisors Dr. Ingrid L. Nelson and Dr. Abigail McGowan for their commitment and contributions to this project. I truly could not have completed this work without their guidance and care for the project and for myself as a person. They see me as a young person first, student second, and that is a gift I do not take for granted. Thank you also to Professor Hummel for agreeing to be a part of this project sight unseen.

Walden Ng and Charlie Wanzer were my travel partners, who both made everything more enjoyable by doing it with me. They each contributed questions, insights, and observations that are now part of this thesis. Walden was game to take detours, make observations, and crack jokes. Lucy Wanzer let us borrow her car, Shakira. Uncle Charlie drove me up and down Vermont, narrating the landscape as we went, and was a thoughtful and inquisitive guest in Manchester. His enthusiasm was a warm encouragement.

This project would not have been possible without countless hours of work by historians and archivists. Two in particular merit special appreciation for their readiness and availability to meet with me. Prudence Doherty of the Jack and Shirley Silver Special Collections Library helped me in the early stages of this project to understand what kinds of sources could be relevant, and she pulled many books for me. This eventually led me to the Manchester Vermont Historical Society, where Shawn Harrington was and is an incredible wealth of knowledge and led us through their archive and neighboring cemetery on the day before his birthday.

I also owe a debt of gratitude to my own ancestors who researched, compiled, and passed down genealogical information and stories. In this project I particularly draw upon the work of my great-grandmother Ruth (Haven) Backus, who compiled a notebook “Backus and Kinney Genealogy, the Ancestors of Sidney Kinney Backus,” and my grandfather Sidney Hovey Wanzer (Pop, to me), who was incredibly thorough and organized in digitizing and transferring this information.

Liz W. at the Undergraduate Writing Center met with me over a few months to help me with my writing process. Thanks to Liz for being a validating presence and keeping me somewhat accountable amid my practiced skill in procrastination. Thank you to Katelyn and Annie for supporting me during the final stages of writing.

Thank you to my parents, who brought me into this world and made me feel at home in myself, community, and place from the very beginning. This work is dedicated to my sister Sophie, because that feels right.

Lastly, thank you to the Humanities Center who funded this project via a grant through the Summer Undergraduate Research Fund (allocated by the Fellowships Opportunities and Undergraduate Research office at the University of Vermont).

## Table of Contents

<b>Chapter 1. Introduction.....</b>	<b>5</b>
Ingredients .....	9
Cauldron .....	10
Brew .....	10
<b>Chapter 2. Methods .....</b>	<b>14</b>
Spring: seeds & buds.....	14
Summer: spaciousness & connections .....	15
Fall: digging, deep, back .....	17
Winter into spring – summer – fall: weaving.....	18
<b>Interlude 1 – Knowing trees.....</b>	<b>20</b>
<b>Chapter 3. Tree bodies &amp; human trees.....</b>	<b>26</b>
Stress in the forestscape .....	26
Lineage.....	26
Ancestor John Reyner – Dover NH, 1655-1669 .....	27
Doverscape .....	30
Envisioning ewps .....	31
An old friend .....	32
RQ1: stories .....	32
<b>Interlude 2 – Rest.....</b>	<b>40</b>
<b>Chapter 4. Shifting legacy .....</b>	<b>41</b>
RQ 2: entanglements .....	41
Confluence.....	42
Ancestor Timothy Mead – Manchester VT, 1763-1802 .....	42
Place and positioning   Indigenous knowledge .....	44
Reading more-than-human worlds .....	46
RQ3: relationships.....	47
<b>Chapter 5. Conclusion .....</b>	<b>54</b>
<b>Bibliography .....</b>	<b>61</b>
<b>Appendix A.....</b>	<b>66</b>

## List of Figures

Figure 1.1 Ewp figures (2022, by Author).....	12
Figure 1.2 Thesis cauldron (2022, by Author).....	13
Figure 2.1 Walk at Tophet Chasm (2018, by Author) .....	21
Figure 2.2 Family portrait with American elm (~2002, Sidney Wanzer).....	22
Figure 2.3 Wonder-full Trees of Chewonki (2015, by Author).....	23
Figure 2.4 Ewps on the Maine coast (2016, by Author).....	24
Figure 2.5 Ewps on the bank of the frozen Big River (2022, Mit Wanzer).....	25
Figure 3.1 Ancestral Fan-Chart of Anne Huntington Backus, circa 1980 (2021, by Author) .....	35
Figure 3.2. Dover Point maps (2022, by Author) .....	36
Figure 3.3 Forsythia Drive trees (2022, by Author) .....	37
Figure 3.4 My childhood home in front of ewps (2018, by Author) .....	38
Figure 3.5 ewp friend (2022, by Author).....	39
Figure 4.1 Charlie and Emily (Charlie Wanzer, 2022).....	50
Figure 4.2 Manchester riverwalk (by Author, 2022) .....	51
Figure 4.3 Factory Point map (map from F.W. Beers 1869 <i>Atlas of Bennington County</i> ).....	52
Figure 4.4 Mead in Burr's day book (courtesy of Manchester Historical Society, 2022) .....	53
Figure 5.1 Ewps looking over Lake Winnepesaukee (2018, by Author) .....	58
Figure 5.2 Life cycle sketch (by Author, 2022).....	59
Figure 5.3 Emily-ewp dance screen capture (by Author, 2022).....	60

## Chapter 1. Introduction<sup>1</sup>

In any given place within what is now known as northern “New England” (homelands of Wabanaki people), chances are there is an eastern white pine tree (ewp)<sup>2</sup> nearby. These trees are native to the eastern half of the United States (U.S.) and Canada, and they are tall – many grow to stand 150 feet tall (see Figure 1.1). They provide great shelter for forest beings, nest sites for hawks, owls, crows, warblers, and many other birds, and food for snowshoe hares (twigs, buds, and bark), chipmunks, and red and gray squirrels (seeds).<sup>3</sup> Some individuals live for over 300 years, though only about 1% of old growth white pine forest in the U.S. remains.<sup>4</sup> This is a change made by colonial settlers in their pursuit of extractable resources to exploit for money.<sup>5</sup> Settlers brought with them a way of relating to land and place fundamentally different from those of the Indigenous people who have been in relationship with this place and the more-than-human beings<sup>6</sup> here for centuries. All people have relationship to and impact on place, but the values with which we act matter.

Owning/ruling class<sup>7</sup> settler relationships to ewps are demonstrative of this shift, as they saw these trees as valuable, and often political, goods. Once these tall, straight trees were felled and stripped, they were attractive to European colonists of the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> century because they made excellent ship masts, a high-demand product for the British navy<sup>8</sup> who had already fueled the exploitation and demise of their own native trees. The technology of a single trunk far surpassed trees bound together with iron. British inspectors would brand towering trees with arrows, marking them as the property of the Crown, a practice which some historians claim

---

<sup>1</sup> Hello and welcome! I am honored that you have encountered this body of work. These footnotes are a space for me to acknowledge and appreciate the relations upon which this thesis was formed. I must first give credit to my advisor Prof. Ingrid L. Nelson for encouraging this rigorous citational practice, which has since been validated by Eve Tuck’s scholarship. Prof. Nelson was also influenced in this respect by the work of Max Liboiron, who has set precedent for using footnotes as a relational practice. See Max Liboiron, *Pollution is colonialism* (Durham North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2021).

<sup>2</sup> I use this acronym as a term of familiarity or personal nickname for these trees.

<sup>3</sup> “Trees of the Adirondacks: Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*),” Wild Adirondacks, 2021, accessed September 27, 2021, <https://wildadirondacks.org/trees-of-the-adirondacks-eastern-white-pine-pinus-strobus.html>.

<sup>4</sup> David R. Foster and John F. O’Keefe, *New England Forests Through Time: Insights from the Harvard Forest Dioramas* (Cambridge: Harvard Forest, Harvard University, 2000).

<sup>5</sup> William Cronon, *Changes in the land: Indians, colonists, and the ecology of New England*, 1st ed. (New York: Hill and Wang, 1983).

<sup>6</sup> I use “more-than-human” in alignment with an approach in human geography (both a methodology and an intellectual framework) that emerged from feminist science and technology studies, vitalism, and embodied attunement to/with that beyond the self. This work appreciates connectedness and co-production. See Beth Greenhough, “More-than-human Geographies,” in *The SAGE Handbook of Human Geography*, ed. Lee et al. (Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: SAGE reference, 2014).

<sup>7</sup> Political education with the organization *Resource Generation* has informed my class analysis. See also Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz, *Not “a nation of immigrants”: settler colonialism, white supremacy, and a history of erasure and exclusion* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2021); bell hooks, *Where We Stand: Class Matters* (New York, NY: Routledge, 2000).

<sup>8</sup> William Gurdon Saltonstall, *Ports of Piscataqua: soundings in the maritime history of the Portsmouth, N.H., Customs District from the days of Queen Elizabeth and the planting of Strawberry Banke to the times of Abraham Lincoln and the waning of the American clipper* (New York: Russell & Russell, 1968).

precipitated the American Revolution.<sup>9</sup> The struggle was multifaceted: colonists claimed ownership of trees on land they also claimed as “theirs” and organized around the right of the individual to extract the highest profits, worldviews that conflicted deeply with Indigenous ontologies. Central to settler colonialism is the attempted destruction of Indigenous lifeways: it is a system made to control “relations to land and people predicated on intentions to displace, remove, and eliminate Indigenous Peoples, land, and presence.”<sup>10</sup>

From time before the mast trade to today, ewps have been witnesses to this attempted destruction, witnesses to settler colonialism, capitalism, war, extraction, and death. In confronting the problem of settler colonialism (a problem in the very real sense that it is an ongoing project), I choose to shift my gaze to encompass a geography that features the more-than-human.<sup>11</sup> I see ewps as co-shapers of place, as world-makers, as vessels holding knowledge. Throughout this project, I’ve engaged in the practice of understanding eastern white pines, another kind of being, as a relation, one that can help me learn about place, history, and myself under settler colonialism. I researched, spent time with, said hello to these trees. I have been paying attention to trees.

My approach throughout this project has been to gather knowledge as I go about life, through my relationships with other people, with trees, with my ancestors, and with the places we have all created together. Feminist scholars in geography call this kind of research “rhizomatic,” meaning that engagements in knowledge production are “not easily categorized by preexisting, long-standing intellectual traditions”<sup>12</sup> but emerge from within a lateral network of connections with no singular or binary origin. I try to take a different path than the one charted by many in academia, as academic institutions tend to prioritize Euro-American forms of knowledge production or world-making, and many have had an active role in the project of settler colonialism.<sup>13</sup>

My ability to do this is predicated on the work of previous feminist scholars and Indigenous women writers, particularly in the ways that they have opened space for emotion in academic research and cultural movements. As Davidson and Milligan acknowledge in their “Embodying Emotion Sensing Space” article, much contemporary academic writing benefits from past work that integrates the spatial and the emotional. They write that “there is little we do

---

<sup>9</sup> Saltonstall, *Ports of Piscataqua*; Andrew Vietze, *White Pine: American History and the Tree That Made a Nation* (Guilford, CT: Globe Pequot, 2017).

<sup>10</sup> Charlie Amáyá Scott, "Indigenous Feminism: An Entry to Understanding an Indigenized Feminism," 2022, <https://dineaesthetics.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Indigenous-Feminism.pdf>.

<sup>11</sup> My studies with the University of Vermont (UVM) Geography department (coursework with Professors Pablo Bose, Meghan Cope, Ingrid Nelson, Harlan Morehouse, Beverley Wemple, Lesley-Ann Dupigny-Giroux, and Cheryl Morse) have taught me to reject the binary between nature and culture and understand humans as part of nature, accountable to the ways our individual and collective actions

<sup>12</sup> Pamela Moss and Karen Falconer Al-Hindi, "Rhizomatic Encounters and Encountering Possibilities," *Geography and Geology Faculty Publications* 49 (2009): 2, <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/geoggeolfacpub/49>., drawing on concepts articulated by Gilles Deleuze and Félix Guattari, *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia* (Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987).

<sup>13</sup> Robert Lee and Tristan Ahtone, "Land-grab universities," *High Country News*, 2020, <https://www.hcn.org/issues/52.4/indigenous-affairs-education-land-grab-universities>.



with our bodies that we can *think apart* from feeling”<sup>14</sup> and that “place must be *felt* to make sense.”<sup>15</sup> Dian Million writes<sup>16</sup> about the impact that Canadian First Nation women’s narratives have had on dominant culture scholarship, particularly as personal accounts with depth of emotion. She writes that Native people “*feel* our histories as well as think them,” one of the reasons that Indigenous histories have been marginalized and suppressed within and outside of academia.<sup>17</sup> Million’s emphasis on the way that settler colonialism is felt is important for my project because it touches on how an individual’s feelings can expose the mechanisms of a complex sociopolitical system, and the significance that emotional works have in telling histories. She argues that “feelings are theory, important projections about what is happening in our lives. They are also culturally mediated knowledges, never solely individual,”<sup>18</sup> and “stories collectively witnessed the social violence that was and is colonialism’s heart.”<sup>19</sup> Regarding history, Million writes that “histories are positioned, and histories that do not understand their own positioning cannot answer to those conditions they perpetuate,”<sup>20</sup> especially conditions that necessitate silencing, such as the alternative truths of emotional knowledge.<sup>21</sup>

Emotion work is important to me because my feelings were and are an important part of my research and analysis. I learned to pay attention to myself as I learned more about identity and positionality through my coursework and from specific scholars and activists who encourage an orientation grounded from the self that includes a critical analysis of personal identity in movements and studies of justice. Author/poet/artist/activist Sonya Renee Taylor holds this analysis in racial justice work, challenging the idea that conversations about race should always or even primarily focus on Black and Brown people. In an Instagram video posted amidst the uprisings in the wake of George Floyd’s murder at the hands of police, she asserts that rather than “hav[ing] a conversation about whether another group of people deserve to live... white people need to be talking about whiteness.”<sup>22</sup> The reality of life under racial capitalism means that “Black people are not suffering at an amorphous blob called the system, Black people are suffering at the hands of whiteness and white people who live inside the delusions of white supremacy and construct systems and structures to enact the delusions of white supremacy.”<sup>23</sup> Unearthing and reflecting on these histories and material presents is a tool that I have also learned about through Resource Generation (RG), a political home of mine whose mission is to

---

<sup>14</sup> Joyce Davidson and Christine Milligan, "Embodying Emotion Sensing Space: Introducing emotional geographies," Editorial, *Social & Cultural Geography* 5, no. 4 (2004): 523.

<sup>15</sup> Davidson and Milligan, "Embodying Emotion Sensing Space: Introducing emotional geographies," 524.

<sup>16</sup> I found Million’s work through Eve Tuck’s website: "Recordings: Felt Theory Felt Sense Guided Meditation for Writing, with music," (Audio recording), 2022, <http://www.evetuck.com/recordings>.

<sup>17</sup> Dian Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," *Wicazo sa review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 54.

<sup>18</sup> Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," 61.

<sup>19</sup> Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," 56.

<sup>20</sup> Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," 72.

<sup>21</sup> Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History," 64.

<sup>22</sup> Sonya Renee Taylor, "ASL TRANSLATION: Why Talking to Your White Family About Black People is the Wrong Approach," YouTube, 2020, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8n-vaCQqWEY&t=99s>.

<sup>23</sup> Taylor, "ASL TRANSLATION: Why Talking to Your White Family About Black People is the Wrong Approach."

organize young people with wealth and/or class privilege to work towards the equitable distribution of wealth, land, and power. Mentors in RG guided me in sharing “money stories,” a practice that encourages rich people to grapple with the cultural and material legacies left to them, particularly before committing to personal redistribution or engaging in cross-class work.

In her video, Sonya Renee Taylor says that “the conversation needs to be about why white people created mission assignments in Black and Brown countries and then went to murder them. The conversation needs to be about why white people needed colonialism. White people need to start asking about their whiteness.”<sup>24</sup> As a white, able-bodied, managerial class person, this felt like an invitation to dig deeper into justice work, and this thesis felt like one vessel that could help carry it. Considering my own positionality as the descendant of early white upper class colonial settlers, I decided to focus on three of their stories in order to ask questions of, or “unsettle,” settler ways of being and relating. Not a comprehensive history of settler colonialism, fragmentary engagements with my ancestors rather allow me to personalize a complex and troubling history and help me “become aware of [my] limits in both *what* [I am] thinking and *how* [I am] thinking it.”<sup>25</sup>

The *what* and *how* comprising this thesis are inextricably connected to myself as the author and as an agent in this text. Donna Haraway, a radical feminist scholar, writes on “objectivity,” purporting that “objectivity turns out to be about particular and specific embodiment.”<sup>26</sup> Speaking on feminist studies, she suggests that this way of knowing “allows us to become answerable for what we learn how to see.”<sup>27</sup> On the flip side, she warns against “various forms of unlocatable, and so irresponsible, knowledge claims.” She argues for “the view from a body,”<sup>28</sup> a somatic approach that “resists fixation and is insatiably curious about the webs of differential positioning.”<sup>29</sup> This kind of knowledge production sees the object of knowledge as “an actor and agent,”<sup>30</sup> as moving and dynamic. Since learning from dancers such as my teacher Millie Heckler and my best friend Mads, I can envision and approach knowledge-making in this way as a kind of dance.

I lean in to Haraway’s muddling of objectivity and truth and acknowledge that this piece of academia is very much from and about myself. The knowledge “produced” here could only come from my body – in the physical sense as my hands move across my keyboard to communicate words to you, and in the felt sense, where I attune to my own feelings as way to understand place and relationship amidst settler colonial ruin.

This creative piece, both separate from and part of me, is a compilation of questions, findings, and the sweet and misty and hopeful area between. I weave personal and academic

---

<sup>24</sup> Taylor, "ASL TRANSLATION: Why Talking to Your White Family About Black People is the Wrong Approach."

<sup>25</sup> Moss and Falconer Al-Hindi, "Rhizomatic Encounters and Encountering Possibilities," 5-6.

<sup>26</sup> Donna Haraway, "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective," *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 582.

<sup>27</sup> Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 583.

<sup>28</sup> Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 589.

<sup>29</sup> Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 590.

<sup>30</sup> Haraway, "Situated Knowledges," 592.

writing with photographs, drawings, and dance, helping to unsettle the idea that words (particularly, English words) are the most effective way to communicate academic knowledge. This thesis is multidisciplinary, multimethodological, and multimedia. It is a brew, as conceptualized by artist and writer Yumi Sakugawa, mixed in “a cauldron in the holy vessel of [my] body... potent magic that will summon all that [I] desire for [my]self, [my] creative practice, [my] relationships, [my] communities, [my] ancestors, the planet at large.” As Yumi leaves space for, I don’t “exactly know what or how they will all come together, but [I] can pour into [my] brew the ingredients [I] know to be true.”<sup>31</sup> Place, time, relations, and questions are the ingredients key to this thesis.

## ***Ingredients***

### Places<sup>32</sup>

- Northern New England (*N'dakinna*, Wabanaki Dawnland Confederacy land)
- Burlington, Vermont (Abenaki land) / *Bitawbagw*
- Littleton, Massachusetts (Nipmuc land) / swamp land<sup>33</sup>
- Dover, New Hampshire (Pennacook land, *Wecohamet* Village) / *Peskategwa*
- Manchester, Vermont (Abenaki land) / *Dionoondehowee* or *Ondawa*
- Lockes Island, New Hampshire (Abenaki land) / *Wiwnineesakik*

### Times

- 1655-1669 (John Reyner settled in Dover, NH)
- 1760-1800 (Timothy Mead settled in Manchester, NH)
- 1965-present (my family owns property on Lockes Island, NH)
- 1999-2018 (I grew up in Littleton, MA)
- 2020-present (I live in my first apartment in Burlington, VT)

### Relations

- eastern white pine trees (ewps)
- ancestors: Timothy Mead<sup>34</sup> and John Reyner<sup>35</sup>
- academics, activists, and mentors
- my friends, housemates, and family

---

<sup>31</sup> @yumisakugawa, "INSPIRATION FOR CREATIVITY," Instagram post, March 11, 2022, [www.instagram.com/p/Ca-gJwNJ2Tv/](https://www.instagram.com/p/Ca-gJwNJ2Tv/).

<sup>32</sup> As I listed these places, I felt myself called to also name the life-giving waters that make these places what/who they are. These waters are also part of this work. I use Indigenous placenames for them. My intention is for this to help me maintain the distinction of settler colonial constructions of place from Indigenous epistemologies, and orient towards a sense of place that includes the more-than-human.

<sup>33</sup> Now Mill Pond, I've begun thinking of this area as swampland ever since reading Lisa Brooks, "'Every Swamp is a Castle': Navigating Native Spaces in the Connecticut River Valley, Winter 1675–1677 and 2005–2015," *Northeastern Naturalist* 24 (2017).

<sup>34</sup> lineage: Timothy Mead Sr. (born 1701; settled 1760) - Timothy Mead Jr. (b. 1724 died ~1800) - Rachael Mead - Sarah Gale - Roswell Kinney - Sidney Rice Kinney - Francis Dudley Kinney - Sidney Kinney Backus - Anne Huntington Backus - Timothy Edwards Wanzer - Emily Joelle Wanzer

<sup>35</sup> lineage: John Reyner (b. ~1605?; died 1669; settled 1635) - John Lane - Mary Lane - Mary Whitmore Weber - John White - Lucy White - Mary Parker Prentiss - Oswald Prentiss Backus - Sidney Kinney Backus - Anne Huntington Backus - Timothy Edwards Wanzer - Emily Joelle Wanzer

### Research Questions (RQs)

- RQ1: What stories can eastern white pines and people tell about a settler colonial past and present in northern ‘New England’?
- RQ2: How can more-than-human geographies—in this instance attuned to ewps—inform an understanding of human-tree entanglements?
- RQ3: How do my changing relationships with white pines and my ancestors impact my sense of place?

### *Cauldron*

My “cauldron” is both my body and the frameworks that inform my way of thinking and doing research. Feminist scholarship affirms the importance and validity of emotion in academic work and opened me to autoethnographic methods critical to this project.<sup>36</sup> Tricia Hersey (The Nap Bishop) and scholar-activists Sonya Renee Taylor<sup>37</sup> and adrienne maree brown embody frameworks of Rest as Resistance, radical self-love, and pleasure activism that influence this work as it connects to me and my boundaries of work, play, and creativity. This study is predicated on the work of feminist political ecologists and Indigenous historians who have worked to de-center the human in knowledge production, part of a growing body of scholarship that engages “more-than-human” beings and methods.<sup>38</sup> Lastly, disability justice is a framework and love and care ethic that has helped me to be able to articulate and live into visions for the kind of world I want to be a part of and leave for future generations. I understand disability justice to encompass justice for all beings, and it feels important to connect this work back to multiracial cross-class movements fighting for liberation today.<sup>39</sup>

### *Brew*

My chapters are deeply interconnected and do not progress linearly. The ideas I write into each chapter by thinking about the research question(s) I ask may also respond to another, if not

---

<sup>36</sup> As I’ve already referenced, there are countless feminist scholars doing important work with attention to power relations and affect. To check out just a couple, see Leslie Kern et al., “A collective biography of joy in academic practice,” *Social & cultural geography* 15, no. 7 (2014); Sara Ahmed, *The cultural politics of emotion* (New York: Routledge, 2004).

<sup>37</sup> Author of Sonya Renee Taylor, *The body is not an apology: The power of radical self-love* (Oakland CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2021).

<sup>38</sup> To list just a few: Bawaka Country et al., “Working with and learning from Country: decentring human authority,” *cultural geographies* 22, no. 2 (2015); Julie Cruikshank, *Do glaciers listen?: local knowledge, colonial encounters, and social imagination* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007); Robyn Dowling, Kate Lloyd, and Sandra Suchet-Pearson, “Qualitative methods II: ‘More-than-human’ methodologies and/in praxis,” *Progress in Human Geography* 41, no. 6 (2017); Kj Hernández, “Land and ethnographic practices—(re)making toward healing,” *Article, Prácticas de tierra y etnográficas: (Re) Haciendo Hacia la Curación*. 21, no. 7 (2020); Hannah Pitt, “On showing and being shown plants - a guide to methods for more-than-human geography,” *Article, Area* 47, no. 1 (2015); Vanessa Watts, “Indigenous place-thought and agency amongst humans and non humans (First Woman and Sky Woman go on a European world tour!),” *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2, no. 1 (2013).

<sup>39</sup> Daria of Accountability Mapping (“Accountability Mapping: Let’s build new tools!,” 2022, accessed March, 2022, <https://accountabilitymapping.com/>.) and keithlee, my supervisor at Resource Generation ([www.resourcegeneration.org](http://www.resourcegeneration.org)), have both deepened my understanding and practice of disability justice.

all, of them. “Ch. 3. Tree bodies & human trees” grounds from the knowledge that humans and trees have relationships, and that looking at these relationships can help us learn about ourselves and this place under settler colonialism. From that understanding, I explore RQ1: What stories can eastern white pines and people tell about a settler colonial past and present in northern ‘New England’? As I look to the past and weave stories of my own relationship to trees and an ancestral story, I find that the past can sometimes lead us towards hopeful futures, particularly as I look to the possibilities of new historical records inclusive of place. This leads me into “Ch. 4. Shifting legacy” where I ask RQ2: How can more-than-human geographies—in this instance attuned to ewps—inform an understanding of human-tree entanglements? and encourage an orientation from the body within more-than-human research, where personal relationship cultivates feeling. I introduce another ancestor story and bring in theories of place, which leads me back to my own tools (reading fantasy and appreciating nature) that have helped me look beyond the human in my research practice. All of this informs my answers to RQ3: How do my changing relationships with white pines and my ancestors impact my sense of place? I assert that engaging in a working praxis around place can shift colonial ways of being.

I pulled a “flavor profile” from each research question, which gives a sense of how blending different ingredients through these lenses led me to creative findings:

#### RQ1

- empathizing with trees
- visualizing hopeful futures
- colonial ways of being impede connection

#### RQ2

- personal relationships: friendship & feeling
- specific embodiment with my own tools
- possibilities for new historical record

#### RQ3

- togetherness in fabric of place
- shifting settler relationships to place requires time and attention.



Figure 1.1 Ewp figures (2022, by Author)

Two photos side by side of eastern white pines. The left photo shows five trees, the one in the middle standing taller than the others, more prominent with its trunk highlighted by the sun. It is February and there is snow on the ground. The sky is an intense blue and the needles of the trees are dark green. The photo on the right is blurry, taken from a car window, and shows the outline of an ewp above the other trees, silhouetted against the gray sky.

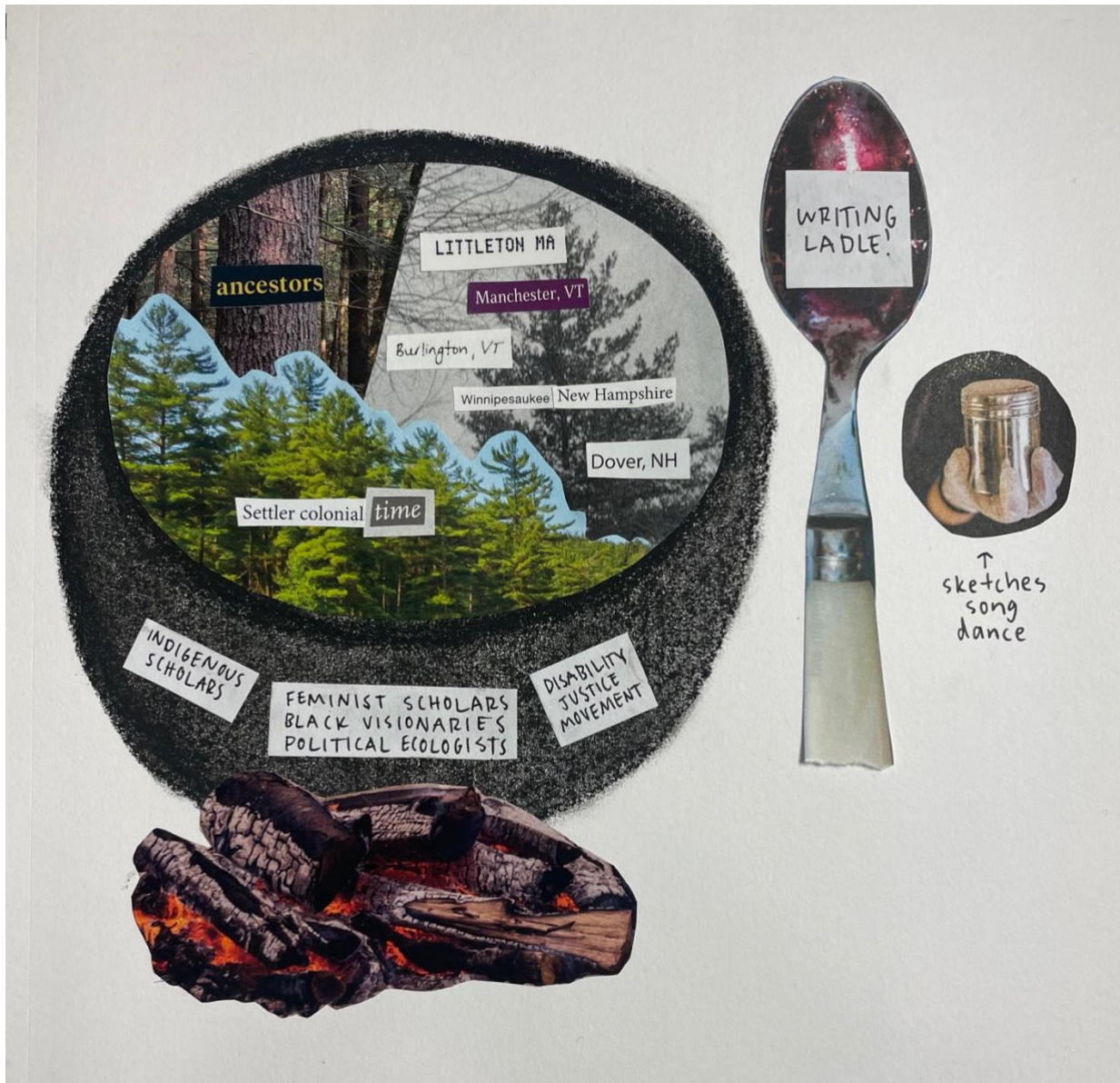


Figure 1.2 Thesis cauldron (2022, by Author)

A mixed-media collage (magazines, charcoal, pen, paper) represents my thesis, metaphorized as a brew in a cauldron. The cauldron is charcoal and has text representing the frameworks that hold my work: Indigenous scholars, feminist scholars, Black visionaries, political ecologists, and the disability justice movement. Inside the cauldron there is collaged text for ingredients that make up my brew, including ancestors, Littleton MA, Manchester VT, Burlington VT, Winnepesaukee NH, Dover NH, and settler colonial time. These words are collaged over photos of eastern white pine trees. The cauldron is fueled by burning logs, another acknowledgement of the impact of tree bodies in our lives and this work. To the left of the cauldron is a collaged spoon representing the ladle that spoons out my brew, a metaphor for my method of writing to pull together disparate pieces of this work, and a spice shaker that represents the forms of art I used to enhance this work: sketches, song, and dance.

## Chapter 2. Methods

This is a mixed-method and interdisciplinary project. I approach my questions by bringing together genealogical histories, more-than-human geography, and autoethnography using an approach that is both iterative (returning to, cyclical) and inductive (grounded in observation). My methods, or procedures for answering my research questions, are organized by season to bring in an understanding of the passing of time and the ways that this work has ebbed and flowed and happened in specific times and places. Though introduced linearly, each method has also shown up in each season. The ways that they have interacted with each other and been understood by me has shifted and grown with time.

I situate my work within the umbrella of GeoHumanities research,<sup>40</sup> which grounds me in my use of historical stories, scientific research, fiction/fantasy, feelings, and shared experiences with others. My approach to analysis is highly embodied, connected to my thought processes/ways of being and facilitated by writing. As Professor Ingrid L. Nelson affirms, I understand that “writing grounded and contextualized narratives *is* a form of rigorous analysis.”<sup>41</sup> The narratives in this thesis emerge from relationships: my own relationships with family, place, books, ancestors, objects, and trees. Trees are of particular note because this thesis asks questions about and encourages more engagement with more-than-human geographies. I focus on co-habitation and co-production of knowledge with eastern white pine trees, practicing “engaged witnessing” as research process.<sup>42</sup>

Engaging with experimental humanistic and more-than-human methods has helped me better understand the ways that knowledge production falls short when the tools we have are from and centered around the human, and the communication of this knowledge overwhelmingly favors the written. As N. K. Jemisin writes in *The Fifth Season* (book one of the Broken Earth trilogy), “Who misses what they have never, ever even imagined? That would not be human nature. How fortunate, then, that there are more people in this world than just humankind.”<sup>43</sup> Paying attention to the elegant simplicity with which trees store and pass on knowledge has led me to push this body of academia towards the creative.

### *Spring: seeds & buds*

The first ways I “produced knowledge” were through conversations, emails, messages, and notes between myself and my friends, family, and advisors. Prof. Nelson, as my academic advisor (and later thesis co-advisor), played a key role in the early development of my ideas, methods, and goals for this thesis. In an email to her nearly two years ago, I wrote that I hoped to create a project in connection with the past, with our ancestors, and with those who have shaped my worldview. I wanted to center in New England, to blend truth and art, and to disrupt white

---

<sup>40</sup> Tim Cresswell et al., "Editorial," *GeoHumanities* 1, no. 1 (2015/01/02 2015).

<sup>41</sup> Roberta Hawkins and Ingrid L Nelson, "Where are Rooted Networks in Digital Political Ecologies?," *Frontiers in Human Dynamics* (2022): 1.

<sup>42</sup> Sarah J. Bell, Lesley Instone, and Kathleen J. Mee, "Engaged witnessing: Researching with the more-than-human," *Area* 50, no. 1 (2018).

<sup>43</sup> N.K. Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*, The Broken Earth, (New York, NY: Orbit, 2015), 151.



supremacy culture. Faced with overwhelming injustice, I also wanted to bring in hope and joy: my connection with food, queer love, and Indigenous care for Earth.

I began to have conversations with friends and family members, expressing these values and ideas. It is important to acknowledge this process of talking about my project in casual and interpersonal ways as a critical part of the development of this work. This project would not be what it is today without the people I talked to. In their research on social workers, Cherie Appleton used ‘critical friends,’ people who would “monitor [her] and [her] performance as a researcher, act as sounding boards, and offer challenges, ideas and encouragement,”<sup>44</sup> as a feminist research method. Her work was built upon the work of other theorists such as “Mitchell and Oakley (1986), Swigonski (1994), and Trinder (2000)” who “emphasise the importance of consciousness raising, inviting, listening and giving voice to the personal which in turn is a crucial aspect of the political.”<sup>45</sup> Appleton found that the tool offered “support and critique throughout the research journey [and] contributes to the maintenance of the researchers’ professional and personal integrity.”<sup>46</sup> Though my use of friendships was not as formal as hers, I relied on friends to support and develop my research process and formative ideas. A few of my critical friends were also developing their own theses alongside me, including Eleanor Duva, Annalisa Fiore, and Reese Green, who all provided emotional support and work time accountability.

### ***Summer: spaciousness & connections***

Spring buds bloomed, and I found myself tumbling into summer. As I centered my focus on eastern white pines, colonial history, and their intersections with the human, I worked with Prof. Nelson and Gale Weld from UVM’s Research Protections Office to create a human subjects protocol and submit it for International Review Board (IRB) approval.<sup>47</sup> We designed my protocol to plan for encounters that I could have with other humans in the woods or around trees as I spent time with white pines around town/around New England. Despite my field research centering on trees, the way that the human subjects protocol process required me to ask questions of my research centered around humans.

With the paperwork submitted, I shifted my gaze to the trees. I said hello to ewps whenever I saw them. I can track some of my own geographies through these encounters: birding class,<sup>48</sup> North Beach, Roosevelt Park, the roof of my house, driving to late summer Vermont adventures, house-sitting in Williston, walking home from a friend’s house in the Old North End, Lockes Island, my childhood home, on a walk for dance class,<sup>49</sup> ultimate frisbee tryouts, the UVM campus, driving from home to home to grandparents and cousins, walking home from the

---

<sup>44</sup> Cherie Appleton, "Critical Friends', Feminism and Integrity: A reflection on the use of critical friends as a research tool to support researcher integrity and reflexivity in qualitative research studies," *Women in welfare education*, no. 10 (2011): 6.

<sup>45</sup> Appleton, "Critical Friends', Feminism and Integrity," 5.

<sup>46</sup> Appleton, "Critical Friends', Feminism and Integrity," 1.

<sup>47</sup> It was approved on June 21, 2021, protocol number: STUDY00001658

<sup>48</sup> Prof. Trish O’Kane’s spring 2021 class “Birding To Change The World”.

<sup>49</sup> Millie Heckler’s spring 2021 class “Movement and Improvisation”.

gym, driving along I-89 to Montpelier. Over spring break, I took a run leaving from my childhood home in Littleton, MA, and couldn't help but see many ways that ewps had presence in this town (see Appendix B for photos and descriptions). Centering trees in my analysis of settler colonialism follows a feminist political ecology tradition of focusing on case studies and "sticky" points to reveal broader social and political power dynamics that flow through everyday practices/objects/beings.<sup>50</sup>

I developed a practice of taking my yellow field notebook with me on walks and trips around Burlington, around Vermont, and around greater New England. I would seek out ewps to sit underneath, and I would write about what I was thinking or feeling, make observations about the trees, sketch with my ballpoint pen, and collect pine needles or litter. These observations span from July 2021 to October 2022 and fill 72 pages of my notebook. I identified a few locations near to my home in downtown Burlington Vermont where there were ewps I could visit with relative ease: the stand of trees behind Mt. St. Mary's Convent and the trees along North Beach off of the Burlington bike path.

I also paid attention to what other humans were saying about trees and colonialism. I followed Black and Indigenous creators/scholars/activists on Instagram<sup>51</sup> and TikTok.<sup>52</sup> These platforms are increasingly being used as knowledge sources, but my intention was to center these voices as part of the media I consume in my life.<sup>53</sup> In listening to these visionaries, I heard a compelling call to rest. Tricia Hersey, founder of The Nap Ministry, preaches that "resting is a meticulous love practice,"<sup>54</sup> and "to rest is to creatively respond to grind culture's call to do more."<sup>55</sup> Her work is influenced and inspired by Black scholarship on liberation, by the work of people like bell hooks, James Cone, Toni Morrison, Katie Cannon, Audre Lorde, and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As the Nap Minister, Hersey harnesses powerful critiques of grind culture and offers ways to rest within and in defiance of capitalist systems while refuting "the toxic idea that we are resting to recharge and rejuvenate so we can be prepared to give more output into capitalism."<sup>56</sup> In her 2022 book, she touches upon connections to both nature and ancestors,

---

<sup>50</sup> I am most influenced by Prof. Nelson's work (see Ingrid L Nelson, "Sweeping as a site of temporal brokerage: Linking town and forest in Mozambique," *Critique of Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (2016).), which is part of a lineage of feminist scholars - Rebecca Elmhirst, "Introducing new feminist political ecologies," *Geoforum* 42, no. 2 (2011/03/01/ 2011); Wendy Harcourt and Ingrid L Nelson, *Practising feminist political ecologies: moving beyond the 'green economy'* (London: Zed Books, 2015); Dianne Rocheleau, Barbara Thomas-Slayter, and Esther Wangari, "A feminist political ecology perspective," *Feminist political ecology: Global issues and local experiences* (1996); Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins* (Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015).

<sup>51</sup> @sepanativeplant, "Sepa Native Plant Sanctuary," Instagram account, [www.instagram.com/sepanativeplant/](http://www.instagram.com/sepanativeplant/); charlie amáyá scott @dineaesthetics, Instagram account, [www.instagram.com/dineaesthetics/](http://www.instagram.com/dineaesthetics/); Geo Soctomah Neptune @niskapisuwin, Instagram account, [www.instagram.com/niskapisuwin/](http://www.instagram.com/niskapisuwin/).

<sup>52</sup> Jocelyn Joe-Strack @auntyjocey, TikTok account, [www.tiktok.com/@auntyjocey](http://www.tiktok.com/@auntyjocey).

<sup>53</sup> More research is needed on this. See Jonathan M. Cox, "The source of a movement: making the case for social media as an informational source using Black Lives Matter," *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 11 (2017/09/02 2017).

<sup>54</sup> "Our work has a framework: REST IS RESISTANCE!," The Nap Ministry, 2021, accessed March 2022, <https://thenapministry.wordpress.com/2021/01/11/our-work-is-has-a-framework/>.

<sup>55</sup> Tricia Hersey, *Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto* (Hachette Audio, Imprint: Little, Brown Spark, 2022).

<sup>56</sup> Hersey, *Rest Is Resistance*.

writing that “staring out of the windows on public trains and buses saved my sanity during the height of my exhaustion,” and that her “commitment to honoring [her] own body, community care, and the remembrance of [her] ancestors came together as if [her] ancestors themselves were blowing wind under [her] wings and holding [her] hand offering rest as a gift for the world.”<sup>57</sup>

I applied for and received the 2021 Summer Undergraduate Research Fund (SURF) Humanities Center grant, which gave me somewhat more spaciousness in developing my project. I would not say that writing a thesis is embracing Hersey’s “Rest is Resistance.” By choosing to engage with more-than-human geographies, I hoped to counter some of the stress and pressures (part of the violence) of academia, which Hersey asserts “is a headquarters for grind culture.”<sup>58</sup> Through the summer I grappled with how to tend to my emotional self and counter the internalized messages capitalism, white supremacy and our school systems have imparted to me about productivity and worth. In this period where I was conducting mostly self-guided research, I was often plagued with feelings of inadequacy, like I was never doing enough for my project. Many of Tema Okun’s Characteristics of White Supremacy Culture showed up, reinforced by academia: fear, individualism, progress is more & quantity over quality, worship of the written work, and urgency.<sup>59</sup>

### ***Fall: digging, deep, back***

*I careened through summer and fall is hitting like a brick wall – a cool brick wall that I can face and lean my forehead against, eyes closed.*<sup>60</sup> I worked with my thesis co-advisor Professor Abby McGowan on identifying and developing the historical strategies I would use to connect myself to my cultural history and situate myself within our settler colonial present. Engagement with my ancestral past was encouraged and facilitated by SUSU Healing Collective’s “Unbodying White Supremacy” course<sup>61</sup> and Resource Generation Vermont’s praxis<sup>62</sup> as well as other scholars and activists like Tricia Hersey who writes that “You will have to dismantle your own unique cultural history in order to heal your own collective and individual traumas. You will have to do real work to change.”<sup>63</sup>

I see the importance of this work on both sides of my family. Resources like *Transcending Jewish Trauma* lift up the importance of healing for assimilated, white Ashkenazi Jews living in the United States.<sup>64</sup> For me, it feels particularly important to first engage this work on my paternal side, where my ancestors were perpetrators of multiple violences aligned with the projects of colonialism and white supremacy. On this side of my family, I have access to genealogical information compiled by my great-great grandfather Charles Swett Hayden, his

---

<sup>57</sup> Hersey, *Rest Is Resistance*.

<sup>58</sup> Hersey, *Rest Is Resistance*.

<sup>59</sup> “WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE CHARACTERISTICS,” 2022, <https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/characteristics.html>.

<sup>60</sup> Field notes, Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> 2021, Mt. St. Mary’s Burlington VT.

<sup>61</sup> facilitated by Amber Arnolds

<sup>62</sup> facilitated by Wren Lansky and Zoe Jeka

<sup>63</sup> Ministry, “Our work has a framework.”

<sup>64</sup> “Transcending Jewish Trauma,” accessed 2022, <https://www.transcendingjewishtrauma.com/>.

sister Caroline Helen Hayden, my great-grandmother Ruth Bowne (Haven) Backus, and her sister Margery (Haven) Fifield. It contains hundreds of ancestors (names, most with birth and death year and location) and in the past 40 years has been edited, transcribed, digitized, and added to by my grandparents Anne Backus Wanzer and Sidney Hovey Wanzer. Accompanying these data points are 238 Word documents (accessible via Dropbox) of narrative information about many of these people/lineages.

Using RootsMagic genealogical software, I read through much of this information, searching particularly for people who worked with trees and for geographic places of significance to lumber industry/the changing treescape. Once I identified two specific ancestors, I turned to the archival and historical record to learn more about them, utilizing resources at the Howe Library and the Jack and Shirley Silver Special Collections Library, both located at the University of Vermont in Burlington Vermont, as well as the Manchester Historical Society's archive in Manchester Vermont. These sources included town histories focused on development and industry, early maps, and ledgers kept by storeowners. All of these materials are written and preserved from a settler perspective. While this leaves huge gaps in my ability to reconstruct and understand the past, it provides an opportunity for me to "unsettle" settler ways of being and knowing by using settler materials to reveal some of the ways the violences of settler colonialism operate. Using my ancestors as case studies, I focused on getting a sense of the context of the place, time, and culture.

### *Winter into spring – summer – fall: weaving*

I brought all these threads (of unsettling colonialism, tree friendship and knowledge, ancestral histories) together by writing my life. Using Pamela Moss and Kathryn Besio's framing of auto-methods (treating my own story as data), I embraced and played with "new modes of reading and writing that begin with a self."<sup>65</sup> This is a deepening of the feminist scholastic tradition of stating and centering positionality, "that is, the need to engage with experience as context, the importance of hearing marginalized voices, and our excitement for an embodied view from somewhere."<sup>66</sup> In this work, writing my own story is not a foundation for my research to sit on top of, but my method of analysis.

By using "auto-methods," my experiences and memories become data that constructs truth "through relations that have temporal and spatial dimensions... [and] come in and out of the author's and the reader's views and voices," linking them together.<sup>67</sup> This is a relational way of producing knowledge in that "trailing pathways through one's own inhabitation" encourages analysis of our "embedded[ness] in multiple relations" and of "the complexities of power," while also requiring the author and reader to engage each other.<sup>68</sup> Writing as an action and process is a means to analyze and synthesize these discrete experiences and feelings. A recording made by

---

<sup>65</sup> Pamela Moss and Kathryn Besio, "Auto-Methods in Feminist Geography," *GeoHumanities* 5, no. 2 (2019): 314.

<sup>66</sup> Moss and Besio, "Auto-Methods in Feminist Geography," 314.

<sup>67</sup> Moss and Besio, "Auto-Methods in Feminist Geography," 320.

<sup>68</sup> Moss and Besio, "Auto-Methods in Feminist Geography," 318.

Eve Tuck<sup>69</sup> helped me to locate my ideas as feelings within my body, which I used to respond to my original research questions. Tuck's approach drew from Dian Million's "Felt Theory"<sup>70</sup> and Sondra Perl's "Felt Sense."<sup>71</sup> Music also helped me focus, in this space and time particularly "Breathe It In" by Beautiful Chorus, "Crowded Table" by the Highwomen, and my friends Mads and Jonna's "Gemini pride <3" playlist. Writing was how I weaved multiple disciplinary traditions, methods, times, places, and beings together.

I was able to step away from this project for Summer 2022 because I was too emotionally and physically drained to follow my original timeline. This sabbatical of sorts is worth mentioning as part of my methodology because it gave space for a slower kind of knowledge-making that is tied to my body. The Nap Minister says it best: "this is about more than naps... Go slow. Learn history. Learn your own history. View your body as its own unique technology. Listen."<sup>72</sup>

"Extra" time also simply allowed me the space to give this project the depth it deserves and the time to visit Dover NH and Manchester VT. I'm able to feel in my throat the ways that our school system blocks relaxation with stress and expectations, and my body hums as it turns toward a future where production is not tied to worth, when I can learn in messier, slower, even more creative ways with an expanding network of those I love.

---

<sup>69</sup> Tuck, "Recordings."

<sup>70</sup> Million, "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History."

<sup>71</sup> Sondra Perl, "Understanding Composing," *College Composition and Communication* 31, no. 4 (1980).

<sup>72</sup> "Rest is anything that connects your mind and body," The Nap Ministry, 2022, accessed March 2022, <https://thenapministry.wordpress.com/2022/02/21/rest-is-anything-that-connects-your-mind-and-body/>.

## Interlude 1 – Knowing trees

My family knows trees. We notice them, say hello, offer compliments and acknowledgements. My uncles and my sister know many by name. A particular body language of appreciation punctuates walks (see Figure 2.1): someone finds stillness, feet planted, face turned up to witness a great being before us. Others pause too, maybe bring hands to trunk, hands to hands, body to tree.

Encounters with trees are scattered through the geographies of my life. One of my favorite photos of my family is of my parents (Mit and Marcy), my sister (Sophie), and I leaned up against an American elm outside my grandparents' old house in Concord, Massachusetts (see Figure 2.2). For Sophie's eleventh or twelfth birthday I rigged a rope along a leaning tree so that she could climb in and store things in a waterproof toolkit I hid in the woods. When I left my high school in Devens MA to attend a semester school in Wiscasset ME for the fall of my junior year, I made a map of "Wonder-full Trees" (the "biggest" and "coolest") for my human ecology capstone project (see Figures 2.3 and 2.4). Eastern white pines are my dad's favorite tree, featured often in his camera roll (see Figure 2.5).

My parents raised me and my sister Sophie in Littleton MA. We slept in a blue-sided house (see Figure 3.4) on a street called Mill Road, which was bracketed by a Catholic church and "the big red barn." We lived there alongside many other beings - eastern white pine trees, two dogwood trees, a crab apple tree, a disease-resistant elm tree, a silver maple, raspberries and blueberries, bleeding hearts, a butterfly bush, forsythia, lady slippers, foxes, chickadees, nuthatches, blue jays, cardinals, woodpeckers (hairy, downy, pileated, flickers), wood ducks, turkey vultures, chickens, a dog (Pretzel).<sup>73</sup>

---

<sup>73</sup> I documented many of these beings during Covid-19 lockdown for a "Contemplative Ecologies" project for Prof. Harlan Morehouse's "Political Ecology" class. See "Contemplative Ecologies: Work in Isolation," Harlan Morehouse ed. *UVM Blogs*, 2020, <https://blog.uvm.edu/tmorehou-tmorehou/2020/04/23/contemplative-ecology-creativity-in-a-time-of-pandemic/>.



Figure 2.1 Walk at Tophet Chasm (2018, by Author)

Two family members, wearing homemade hats and winter jackets, stand in some woods, snow on the ground. Two ewps stand ahead of them to the right, one with a trail marker arrow and the other with a green hand-painted sign reading “TOPHET CHASM” (the colonial name for this place). Ewps also line the background, backlit by the sun hitting the opposite side of the chasm.

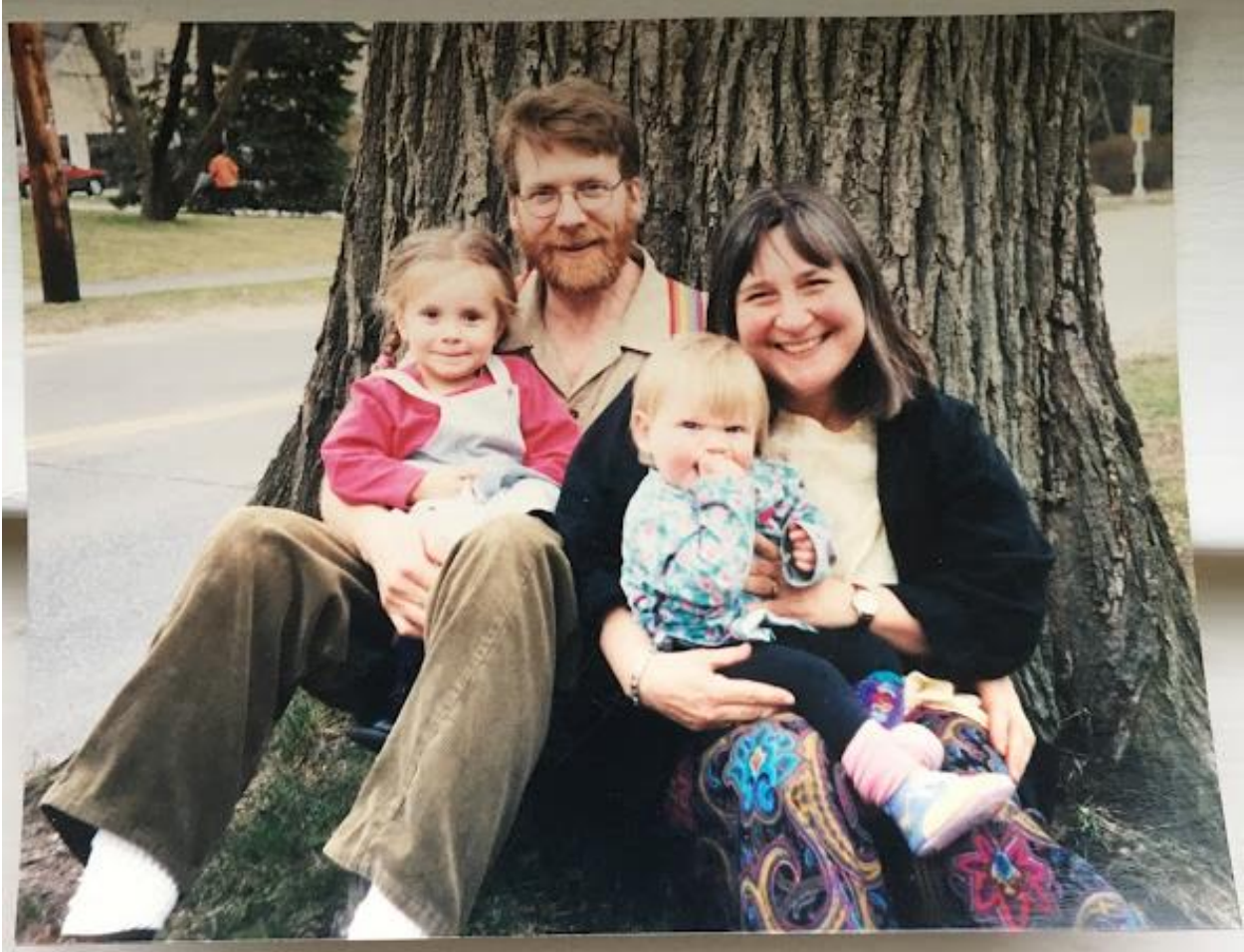


Figure 2.2 Family portrait with American elm<sup>74</sup> (~2002, Sidney Wanzer)

Sophie, about one year old, and I, about three, sit in our parents' laps. We are all white and are looking at the camera. I have overalls on with a pink shirt and my hair in two braids, a slight smile on my face. My dad's beard is reddish, his shirt, pants, and hair are all shades of brown and he has on rainbow suspenders and wire-rimmed glasses. My sister has her fist in her mouth, has light blond hair and is wearing black tights, booties, and a flowery blue pullover. My mom has a big smile, black shoulder-length hair and bangs, streaked with gray. She has a black jacket over a yellow shirt and patterned flowy pants. Supporting and framing us is an American elm tree. It is various shades of gray with vertical grooves in the bark, forming lines that flow into V's at times.

---

<sup>74</sup> My dad helped with identification.



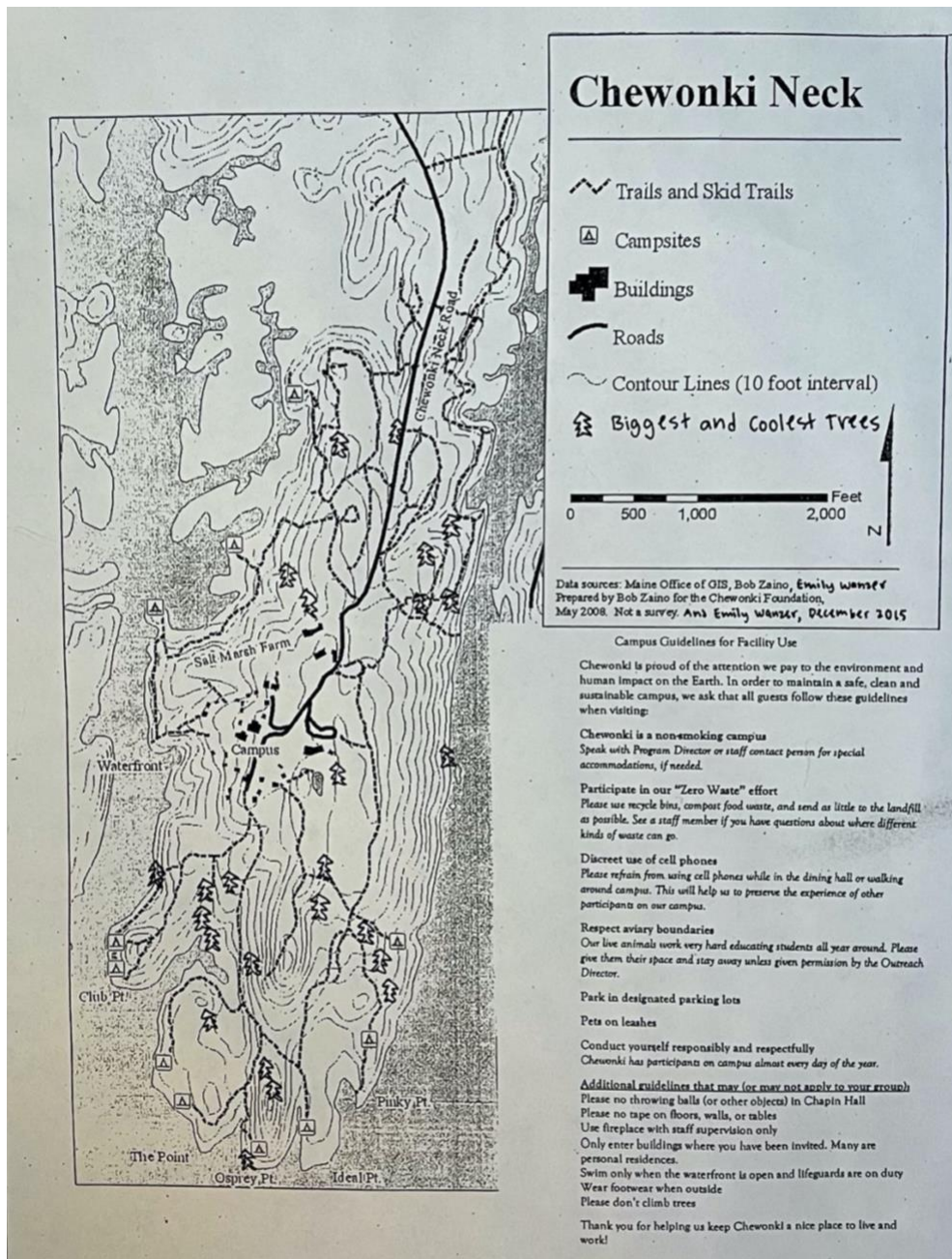


Figure 2.3 Wonder-full Trees of Chewonki (2015, by Author)

Photo of a paper copy of a topographical map of Chewonki Neck, a peninsula with five fingers (Club Pt., The Point, Osprey Pt., Ideal Pt., and Pinky Pt.) on the coast of Maine, in black and white. Campus, Waterfront, Salt Marsh Farm, and Chewonki Neck Road are also labeled. There are twenty-five tree icons drawn on, labeled on the legend as "Biggest and Coolest Trees." A more detailed version of this map is available online [here](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=18qFLDkCfMW00_BsI5nLBNzzV34ZEwFP&usp=sharing).<sup>75</sup>

<sup>75</sup> "Wonder-full Trees of Chewonki" map link address:

[https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=18qFLDkCfMW00\\_BsI5nLBNzzV34ZEwFP&usp=sharing](https://www.google.com/maps/d/u/0/edit?mid=18qFLDkCfMW00_BsI5nLBNzzV34ZEwFP&usp=sharing)



Figure 2.4 Ewps on the Maine coast (2016, by Author)

Landscape photo taken across an inlet on the Maine coast. The tide is high, a light breeze making ripples on the water. Over twenty ewps rise above other trees on the neighboring point and puffy white clouds dominate the sky.



Figure 2.5 Ewps on the bank of the frozen Big River (2022, Mit Wanzer)

Dozens of ewps stand on the snowy bank of the Connecticut River in southern VT/NH. The sky is a bright blue. The water of the river is completely frozen over, mostly with black ice. The photo is taken from the ice, where beloved family and friends met to ice skate for a day.

### Chapter 3. Tree bodies & human trees

*Time keeps on slipping away from me and it feels like the tighter I hold on, the faster it flows, flows, flows. How does time make its mark on my body? My body converses with the moon. Tree bodies pulse with the years. Giant breaths.*

Field notes, July 23, 2021, Burlington VT

#### *Stress in the forestscape*

I enter the forestscape holding the legacy of my ancestors. My body feels the impact of their world-making. There is a spot on my back, in the space behind my heart, where my feelings are stuck. My body has felt a lot of stress the past few years. The grind and pressures of academia, a global pandemic, heartbreak. I think about the lessons that books like *My Grandmother's Hands*<sup>76</sup> popularized, that trauma can be inherited and passed down through genes, and I think about my mother, who lives beautifully, and clenches her teeth in sleep.

#### *Lineage*

Nathan and Maya (Manya) met in Cuba in 1921, on their way from western Russia to New York City, fleeing “Revolutions, wars, fires, pogroms, thrown from one town to another.”<sup>77</sup> Writing in 1987, Nathan wrote that the forty years he lived in Brooklyn were “almost like the forty years Moses and the Israelites traveled in the desert.”<sup>78</sup> Ruth (Rifke), my grandma, was born in 1927 and had an independent, spirited youth as the child of immigrants who spoke Russian, Yiddish, Portuguese, Spanish and Hebrew. She met my grandpa Joseph Kantell (Cantor) in 1957 and married him after three months. They moved to the suburbs in Suffern, NY,<sup>79</sup> where my mom Marcy was born. This one line ties me to my Jewish past and present.

My dad Mit (Tim) was born in Concord, MA at the same hospital my sister and I were born at years later. Colonial hegemony and white supremacy paved the way for many paths connecting me with my paternal settler ancestors (see Figure 3.1). These ancestors were pilgrims,<sup>80</sup> lawyers,<sup>81</sup> pastors,<sup>82</sup> missionaries,<sup>83</sup> soldiers,<sup>84</sup> constables,<sup>85</sup> captains,<sup>86</sup> husbandmen,<sup>87</sup>

---

<sup>76</sup> Resmaa Menakem, *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies* (Las Vegas, NV: Central Recovery Press, 2017).

<sup>77</sup> Nathan Rosevitsky, *A Short Story About the Life of Your Father, Grandfather, and Great-grandfather*, 1987.

<sup>78</sup> Rosevitsky, *A Short Story About the Life of Your Father, Grandfather, and Great-grandfather*, 19.

<sup>79</sup> According to Grandma, their down payment on a house was “five dollars and a handshake.”

<sup>80</sup> John and Priscilla Alden

<sup>81</sup> many Backuses

<sup>82</sup> John Reyner (see Chapter 3)

<sup>83</sup> James Parker

<sup>84</sup> Daniel Hawes

<sup>85</sup> Richard Everett

<sup>86</sup> Joseph Holden; John Moseley II (also owned a mill) and John Moseley III

<sup>87</sup> John Bent

selectman,<sup>88</sup> wives.<sup>89</sup> They settled in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries in places they shaped into Plymouth MA, Hartford CT, Dover NH, Cornwall/Underhill/Enosburgh VT, Wrentham MA, Dedham MA, Windsor CT, Sudbury MA, and Dorchester MA (respectively). They “cleared land” and killed native people with disease and war. Rippling through space and time, their descendants moved south and exploited the labor and lives of Afro-Indigenous people, becoming enslavers. They invested in (bought in to) institutions of higher education, consolidating power in the North. They extracted (committed violence against the earth) in exchange for capital.<sup>90</sup> And they lived human lives.

My parents met on a river sloop, and this was the world I was born into. My body persists as a living, breathing, mobile legacy of that connection, the present crest in this wave of humanity.

### ***Ancestor John Reyner – Dover NH, 1655-1669***

My 9x paternal great-grandfather, Rev. John Reyner was born in England and sailed across the Atlantic to settle an unfamiliar place.<sup>91</sup> In 1655, that place was Dover, New Hampshire, although then it was not known as Dover nor New Hampshire, but as a colony, the first settlement in what eventually became New Hampshire. This place is next to a river that was hugely important in the commodification of tree bodies through the mast trade (see Chapter 1).<sup>92</sup> John may have been one of the last people to live near “Pine Point” before it became “Birch Point” after “the primeval pines of the forest were cut by the first settlers, and the birches took their place.”<sup>93</sup>

Powerful men positioned Reyner in this place as a powerful man, in order to control others’ bodies. As pastor, he was an ideological leader and was given land and a house in 1659. Beginning in 1662 he was also given provisions including beef, pork, wheat, malt, and peas, paid for by taxes from the entire town (that is, by those whose bodies signaled membership to the community - male, landowning, white).<sup>94</sup>

In 1662, shaken Dover residents summoned John to confront the arrival of Quakers in the village. The pastor arrived at the scene to defend the ideology of his church and was met with the

---

<sup>88</sup> William Blake

<sup>89</sup> All genealogical information I have is extremely male-centered and I have much less information on women or any person who lived in contrast to cis white wealthy men. As my advisor Abby pointed out, this phenomenon is so ubiquitous that you can point to nearly any historical scholar with a critical lens for more instances and analysis on this. It is demonstrative of the chilling omnipresence of patriarchy and the way that oppression ripples through time.

<sup>90</sup> This analysis for the most part does not appear in my family records or narratives. The voice of the genealogical historian is neutral in the sense that it relays factual information, but of course there is no way to tell what information has been omitted or destroyed (intentionally or not).

<sup>91</sup> From family genealogy notes: Ruth Backus, Backus and Kinney Genealogy, the Ancestors of Sidney Kinney Backus, 1950-1980.

<sup>92</sup> Saltonstall, *Ports of Piscataqua*.

<sup>93</sup> John Scales, *History of Dover, New Hampshire (Tercentenary ed.): Containing historical genealogical and industrial data of its early settlers, their struggles and triumphs*, vol. I (Manchester, NH: John B. Clarke Co., Printed by authority of the City Councils, 1923), 220.

<sup>94</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 241.

unapologetic convictions of Mary Tomkins and her compatriots. According to George Bishop's account in "New England Judged by the Spirit of the Lord," Reyner "in a rage flung away, calling to his people from the window to go away from amongst them; but Mary soon after got after him, and spake to him to come back, and not to leave his People amongst them he called wolves; but away packt the priest."<sup>95</sup> Evidently the Quaker missionaries were successful in converting some. When Mary returned to Dover from Maine later that winter with Alice Ambrose and Anna Coleman, they were met with shocking and disturbing violence, "a flood of persecution [that] arose by the instigation of the priest."<sup>96</sup>

The captain Richard Walderne<sup>97</sup> instructed the constable of Dover and ten other townships to "make them fast to the cart's tail, and drawing the cart through your several towns, to whip them upon their naked backs, not exceeding ten stripes apiece on each of them in each town."<sup>98</sup> This was carried out in Dover and Hampton. The Dover constables also dragged each of the three women over a mile through the snow and took them out on the river in a dugout canoe, sending Alice Ambrose into the freezing water.

Many factors can contribute to the persecution of a group of people.<sup>99</sup> Oftentimes powerful men play a role in this violence, a pattern we see in the Dover community: Reyner (pastor), Walerne (captain), Hatevil Nutter (elder/wealthy man), and the Roberts brothers (constables) all worked to manifest hostility and violence towards the Quakers. These power dynamics reverberate through time and show up throughout the historical record, including in its production. John Scales, the 20th century historian who wrote the *History of Dover* containing this story, defends these men and their actions. Referring to Reyner, he asserts that this account is "totally opposed to all other accounts of his character,"<sup>100</sup> as if that absolves him from accountability for his role. He also writes that "Perhaps the constables, John and Thomas Roberts, were a little too frisky in giving the missionaries a free ride in an Indian canoe on Fore River that cold night, but they were servants of the colony, sworn to enforce the law whenever ordered to do so."<sup>101</sup> Speaking about the Quaker missionaries, Scales writes that "Elder Nutter believed it was right to force them to go... the worthy Elder should be judged by the standards that prevailed everywhere then; it would not be just to judge his acts by the standard of the

---

<sup>95</sup> George Bishop, *New-England judged, by the spirit of the Lord* (England: Printed and sold by T. Sowle, 1703, 1703).

<sup>96</sup> Bishop, *New-England judged, by the spirit of the Lord*, 229.

<sup>97</sup> Walderne also "did an immense lumber business" Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 186. He also broke a 1675 peace negotiation and sent about two hundred Indigenous refugees, who had fled north from King Phillip's War, to Boston with British military the following year, where seven or eight were hanged and the rest were sold into slavery. The Pennacook, who Walderne separated and spared, took revenge in 1689 and killed him with his own sword. See "Indigenous NH Collaborative Collective StoryMap," (ArcGIS StoryMap), 2021, accessed March 2022, <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=693c9b595c5847cfb07d100935e423ef>.

<sup>98</sup> Bishop, *New-England judged, by the spirit of the Lord*, 230.

<sup>99</sup> I studied this in Prof. Charles Briggs' history seminar "Encountering the Other: Persecution in the Middle Ages."

<sup>100</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 130.

<sup>101</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 138.

present day.”<sup>102</sup> Towards the end of his account, he goes so far as to blame the survivors themselves, writing that “in a measure, it was their own fault that they were thus punished.”<sup>103</sup>

Anti-Blackness was also part of the Dover colonization project, and also defended by figures like Scales, who writes that enslaved people in the 18<sup>th</sup> century in Dover “were glad to get here and escape from the cruel masters they had worked under in the islands; they never wanted to leave Dover.”<sup>104</sup> Based on the historical record that Scales had access to, namely settler narratives, it is unlikely that his assertions here are based on accounts from these oppressed people. The one narrative he offers that actually names individual Afro-Indigenous people still centers the will and desires of white men. Scales tells of a story settlers passed down concerning Caesar and Pompy, both enslaved, who were made to wrestle underneath an oak tree that marked the property line between their enslavers, an event spectated by a large group of neighbors. This story exemplifies how the “White male consumer has played an essential role in the shaping of... images [of Blackness],”<sup>105</sup> and the presence of this story in Scales’ history sheds light on his framing of whiteness, as ““spectacular consumption arises in part out of the desire for white folk to reconstitute their identities through acts of black consumption.””<sup>106</sup> Scales told this story for a reason, ending with the celebration of the spectators, who “congratulated both of the boxers on the fine work they had done and the good sport they had provided for the dwellers on Dover Neck.”<sup>107</sup> In this story we see the way that white supremacy was a tenet of settler society, where Black folks’ value was tied to white pleasure. Looking to trees helps us see ways that settlers constructed borders and fought over them (the wrestlers had to pin their opponent on their enslaver’s land to win), tying property to violence.

The following passage by Scales demonstrates the connectedness of the histories of exploitation of people, more-than-human beings, and land, and how those processes are wrapped up with wealth accumulation. Unnamed in this passage is the role of this Dover network in the development and maintenance of the transatlantic slave trade:

“The English began to settle there [in Barbados] about the same time that they began business on Dover Neck; some of them may have been neighbors in the old Home [England]; their descendants kept up the acquaintance through several generations, by way of trade, with vessels frequently going back and forth between the island and New England... Dover men not only went down there in their ships to trade, but quite a number invested in the sugar business, by which they acquired much wealth.”<sup>108</sup>

The colonial project was built upon the connections of powerful wealthy white men, who built their empires using/exploiting other beings. These men named various timber lots in the Dover

---

<sup>102</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 116.

<sup>103</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 144.

<sup>104</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 81.

<sup>105</sup> Nyambura Njee, "Share cropping Blackness: White supremacy and the hyper-consumption of Black popular culture," *McNair Scholars Research Journal* 9, no. 1 (2016): 119.

<sup>106</sup> Watts & Orbe, 2002, p. 7 in Njee, "Share cropping Blackness," 120.

<sup>107</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 82.

<sup>108</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 76.

area “Barbadoes”<sup>109</sup> in a strange tribute to their transnational exploitations. According to the *History of Dover*, “Dover Neck did not have any sawmills, but some of its leading residents were largely engaged in building mills and running them in the manufacture of various kinds of lumber.” Some higher authority (unnamed in the book, presumably governing officials with connections to England) granted these “leading residents” sections of rivers and the ability to cut trees from the area surrounding the mill. The lumber came through Dover Neck and “was there used, or loaded onto vessels and transported to towns along the New England coast, or to the West Indies and England.” A primary use was to make clapboards “of the best of white pine, of which there was a great abundance around Dover in those early times.” For each tree body cut down, the “leading resident” that had ownership of the operation would pay a sum to a town fund, some of which would contribute to my ancestor John’s salary.<sup>110</sup>

### *Doverscape*

Let’s stay in this place for a moment but step through a wormhole and end up in early July of this past summer, year 2022. My boyfriend Walden and I detour through Dover on our way from Portsmouth NH to Lake Winnepesaukee where we will meet up with my parents. I line up a historical map with Google maps and put a pin on where I think John Reyner’s house was on what is now Dover Point Road (see Figure 3.2). Surrounded by cars on a busy highway, we cross over the Piscataqua River without me even noticing. We pull over at Forsythia Drive, and I immediately feel a sense of accomplishment and relief and *wonder* because eastern white pines suddenly tower above us (see Figure 3.3). Walden says he thought he saw a historical marker across the road. I guide the car to a stop and we get out to walk around. I find a small path (human or deer?) and we followed it to some ewps that we stand next to, and touch. Long spiderwebs glint in the dappled sun, which also touches big ostrich ferns, drawing out their lime green brightness. Walden comments that the trees look sad. I “mm” in agreement, and think back to another forest, in Williston VT, that felt similar, choked, crowded, too quiet. Forests without elders.

We wait for a gap in the fast-moving traffic and cross the street to find a fenced-in piece of grassy land, marked by a sign hanging from wooden posts that reads “HISTORIC SITE / The First Parish Church in Dover erected here 1654.” That was a year before John Reyner moved to Dover as Reverend. I get excited. Not because of the history of the Church, but because this was the place where my ancestor spent time every day, and at the center of the green stands a multi-trunked ewp. It reminds me of the legacy we (some of us more than others) hold from colonial times, this being whose stories run alongside ours, and into the future. Walden remarked that maybe one day one of my descendants will come to this place and reflect on these stories, and think about me coming here. Maybe they will breathe with the land, instead of rushing over it.

We rush on.

---

<sup>109</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 77.

<sup>110</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 73.



In the car, I try to glimpse the Bellamy River, which runs alongside the highway we join, our car adding to the ceaseless noise reverberating through the Point.

I think about John. I didn't feel the spirit of him in that place, but I reflect on how he may have felt. Perhaps he was scared. Perhaps his dismissals of difference and reach towards violence had to do with the fear of living alone in the woods, of losing the few he knew to others. Perhaps if he had opened to more "others," if he had turned *towards* the dark tall looming trees, if he had refused to fell those reliable neighbors and friends, Dover Point would resound with a sense of ease and comfort.

### *Envisioning ewps*

I read that "the Dover men had a magnificent forest all over their land,"<sup>111</sup> and it takes me through another wormhole. Reading the past opens me to the possibilities of the future. I feel the march of settler destruction in my body – the deforestation of Dover Point, the choking of the Piscataqua and Bellamy Rivers and their salmon by sawdust, the dumping of hazardous materials by the Pease Air Force Base in the late 20<sup>th</sup> century<sup>112</sup> – and I breathe it out. I move back and forward at once.

Ewps root on a point of land overlooking the confluence of four rivers. They are staggeringly tall, the first branches emerging from the trunks far above a human figure. Their bark is deeply grooved, etched markers of age spanning the length of these looming tree-faces. Sunlight filters through their crowns, falling easily on the blueberry-dominated forest floor, unimpeded by crowded branches. Up close, their trunks have presence in their quiet immobility, part of the nature of their magnitude.<sup>113</sup>

Along either side of the bank, brackish water ebbs and flows with the moon, the glass-like surface concealing teeming life and touching upon "eelgrass meadows, mudflats, salt marsh, channel bottom, and rocky intertidal places."<sup>114</sup> The glass-like surface conceals teeming life: worms, soft-shelled clams, mud snails, horseshoe crabs and oysters.<sup>115</sup> Salmon and sturgeon life, death, and birth are tied to their abundant travels through these waters.

Beneath the trees walk deer, bobcat, bear, cottontail rabbit, skunk, fox, mink, and otter. Opossum, racoon, squirrel, chipmunk, and porcupine climb them.<sup>116</sup> The soundscape reverberates, alive with birds of many songs: pheasant, bobolink, meadowlark, heron, gull, osprey, sandpiper, bald eagle, chickadee. People find community here too, with each other and with these more-than-human beings. They fish and forage, make art in the trees, and rely on all their neighbors as seasons change.<sup>117</sup> They play under ewps, who are their friends.

---

<sup>111</sup> Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 125.

<sup>112</sup> "Great Bay 101," Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, accessed March, 2022, <https://greatbay.org/learn/great-bay-101/>.

<sup>113</sup> "huge forest trees" in Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 217.

<sup>114</sup> "Great Bay 101."

<sup>115</sup> "Great Bay 101."

<sup>116</sup> "various kinds of wild animals" in Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 217.

<sup>117</sup> "On the field, extending back towards the road, was, anciently, an Indian cornfield, handy for planting the fish, as well as the corn, in spring time." Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 215. ... "the camping-place of the Indians at the head-

*I am starting to think of ewps as my friends. Yesterday Maddie Brianna and I hiked Mount Hunger. On the drive home through Waterbury I noticed the relief I felt to just see ewps out my window, the familiar spray of needles poking at the sky. Today, Jonna and I are at North Beach and I directed us to sit by my newest tree friends.<sup>118</sup>*

### ***An old friend***

There was just one year, in early middle school, where I walked home from the bus stop by myself. One day, feeling particularly pensive, I cut through the small group of trees separating our garage, garden, and driveway from the street. My steps were careful and deliberate, treading slowly on the pine needles and small leafy green shoots blanketing the ground. I took deep breaths and tilted my face up so that my gaze met the waving crowns of the ewps and the silver maple. I decided that one of the trees would be my tree. I chose a tall one, perhaps the biggest white pine in the area, and approached it, bringing my body very close to it, resting my front against its solid body. I traced the grooves of its bark with my fingers, wrapped my arms around it. I looked up and breathed in. I pressed my lips against it, giving some physical and energetic love, and told myself that I would remember that exact spot on the tree, revisiting it even as I grew taller.

I don't remember that exact spot on the tree's body, but I remember the tree, and the feeling I held through our meeting. This memory stands out to me because of the self-aware calm, tinged with grief, present in my self-awareness.

I only visited that tree a few times, and for most of my life that memory has been lost. I found it one day as I thought about these trees, these ewps, along with that strange and specific feeling of loss, grief, and quiet calm. As an eleven-year-old touching that tree, I also touched the knowing that things would never be what they had been again. I was changing, and soon I changed again and left that tree there to grow and be.

Today that tree connects me to my young self through the feelings in this body. It still stands today, near the mill stone by my family's driveway. I visited it in early March of this year (see Figure 3.5).

### ***RQ1: stories***

*What stories can eastern white pines and people tell about a settler colonial past and present in northern "New England"?*

In this chapter I started in the forest, traced some of my lineage, and spent a lot of time in Dover NH (in the past, present, then future). Eastern white pines became my friends, and I landed at my childhood home, where I explored a memory from my young self. These excerpts about trees and people tell stories of beings with bodies in deep, complex relationship through time. They help me ground in the present, revisit the past, and consider the future. Looking

---

waters, where they had cooked their fish and feasted in the spring of the year, when the salmon and other fish were plenty about the falls." Scales, *History of Dover*, I, 218.

<sup>118</sup> Field notes, August 6 2021, North Beach, Burlington VT

beyond the human, looking to trees, helps me remember. Knowing that there were once big trees on Dover Point made me feel as if there could be big trees there again.

These stories help me cultivate empathy for more-than-human beings, which I understand to be an anti-colonial practice. As I paid attention to ewps and spent time with them for my research, I asked questions about their senses. On a busy day at North Beach in Burlington, I wrote:

*It's hot and sunny out and these trees provide epic shade. I photosynthesized for a while, but the sun on my body takes all of my focus. What does sun on needles feel like? Does that take all of a tree's focus? Or is it as automatic as breathing is for us?*<sup>119</sup>

Empathy for trees connects me to the depth of the violence of colonialism. The colonial project ate up the eastern forests and was fueled by these extreme and widespread violence.<sup>120</sup> I write this not to minimize the harm done to people, particularly Indigenous folks, but to emphasize the nexus of damage wrought by settler colonialism.

The legacy of past historians suffuses colonial history in “New England.” The kind of history told in *History of Dover* revolves around white settlers. In a recent article, Howey and DeLucia critique a historical pageant put on in Dover the same year as *History of Dover's* publication, writing that it “memorialized a specific, and deeply exclusionary, narrative of English settler colonialism” and ignored significant material traces from the seventeenth century.<sup>121</sup> Despite its issues, or perhaps because of them, there are material traces of sorts available for analysis within these fabrications themselves. The “Bound Oak” story, in its incorporation of the “other,” is replete with opportunities to critique settler ways of being and imagine a way of life and place in the landscape for other beings.<sup>122</sup> As I turn towards the knowledge that people relate differently to place, and that more-than-human beings also have their own worlds, possibilities for a new kind of historical record emerge.<sup>123</sup> Attending to relationships can help tell and keep richer, more inclusive, and more relevant histories. I can see how socio-cultural phenomena were (and are) realized in actual places and on land constituted by multiple beings and relationships. In this way I build upon the work of natural historians, who look to beings beyond the human to learn forgotten or oppressed histories of place.<sup>124</sup> Putting

---

<sup>119</sup> Field notes, August 6 2021, North Beach Burlington VT.

<sup>120</sup> See Foster and O'Keefe, *New England Forests Through Time: Insights from the Harvard Forest Dioramas*; Saltonstall, *Ports of Piscataqua*; Vietze, *White Pine: American History and the Tree That Made a Nation*.

<sup>121</sup> Meghan C. L. Howey and Christine M. DeLucia, "Spectacles of Settler Colonial Memory: Archaeological Findings from an Early Twentieth-Century “First” Settlement Pageant and Other Commemorative Terrain in New England," *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 26, no. 4 (2022/12/01 2022): 1, <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10761-021-00635-2>.

<sup>122</sup> Sonya Renee Taylor, amongst others, inspired this perspective on privileged identities.

<sup>123</sup> I strongly encourage engaging with Lisa Brooks' work on this. She has done incredible and extensive research attending to history, place, and Indigenous perspectives. For more on space and place, see also Doreen Massey, *For space* (London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2005).

<sup>124</sup> Tom Wessels, *Reading the forested landscape: a natural history of New England*, 1st ed. (Woodstock, VT: Countryman Press, 1997).

myself on the same land my ancestor lived in complicates his story with my own worldview, hopes, and dreams.

Centering in myself with the knowledge that I can't know what it is like to be another being, I can seek to understand how our bodies meet. That meeting matters; how our meeting feels matters. Sitting beneath ewp friends, I have felt the contrast of my embodied experience, under racialized capitalism and settler colonialism, with ways of being that might allow me to fully connect with trees:

*Sitting in the sun today and watching so many people recreating around me I realize how much stress (residual, sustaining, societally- and self-assigned) I've been carrying. It's made it hard to self-regulate, be calm, be still, stay rooted, bend & sway, rustle & creak, let things pass through me.*<sup>125</sup>

Amidst the bodies of trees, I attempt to cultivate a relationship with the forestscape centered in reconciliation and rest. Paying attention to tree bodies helps with this: they live and grow on different temporal scales than humans are used to. They are quite literally more rooted in place. Perhaps their way of being is one of rest, and slow growth. I look to many trees: the eastern white pines I meet. I see them and say "hello" and "thank you." I look to individual trees: to the black locust outside my home, to the ewp I talk to behind Mt. St. Mary's convent up the hill from where I live in Burlington, Vermont. They help ground me in my own human body, they are helping me tell new and old histories, they are helping me see the power and abundance of time.

*The trees right now are showing me calm. Their bodies do not hold anxiety, at least not on an everyday basis... But then, the weight of that feeling is shared, spread across connected bodies. Stillness. Core strength. Spreading.*<sup>126</sup>

*Encountering this tree was relief.*<sup>127</sup>

---

<sup>125</sup> Field notes, Friday August 6 2021, ~4:30, North Beach Burlington VT.

<sup>126</sup> Field notes, November 30 2021, Waterman Green Burlington VT.

<sup>127</sup> Field notes, August 2 2021, North Beach Burlington VT.



Figure 3.1 Ancestral Fan-Chart of Anne Huntington Backus, circa 1980 (2021, by Author)

Large framed “Ancestral Fan-Chart” hangs above a bookshelf topped with family photos, including a picture of my uncle in a canoe and my parents’ wedding photo. There are names written all across the fan-chart, divided into “paternal ancestry” (Backus) on the left and “maternal ancestry” (Haven) on the right, with generations radiating outwards going back ten generations. In the “first generation” box is “Anne Huntington Backus m. Sidney Hovey Wanzer,” my grandparents. A red star next to a name indicates that they fought in the Revolutionary War. The chart was bought from Goodspeed’s Book Shop in Boston and the information was put together by my great-grandmother Ruth Haven Backus, including research done by her sister Margery Haven Fifield.

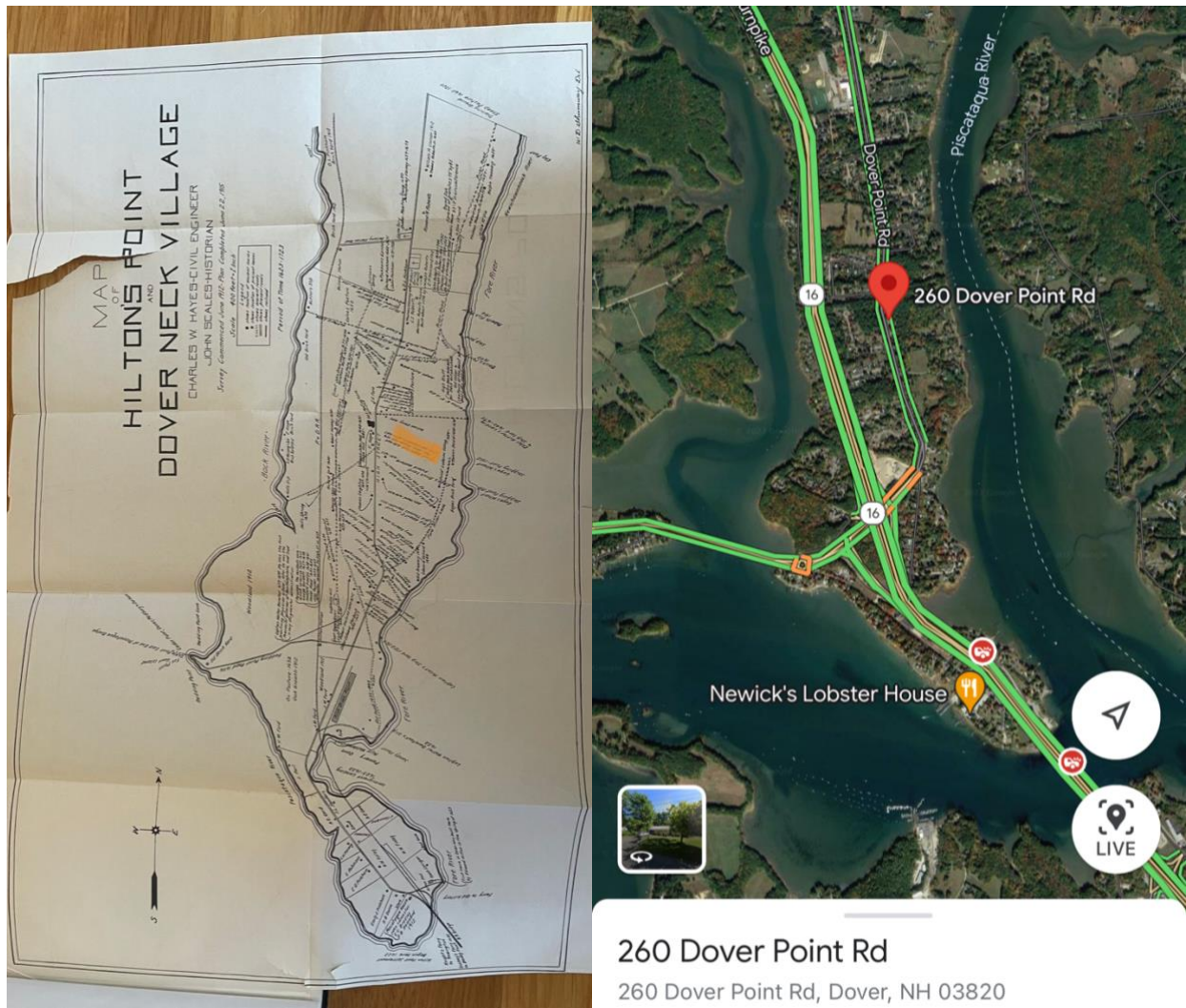


Figure 3.2. Dover Point maps (2022, by Author)

The left half of this Figure is a photo of a fold-out map from *History of Dover* by John Scales, titled “MAP OF HILTON’S POINT AND DOVER NECK VILLAGE.” It has lines marking roads and labels for houses that say who resided there in the 17<sup>th</sup> and 18<sup>th</sup> centuries. One of these labels is digitally highlighted in orange; it reads “Lieut. Ralph Hall 1650-1664 / Rev. John Reyner 1664-73 / Hon. Job Clements 1673-1683.” The right half of the Figure is a screenshot of the same area in 2022 from Google Maps in satellite imagery, at about the same scale and generally north-south orientation. There is a red marker indicating 260 Dover Point Rd, which is about where I estimated the former Reyner residence to be.



Figure 3.3 Forsythia Drive trees (2022, by Author)

A small gray car is parked on a road that is lined with orange pine needles and ostrich ferns. Many trees tower above it, mostly eastern white pines and oak trees.



Figure 3.4 My childhood home in front of ewps (2018, by Author)

A blue-sided house (my childhood home) nestled under textured green trees and a bright blue sky. The ewps behind it tower 3x the height of the house. It is late summer and the lawn is bright green, interrupted by a rhododendron. There is also a white oak, dogwood, and disease-resistant elm.





Figure 3.5 ewp friend (2022, by Author)

Three photos lined up together – the first is of the side of my face looking up towards the top of an ewp, the second is a close-up of the tree's bark, the third is a photo of the whole tree against a bright blue sky, the foreground marked by a mill stone.

## Interlude 2 – Rest

*Needle to North* by Jen Jones of Vermont, arranged by Heidi Wilson, taught to me by Mia Bertelli

I was down in the lowlands where I don't know the stones  
Doubt held my mind like a cloud  
Heart's needle to north  
Like a bell rung  
Mountains are calling me  
oh – oh  
Come higher come home

[Recording by Author and Maine Fiddle Camp Warblers](#),<sup>128</sup> August 2022, 2:03 minutes.

---

<sup>128</sup> “Needle to North” recording link address:  
<https://drive.google.com/file/d/16W1jV0fmTGprFA4XLKwRfN9BHQ2Zxtux/view?usp=sharing>

## Chapter 4. Shifting legacy

*[I] noticed ewp silhouettes on [Route] 495 on the way here and felt that sense of familiarity that only comes from returning home.*

Field notes, March 6 2022, Littleton MA

### **RQ 2: entanglements**

*How can more-than-human geographies—in this instance attuned to ewps—inform an understanding of human-tree entanglements?*

I almost forgot that I have myself until adrienne maree brown (as a mentee of Grace Lee Boggs) reminded me that this work is about “critical connections over critical mass”<sup>129</sup> and that my critical connection here is with the eastern white pines in my life. Take today (Monday Nov. 7 2022) as an example. During some morning screen time, I saw a photo of my dear friend Tina with a spray of white pine needles above her in the sky, and I was filled with love for that place – for Tina, the tree, the blue sky, my hometown. Later, after slowly sinking lower and lower into a library chair, I pulled myself up with the thought of spending time outside on this summery November day, and I stopped beneath the Waterman pines. With my back supported on the ground, focusing on the sensations they offered me was a balm to my agitated self. The wind sung through their needles, which danced along, and their trunks were a statement to their age, the oldest on the green.<sup>130</sup> Tonight, I picked a piece of bark off my pants and instinctually smelled it, and then breathed it in deeper as it revealed itself to be piney.

I understand more-than-human geographies to be fundamentally about relationships. There are countless relationships to explore through this perspective, to reveal the messy entanglements through which we touch each other. Grounding from my own body allowed me to be deep and specific in this work.<sup>131</sup> This process cultivates feeling.<sup>132</sup> I find myself landing on love.

*The placescape is both utterly familiar and new to me at the same time. I notice the trees everywhere. I notice the beauty. I notice the way the land has had time to recover in pockets here, in this peculiar place of early colonization. I notice the ~~absence~~ presence of ghosts, of many thousands lives lost... And I find love when the brush and trees part, leaving a window of absence through which the Nashua reveal themselves in perfect quiet beauty, in I-didn't-know-there-was-a-door-there slam to the whole body.<sup>133</sup>*

---

<sup>129</sup> adrienne maree brown, *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds* (Chico, CA: AK Press, 2017), 3.

<sup>130</sup> I learned this when I listened in on a dendrochronology class that was walking around the Waterman Green at UVM. See field notes, Nov. 30<sup>th</sup> 2021.

<sup>131</sup> This approach was introduced to me by Prof. Nelson and other feminist political ecologists who use case studies in order to observe broader flows of power.

<sup>132</sup> My argument here would not be possible without the work of feminist scholars like Moss & Besio who deal with affect and fought for the validity of feelings and autoethnography in academic research.

<sup>133</sup> Field notes, Sept. 25 2022, road next to Nashua River MA

## ***THE History of Manchester***

The story of Manchester VT begins when Governor Benning Wentworth of New Hampshire chartered the land to ‘Grantees’ in 1761, apparently “to acquire funds for his accustomed style of expensive living.”<sup>134</sup>

Hm.

Perhaps we could begin in a place --

## ***Confluence***

Uncle Charlie and I (see Figure 4.1) park in the lot next to the house where our ancestor lived, now a popular bookstore. We meandered through and out the side door, across the street to where the old mill was, now with a sign on the side of the building reading “Wohler Realty Group,” and to the West Branch of the Battenkill River. We stand for a while and I spy a crayfish in the mud, and a warbler in the branches of a willow that reaches out over the water. Charlie looks across the river and reads aloud to me the stories of the stones, what he sees in the granite and concrete and new stones and old. We come across a big hunk of stone by the road that is carved out like a bowl, and he quizzes me on what I think it could be (science teacher) and I guess something for horses? A water trough? He agrees. We continue along the “Manchester riverwalk,” which is surprisingly connected to the war economy, with markers for various wars with American involvement. Following the path, we walk down and find ourselves near water, stones (human-placed and otherwise), trees (lots of willows and maples), and other tourists (see Figure 4.2). I drew some marble stones that were once part of a mill structure, and someone said I looked “so peaceful.” Charlie checks out the old mill turbine that was preserved and is now part of the riverwalk.

We hunt for the confluence. Earlier we had searched on Google Maps to see where the West Branch met up with Battenkill proper. Following some car tracks in the grass, we end up by some low-income homes and an auto repair/septic systems shop. The willows lead us as far as we can go, to some brambles that are our sign that the place beyond is not for us, not now. On our way out, we see a sawmill on our left and Charlie says my dad had the same one. On our right are some young ewps. Back on the main drag, we pass high-end outlets – Michael Kors, Ralph Lauren, Eddie Bauer.

To me, the willows are the stars, with stories to tell. Perhaps their ancestors had stories of mine.

## ***Ancestor Timothy Mead – Manchester VT, 1763-1802***

At 39 years old, in the summer or fall of 1763, my 7x great-grandfather<sup>135</sup> Timothy Mead “with several others went on an exploring tour to that section of country now Washington County, N. Y., which was then a wilderness.”<sup>136</sup> Upon their return home to Amenia NY, they

---

<sup>134</sup> Judge John S. Pettibone, "The Early History of Manchester," in *Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society* (Montpelier VT: Vermont Historical Society, ~1857, published 1930), 6.

<sup>135</sup> Backus, Backus and Kinney Genealogy, the Ancestors of Sidney Kinney Backus. (Family source)

<sup>136</sup> Pettibone, "The Early History of Manchester," 149.

“made a report of this section of the country so favorable for agricultural and manufacturing purposes that an agent was sent to New Hampshire to make a purchase of the Township.”<sup>137</sup> Mead ended up with two lots of 100 acres, an area that makes up most of Manchester Center today, but before that was known as ‘Factory Point’ (see Figure 4.3) before then ‘Mead’s Mill,’ but first (and still) Native land.

The next year, “six clearings were commenced,”<sup>138</sup> and the year after that Mead settled on the West Branch of the Battenkill River with his father Timothy Sr. and brothers James and Stephen. There is no mention of any Mead women in the written historical record. One or both of the Timothys built a grist mill, a fulling mill, a saw mill, and a store.<sup>139</sup> The dominant narrative about Timothy Mead in the historical record is that he “held up the development of [Factory Point] greatly,” refusing to sell his land for (further) development, his only exception being land given to the Baptist church.<sup>140</sup>

There is much I don’t know about Timothy, and never will. I think it likely that ewps came through his saw mill, but I don’t know what he thought of them. In the Manchester Historical Society archive, I learned that he was at least somewhat privileged, with the ability to buy land and labor and goods, and his presence in the historical record (see Figure 4.4). His life was also not without struggle. I learned that he was illiterate, an official document marked with a “T” over someone else’s script of his name. He was impacted by the Revolutionary War, which he likely served in, and which “had a bad influence on the minds of the people... leading men in Town had formed habits of drinking-if not of intercourse.”<sup>141</sup> One story in Pettibone’s account gets at this sense of what I will never be able to touch, those values of the place and people that were early Manchester:

“They were induced to believe that if the vitals of the first wife could be consumed by being burned in a charcoal fire it would effect a cure of the sick second wife. Such was the strange delusion that they disinterred the first wife who had been buried about three years. They took out the liver, heart, and lungs, what remained of them, and burned them to ashes on the blacksmith's forge of Jacob Mead. Timothy Mead officiated at the altar in the sacrifice to the Demon Vampire who it was believed was still sucking the blood of the then living wife of Captain Burton. It was the month of February and good sleighing. Such was the excitement that from five hundred to one thousand people were present.”<sup>142</sup>

---

<sup>137</sup> Pettibone, "The Early History of Manchester," 150.

<sup>138</sup> Note Pettibone’s use of passive voice here. Prof. Nelson has taught (and reminded) me of the importance of being precise about who does what, as passive voice can shunt accountability/responsibility. She draws from scholars and writers such as Michael Billig, *Learn to Write Badly: How to Succeed in the Social Sciences* (Cambridge University Press, 2013); Alexis Pauline Gumbs, "the problem with the passive past tense," *Black Perspectives, AAIHS*, 2018, <https://www.aaihs.org/the-problem-with-the-passive-past-tense/>.

<sup>139</sup> Pettibone, "The Early History of Manchester," 152.

<sup>140</sup> Edwin L. Bigelow and Nancy H. Otis, *Manchester Vermont: A Pleasant Land Among the Mountains* (Manchester, VT: Town of Manchester, 1961), 39.

<sup>141</sup> Pettibone, "The Early History of Manchester," 156.

<sup>142</sup> Pettibone, "The Early History of Manchester," 158.

These views are not particularly relatable to me, and I wonder what the energy of that space was, and what theatrics Timothy had on display. He died in 1802 after being gored by an ox the previous year.

Absence in the historical record is just as telling as presence. Women, Indigenous people, and enslaved people were rarely given voice or included in documents that endure. The historical record regarding the early years of Manchester relies heavily on a few accounts authored by upper class white men such as Judge John S. Pettibone. I'm left with lingering questions. With what/whose labor did Mead build his mills? Pettibone writes that he thought "there was not a family living [on Mead's land] during his life time except his sons or one or two families who carried on the mills, store, etc."<sup>143</sup> Who were these other families, unnamed in the written archive? What other beings were there then that aren't present today (lake trout, oxen, horses, etc.)? What roles (if any) did masculinity and colonial ideologies play in these settlers' move from Amenia to Manchester?

### ***Place and positioning / Indigenous knowledge***

Lisa Brooks, an Abenaki scholar, contrasts settler understanding of place with Native perspectives, which "were always relational... rooted in the interdependent relationship between a community and its territory."<sup>144</sup> She uses Indigenous methodologies to unpack the social, political, and cultural layers of the *Kwinitewk* (the Connecticut River Valley) "swamps" and understand the North Country (area of the *Kwinitewk* headwaters) as "built through the interactions of many beings—people, plants, animals, flowing waters—over many generations."<sup>145</sup> Her article "Every Swamp is a Castle" "highlights an indigenous studies methodology of place-based, experiential research in the land and waterways, in combination with more traditional historical and literary methodologies"<sup>146</sup> in order to tell two Indigenous stories of place and people in *Kwinitewk*, or the Connecticut River Valley.

Brooks used narratives written by English captives, reading closely with an eye for networks of relations and places. She also physically went to these places (with family and students) on foot and by canoe, tracking through multiple seasons. With a research team she created maps using ArcGIS to highlight Indigenous geographies. This "particular... dialogue" is facilitated by an Abenaki/Indigenous familiarity with place and "is informed by oral traditions, cultural insight, and traditional ecological knowledge."<sup>147</sup>

My research feels connected to Brooks' in many ways, particularly in how I also understand that "the land itself is an archive that demands interpretation."<sup>148</sup> It also differs from Brooks' because though I draw from Indigenous knowledge, Indigeneity is an identity and set of

---

<sup>143</sup> Pettibone, "The Early History of Manchester," 154.

<sup>144</sup> Lisa Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast* (University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 68.

<sup>145</sup> Brooks, "Every Swamp is a Castle," 71.

<sup>146</sup> Brooks, "Every Swamp is a Castle," 45.

<sup>147</sup> Brooks, "Every Swamp is a Castle," 48.

<sup>148</sup> Lisa Brooks, *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War* (New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2018), 13.

relations (in Brooks' words, Native identity is "in the ongoing relationship and responsibility to land and kin"<sup>149</sup>) that I do not hold. My orientation in this work is perhaps closer to that of the genealogist that Kim TallBear names in her work on genetic ancestry, who "use their own family tree as a window to comprehend world history,"<sup>150</sup> though I also aim to change history to change the future.<sup>151</sup> Like TallBear, I "prefer insider-research and critique from within the place I know best and in which I have the deepest lived investments."<sup>152</sup>

This distinction and my positioning are important to name and understand because of the histories of violence and extraction within academia, ones felt sharply in Indigenous communities<sup>153</sup> and that are still alive today.<sup>154</sup> Indigenous knowledge is often undervalued and underrecognized by mainstream institutions. For example, Indigenous knowledge in the Skokomish Nation says that "there is an intricate and vast system of roots and fungi that keeps the forest strong,"<sup>155</sup> yet this understanding has only recently been recognized following scientific research conducted by Dr. Suzanne Simard in what is now known as British Columbia.<sup>156</sup> Indigenous-led movements to protect old-growth forest in this place are met with state-sanctioned police violence.<sup>157</sup>

Eve Tuck critiques the phenomenon of academic appropriation and extraction in her work on education. (As a reminder, "Indigenous communities have always resisted and have theorized dispossession"<sup>158</sup>). In her words, "social science hunts for new objects of study, and its favorite breeding grounds are Native, urban, poor, and othered communities."<sup>159</sup> These efforts

---

<sup>149</sup> Brooks, *The Common Pot: The Recovery of Native Space in the Northeast*, xxxii.

<sup>150</sup> Kim TallBear, "Identity is a poor substitute for relating: Genetic ancestry, critical polyamory, property, and relations," in *Routledge Handbook of Critical Indigenous Studies*, ed. Hokowhitu et al. (London and New York: Routledge, 2021), 471.

<sup>151</sup> This is a concept from Sylvia Wynter's work, introduced to me by Eve Tuck, "Biting the Hand that Feeds You: Theories of Change in the Settler State and its Universities," YouTube, 2015, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXEEzqJjA3I&t=212s>.

<sup>152</sup> TallBear, "Identity is a poor substitute for relating," 471.

<sup>153</sup> Perhaps the largest (or best documented) instance of academic research being used for violence at the University of Vermont was the eugenics movement at the university and subsequent forced sterilizations, which targeted Abenaki people as well as disabled people, poor people, and French-Canadians. See "Vermont," *Eugenics: Compulsory Sterilization in 50 American States*, 2011, <https://www.uvm.edu/~lkaelber/eugenics/>. Some of this work is being re-visited for more precision and accountability.

<sup>154</sup> Sarah Viren, "The Native Scholar Who Wasn't," *NY Times* (2021),

<https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/25/magazine/chokeberry-native-american-andrea-smith.html>.

<sup>155</sup> Bruce 'Subiyay' Miller in Suzanne W. Simard, *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest* (Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2021), 283.

<sup>156</sup> Researching intra-tree/fungal connections and relationships in the Douglas-fir forests, Simard suggests "that when plants enter into symbioses with mycorrhizal fungi, this provides them with the necessary topology and energetics for sophisticated intelligence." It is now widely accepted that plants form symbiotic mycorrhizal connections, utilizing fungal hyphae to explore and interact with large volumes of soil. See Suzanne W. Simard, "Mycorrhizal Networks Facilitate Tree Communication, Learning, and Memory," in *Memory and Learning in Plants*, ed. Frantisek Baluska, Monica Gagliano, and Guenther Witzany (Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018), 195.

<sup>157</sup> Ada'itsx / Fairy Creek Blockade @fairycreekblockade, Instagram account, <https://www.instagram.com/fairycreekblockade/>.

<sup>158</sup> Tuck, "Biting the Hand that Feeds You: Theories of Change in the Settler State and its Universities."

<sup>159</sup> Tuck, "Biting the Hand that Feeds You: Theories of Change in the Settler State and its Universities."

are often couched in savior narrative or happy reconciliation terms, while it is well-documented that the origins of academic research were grounded in violence towards marginalized people.<sup>160</sup> These stories “are entangled with the projects of settler colonialism, justifying the theft of Indigenous land and the demolition of Indigenous life, and establishing racial hierarchies to justify the enslavement of Africans.”<sup>161</sup>

Linda Tuhiwai Smith is another Indigenous academic who has done incredible work around the way we learn and do research and the connections to settler colonialism. Her foundational work “Decolonizing Methodologies,” which drew from the work of scholars such as Edward Said and Paolo Friere, was written “out of a desire to turn research around, turn it around from being a negative, turn it around from being an abuse of power, [to learn] how do you shift the gaze.”<sup>162</sup> Along a similar vein, TallBear thinks “that much of settler-colonial thought is simply more wrong than Indigenous thought, and it’s deadly. We actually need to re-script science away from hierarchy toward relational, including Indigenous, analytical frameworks.”<sup>163</sup> I agree. A great example of this in practice is Robin Wall Kimmerer’s beautiful book *Braiding Sweetgrass*, which recognizes and celebrates the knowledge of plants and the importance of Indigenous ways of knowing.<sup>164</sup>

All of these scholars draw upon their own communities’ wisdom and their own experiences in their academic offerings. Tuck invites us all into this kind of work, prompting with the questions:

“what if we believe that our own awareness, our own knowing, is enough to make change? What if we did not wait for others to know but are inspired by our own knowing? What if we hold true that we are the ones who need to know, and not others? What if we believe that we are the ones to make change, and others are not more powerful than us to affect change?”<sup>165</sup>

When I’m drawn to my own knowing, when I sink into myself and grasp at my truths, I find dragons and magic and special powers and animal best friends. I find books; I find love of fantasy fiction.

### ***Reading more-than-human worlds***

Reading into other worlds, particularly worlds with magic and more-than-human/more-than-earthly beings, was an important part of my childhood. I saw possibility in the adventures of young heroes and heroines. I felt an affinity for that which was just beyond the realm of the

---

<sup>160</sup> Geography and Anthropology feel key and relevant here. I learned about the colonial origins of Geography in Prof. Nelson’s “Geography of Africa” course and the racist origins of Anthropology in Prof. McGowan’s “Visualizing History: India” course.

<sup>161</sup> Tuck, “Biting the Hand that Feeds You: Theories of Change in the Settler State and its Universities.”

<sup>162</sup> Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Eve Tuck, “INQ13 | Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Eve Tuck - “Decolonizing Methodologies,” YouTube, 2013, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=rIZXQC27tv&t=2907s>.

<sup>163</sup> TallBear, “Identity is a poor substitute for relating,” 468-69.

<sup>164</sup> Robin Wall Kimmerer, *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants* (Minneapolis, Minnesota: Milkweed, 2013).

<sup>165</sup> Tuck, “Biting the Hand that Feeds You: Theories of Change in the Settler State and its Universities.”



places my body lived in. The characters I read about had close relationships with other species, touched dimensions beyond our own, lived in places of great wonder, and went on badass adventures.

More-than-human geography requires us to reach beyond what our physical senses can perceive; to open to wild and imaginative ways of being. Some authors are doing just that through novels and narratives that blend human and tree stories while making us laugh and cry and see life and death in new ways.

Paying attention to more-than-human geographies allows us to tell deeper and more interesting stories. Stories that touch on tree intelligence, such as *The Overstory*,<sup>166</sup> are increasingly popular and help us question what it means to be human and what relationships are important in life. In the novel *Barkskins*,<sup>167</sup> Annie Proulx beautifully weaves stories and lineages of trees and people across colonial time. *The Word for World is Forest*<sup>168</sup> by Ursula Le Guin grapples with masculinity and settler colonialism across worlds in a way that is cutting and sorrowful. *The Broken Earth* trilogy<sup>169</sup> by N.K. Jemisin contends that the Earth itself is a more-than-human being with feelings and intentions.

As a young person, reading *The Magic Tree House* series,<sup>170</sup> where a tree becomes a portal to different geographies and histories, or the *Guardians of Ga'Hool* series,<sup>171</sup> whose main characters are owls, gave me the tools to do more-than-human research. Fantasy enabled me to envision other worlds and cultivate empathy for those different from myself. This, coupled with the culture of appreciation for nature I have inherited from my family, has allowed me to connect and imagine with trees.

### **RQ3: relationships**

*How do my changing relationships with ewps and my ancestors impact my sense of place?*

Ewps have helped me understand that my presence in a place means I am part of the very fabric of that place. My molecules are not special. In *For space*, Doreen Massey writes that “what is special about place is... the unavoidable challenge of negotiating a here-and-now (itself drawing on a history and geography of thens and theres); a negotiation which must take place within and between both human and nonhuman.”<sup>172</sup> Negotiating with eastern white pines one evening, I wrote in my field notebook that the sun had left the bank, but after a few minutes I realized that the sun still touched the tops of the trees, and that the trees were part of ‘our bank.’ Feeling myself as part of the same fabric, in the landscape with these trees, was comforting. I wrote: *These trees are part of ‘our bank.’ So am I. The thought relaxes me. Some of my tension*

---

<sup>166</sup> Richard Powers, *The Overstory: A Novel* (New York & London: W. W. Norton, 2018).

<sup>167</sup> Annie Proulx, *Barkskins: A Novel* (New York: Scribner, 2016). My dear friend Stacey Lennard recommended this book to me when I first told her about this thesis.

<sup>168</sup> Ursula K. Le Guin, *The Word for World is Forest* (New York: Berkley/Putnam, 1976, 1972).

<sup>169</sup> First book in the series: Jemisin, *The Fifth Season*.

<sup>170</sup> Mary Pope Osborne, *Magic tree house series* (New York: Random House, 1992).

<sup>171</sup> Kathryn Lasky, *Legend of the Guardians (Guardians of Ga'Hoole Collection)* (New York, Toronto, London, Auckland, Sydney, Mexico City, New Delhi, Hong Kong: Scholastic Inc., 2010).

<sup>172</sup> Massey, *For space*, 140.

& emotion is released knowing, *feeling*, that I am part of a collective. That I am safe, and we are okay.<sup>173</sup> With other humans, that sense can be more difficult. The next month, in a different place, someone walked by me as I sat under ewps, and I questioned why he was there, and then questioned that question, writing *I don't ask that of the trees. They are part of what makes this place the place that it is. Me, here, now, I do too, as a visitor. The F-35s [loud military jets that run flights over Burlington and Winooski]. The crow.*<sup>174</sup>

Shifting power and resources requires effort.<sup>175</sup> Learning about Timothy Mead led me to an understanding of him as a person,<sup>176</sup> which has meaning in the present and implications for the past. Spending time with trees has helped me shift my gaze to decenter the human. These threads lead me back to the knowledge that relationship to place is complicated, and towards the knowledge that cultivating an ongoing praxis<sup>177</sup> for this relationship is critical for settlers hoping to unsettle colonialism.

Place praxis: **Time**

Becoming friends with a place or another being takes time. Timothy's brothers and some other men from Amenia spent twenty-two days surveying the land they "bought."<sup>178</sup> This is in deep opposition to the millennia that Abenaki people spent knowing that place, and the generations ahead that they care for. The same place does not feel or act the same at different hours, days, seasons, and years. My research for this project could have been lifelong, but that would not have fulfilled my degree requirements. This fall, I wrote *The ewps are turning, which is something I never noticed until last year. It's cool that this project is old enough for me to notice them again this year. I can imagine a future where I turn each year with the trees.*<sup>179</sup>

Place praxis: **Attention**

I need to pay attention to more-than-human beings. I need to learn their names and feel with them. During this project I began a practice of asking whether a forest, and the trees, were happy. I saw happy trees driving through the woods by Camel's Hump, and my friend Gail noticed happy hemlocks at Honey Hollow.<sup>180</sup> Every time I walked down Grant St. in Burlington, I would look at the sprawling oak tree at the end of someone's driveway, and this fall I noticed when it threw an acorn party for all its squirrel friends.<sup>181</sup> There is a beautiful maple tree outside my house that also sits on the property corner of four parcels of land. On our side there is a gravel driveway, to the north-east there is a lawn, the north-west is a gravel parking lot. The land to the west, though, is full of maple saplings, and squirrels, and pigeons, and sparrows. Nobody

---

<sup>173</sup> Field notes, Nov. 27, 2021, Littleton MA.

<sup>174</sup> Field notes, Dec. 7, 2021, Mt. St. Mary's Burlington VT.

<sup>175</sup> This perspective is heavily informed by my work with Resource Generation where there is a culture of intentional and accountable wealth redistribution.

<sup>176</sup> Thank you again to Shawn Harrington at the Manchester Vermont Historical Society for letting me and Uncle Charlie into the archive, pulling out cool documents to look at, and offering helpful commentary and resources.

<sup>177</sup> I understand praxis to be the intersection of theory and action, which I learned from mentors at RG.

<sup>178</sup> Pettibone, "The Early History of Manchester," 151.

<sup>179</sup> Field notes, Oct. 15<sup>th</sup> 2022, Lockes Island Gilford NH.

<sup>180</sup> Field notes, July 13<sup>th</sup> 2022, Bolton VT.

<sup>181</sup> Field notes, Sept. 9<sup>th</sup> 2022, walk from Hickok to Greene to Loomis to N. Union to Grant back to Hickok.

owns the tree, and many beings love it. Woodpeckers, cardinals, blue jays, squirrels, raccoons, hawks, myself.

Place praxis: **Love**

If I help nurture a sapling today, I will not live to see it grow into its full body, full network of knowing. If I act with those beyond myself, that does not matter.

Place praxis questions:

At what scale do you know the places you know?

Who (human and/or more-than-human) makes you feel connected to a place?

As we design and build for the future, who do we build for?

Are more-than-human beings included?

For what geographic and temporal scales do we produce?



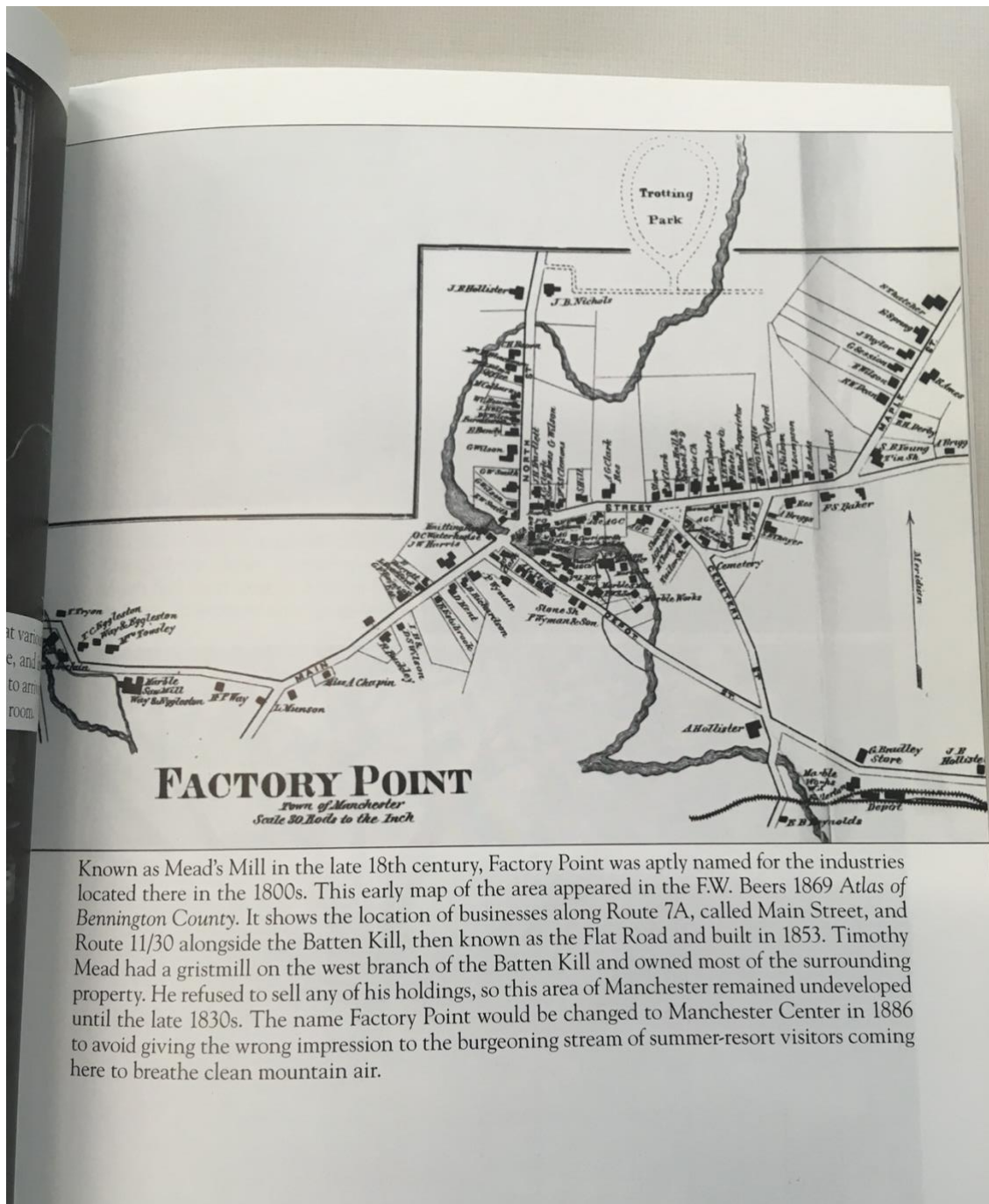
Figure 4.1 Charlie and Emily (Charlie Wanzer, 2022)

A selfie of Charlie Wanzer and myself in front of two large stacks of felled, limbed, and bucked white ash trees we came across when we stopped at a dam on our way to Manchester VT. Charlie is wearing a green t-shirt, a red and black checkered button down, a blue fleece, glasses, and a hand-knit hat. I am wearing an indigo-dyed “Vermont” sweatshirt from Mads, a small silver necklace with a pomegranate etching, and a gray baseball hat. We are both smiling at the camera and Charlie’s hand is on my shoulder.



Figure 4.2 Manchester riverwalk (by Author, 2022)

The West Branch of the Battenkill River moves over stones and between two leaf-covered banks. In the center of the photo stands a tall tree with three trunks splaying up and out. Most of the leaves from this tree have fallen, but many of the trees framing and behind it are displaying their yellow and orange-y fall hues. In the background on the right is a fence, streetlight, and white building.



Known as Mead's Mill in the late 18th century, Factory Point was aptly named for the industries located there in the 1800s. This early map of the area appeared in the F.W. Beers 1869 *Atlas of Bennington County*. It shows the location of businesses along Route 7A, called Main Street, and Route 11/30 alongside the Batten Kill, then known as the Flat Road and built in 1853. Timothy Mead had a gristmill on the west branch of the Batten Kill and owned most of the surrounding property. He refused to sell any of his holdings, so this area of Manchester remained undeveloped until the late 1830s. The name Factory Point would be changed to Manchester Center in 1886 to avoid giving the wrong impression to the burgeoning stream of summer-resort visitors coming here to breathe clean mountain air.

Figure 4.3 Factory Point map (map from F.W. Beers 1869 *Atlas of Bennington County*)  
 Page from a Manchester Historical Society publication featuring a mid-nineteenth century map of 'Factory Point.' Buildings are marked and labeled along streets, and the Battenkill River winds north-south.

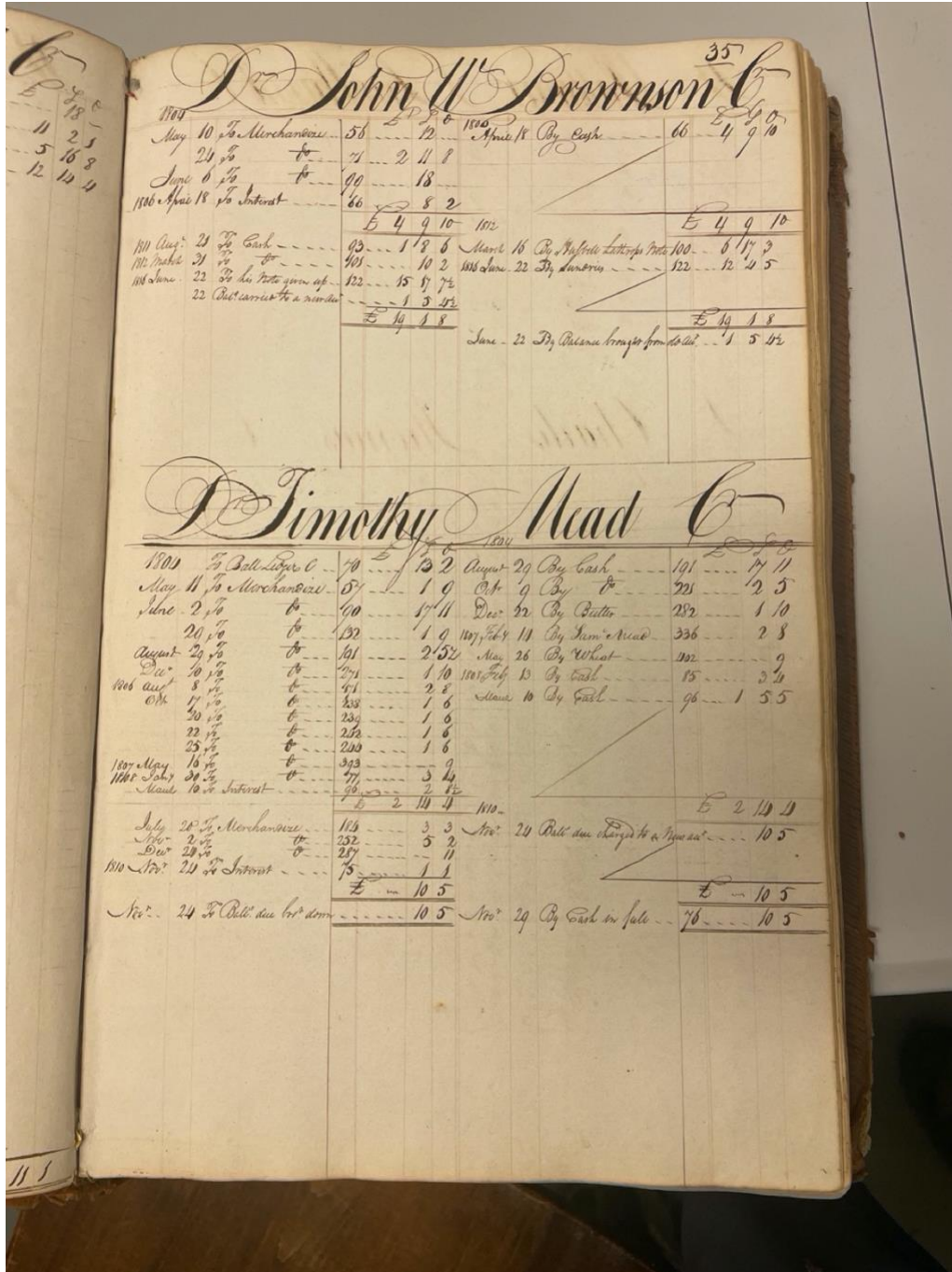


Figure 4.4 Mead in Burr's day book (courtesy of Manchester Historical Society, 2022)

A large book lies open on a table in Manchester Historical Society's archive in the basement of the Manchester Community Library. The book is from the early nineteenth century and was owned and used by Joseph Burr, a Manchester settler, to keep track of goods he sold. The page shown tracks exchanges for John W. Bronnson on the top half of the page and Timothy Mead on the bottom. Both names are large and in calligraphy. Beneath the names the record tracks dates, means of payment (such as "Merchandize," "By Cash," "By Butter," "By Sam Mead," and "By Wheat"), and some numbers that I am not sure the significance of. The pages are a faded yellow and the ink is sepia-black.

## Chapter 5. Conclusion

The week before I was originally supposed to submit this thesis, I walked up to UVM's symptomatic testing site and tested positive for Covid-19.<sup>182</sup> The day before, part of me had even wanted to test positive so that the University and my professors would see that I had a legitimate reason to rest. When I got my results, though, there was no part of me that wanted the virus, and the emotion of living in a pandemic, of witnessing disregard for disabled lives, came down. Or up. It was a beautiful day – the sun was out in that early-spring way where it feels (and quite literally is) life-giving. I walked down towards my house, but didn't feel ready to venture inside, so I found the biggest tree in the area to sit under. I laid there for a while, crying, feeling the grief of the virus, until a person came out of their house and said to me “this is private property.” I made some sort of conciliatory gesture and started crying again, this time a mix of being sick and being reminded of the way this society thinks about and treats land in this place, the legacy left to me by settler ancestors.

Since then, grief has kept showing up. I have felt it in/with/for the Eastern Woodlands. Massachusetts, Vermont, New Hampshire - these are places that pushed back, cut down, countered the energy and beings that are part of the land itself. More precisely, the people who named these places those things cut down and carved through the dynamic forest being. The grief I feel is layered and multifaceted. I grieve for the genocide wrought against so many communities. I grieve for the lifeways lost. I grieve for the ancient old growth forests. I grieve for individual lives lost. I grieve for the ivory-billed woodpecker, who made nests in tree cavities the size of which don't exist anymore. I grieve for my ancestors who participated in this violence, and I grieve for my ancestors who didn't have a voice to flex through time. I grieve for myself,<sup>183</sup> for the world I have been handed, for how hard and scary it is to live into the world I want to be part of.

Sarah Kizuk's work on shame demonstrates the ways that settler shame “desperately seeks resolution, preferring to re-establish the self as good”<sup>184</sup> at the expense of continued violence against Indigenous people, including efforts at “recognition” and “inclusion” on “settler terms.”<sup>185</sup> Building on this, Amy Fung names that an inability to mourn leaves no space for preventing, let alone opposing colonial forms of violence.<sup>186</sup> Tricia Hersey asserts that “we must grieve. Rest supports our grieving for allowing space, and with space we can begin healing... grieving is a sacred act, and one of the ways we can begin to reconnect with our bodies.”<sup>187</sup> My

---

<sup>182</sup> Scholars including Prof. Nelson (influenced by Alex Shevrin Venet, *Equity-Centered Trauma-Informed Education* (WW Norton, 2021).) and Eve Tuck have pointed out that social science research can fetishize ‘pain stories.’ I hope to delineate a difference between pain and grief and frame grief as worthwhile and generative.

<sup>183</sup> I recognize how I have been harmed in order to affirm my own (and all of our) personal stake in undoing colonial systems while also holding on to the understanding that “stories of pain involve complex relations of power.” Ahmed, *The cultural politics of emotion*, 22.

<sup>184</sup> Sarah Kizuk, "Settler Shame: A Critique of the Role of Shame in Settler-Indigenous Relationships in Canada," *Hypatia* 35, no. 1 (2020): 162.

<sup>185</sup> Kizuk, "Settler Shame," 169.

<sup>186</sup> Amy Fung, "Is Settler Colonialism Just Another Study of Whiteness?," *Canadian ethnic studies* 53, no. 2 (2021).

<sup>187</sup> Hersey, *Rest Is Resistance*.



ancestor Nathan Rosevitsky referenced “A Hebrew proverb says that ‘if you plant with tears, you reap with joy’”<sup>188</sup> in the story he wrote to me before I was born.

My favorite place on earth, and the place where grieving has come to me most easily in the past couple years, is Lockes Island, Lake Winnepesaukee, where my family has a vacation home (see Figure 5.1). I like to sleep on the queen bed upstairs by the window, where the soft darkness of the room meets the starglow from outside. The summer breeze is always perfect and delicious, and the lake laps with gentle consistency at the shore.

In late July 2021, I walk back behind our house (‘The Bagel’) up into the hemlock grove where we built fairy houses. As I walk, my shirt picks up a fuzzy white web that was latched to a small hemlock, and sadness and anger courses through me. This is the hemlock wooly adelgid, an invasive species that sucks on the sap of eastern hemlocks. This is the first summer they’ve made it to the island (they are slowly moving north). I lie on the needle-laden ground and gaze up at the trees. I send them gratitude and feel lucky to share space with them. Later, I go for a swim and watch a bald eagle, perched on an ewp, from my spot in the silky water.

Lake Winnepesaukee is a special place to me. It is a special place to thousands of tourists. Before my ancestors colonized the Eastern Woodlands, it was a special place to many bands and networks of kin – the drive-in movie theater my cousins and I liked to go to was a “historically significant Abenaki village site.”<sup>189</sup> It is a place where my family and I can work towards a place praxis and be accountable. Like Amy Fung so clearly articulates, after understanding the multiple violences used by settlers to claim and transform land, “what I learned and continue to learn is that I cannot contain this knowledge and continue on as before.”<sup>190</sup> Grieving can be a release and help us move in the present, oriented towards the future.

### ***Further research***

More-than-human geographies are replete with opportunities for further research. With this project, I would have liked to orient also towards stones (such as tombstones and millstones) and objects (such as a chair that was an ancestor’s and a portrait of an ancestor), building from Kim TallBear’s understanding of objects as beings.<sup>191</sup> I would have also liked to have a more structured and consistent phenology practice, where I spend time in one or more specific places at regular intervals (I would love to do this daily), noticing changes and noting encounters with others. In connection with this work and beyond it, I would have wanted to go deeper into my “felt sense”<sup>192</sup> and use meditations and prompts to make my own recordings.<sup>193</sup> Building a

---

<sup>188</sup> Rosevitsky, A Short Story About the Life of Your Father, Grandfather, and Great-grandfather, 12.

<sup>189</sup> Indigenous NH Collaborative Collective, "An Indigenous Tour of Lake Winnepesaukee," YouTube, 2019, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ATlwQK6i74>.

<sup>190</sup> Fung, "Is Settler Colonialism Just Another Study of Whiteness?," 125.

<sup>191</sup> See Kim TallBear, "APC/GSWS Presents Kim TallBear," in *Beyond Survival: Eco-Feminist Imaginings in Precarious Times* (YouTube: Alice Paul Center, 2021). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQj2dlcPmQ8&t=339s>.

<sup>192</sup> Tuck, "Recordings."

<sup>193</sup> See Land Relations Super Collective, "Somewhere Recordings," <http://www.landrelationships.com/somewhererecordings>

creative practice is also something I would have liked to connect with this project, as drawing (see Figure 5.2) and photographing (see Appendix A) my tree friends was fun and rewarding.

Dance is a creative technology that I would love to practice more and would have liked to explore in more depth in conversation with more-than-human geographies. I dance every day, because dancing is moving, and I danced with intention with the ewps at Mt. St. Mary's in Burlington VT a few times throughout the course of this project. The dances helped me explore movement and speed alongside other beings. In a clip from March 2022, [the trees danced around me](#), faster than I as I watched a red fox (fastest dancer of all) run behind my camera.<sup>194</sup> I used digital technologies to speed up a twenty-minute dance practice from October 2022 into a one minute, 34 second video, which highlights the [beauty in slowness](#) of the trees' practice on this day.<sup>195</sup> At times I appear to be moving very fast, but the trees keep up a steady slow dance around me. Dappled sunlight touches me and the trees, the shadows slowly moving, until the sun dips behind the horizon and we share more muted hues.

Perhaps I will investigate and create together with one or many of these areas in more depth sometime in my life. My primary intention, though, is to leave them here, now and into the future, as offerings.

---

<sup>194</sup> “the trees danced around me” link address: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/9HjCitr3VgpeA8AS7>.

<sup>195</sup> “beauty in slowness” link address: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/EAmZN9ftujBoY3Rb8>.

Interlude 3 – “Survival” by Cheryl Savageau<sup>196</sup>

On Cape Cod  
the colonists bring their  
animals tied to the yoke  
and plow the mother's breast  
planting in long rows,  
separating one crop  
from the other

the corn's feet grow cold  
the harvest small, and eaten  
by raccoons who raid nightly  
with no squash bristles  
to threaten their delicate feet

In winter, angry winds  
carry the earth  
someplace else  
til there is nothing left  
but this sand  
where white pine  
shrunk from grandfather forests  
to these survivors,  
hold hands across the dunes

I know that inside the white pine  
there is food to survive a winter  
that the wide plantain leaves  
pushing up through the old driveway  
could make a salad, that the furry berries  
of the staghorn sumac will make  
a winter tea for me, and be first food  
to returning birds come spring

how much is forgotten?

the earth is cold now  
but when the dogwood blossoms  
it will be warm enough  
to hold the seed corn  
and coax it into growth

see how the hill catches the sun  
for the young roots of corn  
see how the corn stays the winter  
holding the earth safe  
through furious winds

---

<sup>196</sup> Cheryl Savageau, *Dirt Road Home* (Willimantic CT: Curbstone Press, 1995).



Figure 5.1 Ewps looking over Lake Winnepesaukee (2018, by Author)

Photo of Lake Winnepesaukee and the northwest shore of the forested Timber Island. On this side of the island my dad likes to point out his favorite tree on earth: a small ewp that hangs gracefully on the edge of a rock. There are muted sunset colors on the horizon and five or six wispy pinky-orangey-white clouds in the sky. The photo is taken from the water and ewp crowns poke the sky, creating the island's profile.



Figure 5.2 Life cycle sketch (by Author, 2022)

A ballpoint pen sketch in my Rite in the Rain notebook of a snag (tree skeleton), with a label by a sawed section indicating that that section of trunk had ~102 rings (equal to years of age). There is another label pointing towards the base of the trunk that reads 'seedlings.'



Figure 5.3 Emily-ewp dance screen capture (by Author, 2022)

A still from a sped-up video of myself during a twenty-minute dance/movement practice beneath ewps at Mt. St. Mary's in Burlington VT. I am wearing a tan collared t-shirt and blue athletic shorts. The trees fill almost the entire frame and have brown bark and green needles. The sky behind them is white and blue, and the ground has green grass and orange pine needles.

## Bibliography

- @auntyjocey, Jocelyn Joe-Strack. TikTok account. [www.tiktok.com/@auntyjocey](https://www.tiktok.com/@auntyjocey).
- @dineaesthetics, charlie amáyá scott. Instagram account. [www.instagram.com/dineaesthetics/](https://www.instagram.com/dineaesthetics/).
- @fairycreekblockade, Ada'itsx / Fairy Creek Blockade. Instagram account. <https://www.instagram.com/fairycreekblockade/>.
- @niskapisuwin, Geo Soctomah Neptune. Instagram account. [www.instagram.com/niskapisuwin/](https://www.instagram.com/niskapisuwin/).
- @sepanativeplant. "Sepa Native Plant Sanctuary." Instagram account. [www.instagram.com/sepanativeplant/](https://www.instagram.com/sepanativeplant/).
- @yumisakugawa. "INSPIRATION FOR CREATIVITY." Instagram post, March 11, 2022. [www.instagram.com/p/Ca-gJwNJ2Tv/](https://www.instagram.com/p/Ca-gJwNJ2Tv/).
- Accountability Mapping: Let's build new tools!". 2022, accessed March, 2022, <https://accountabilitymapping.com/>.
- Ahmed, Sara. *The cultural politics of emotion*. New York: Routledge, 2004.
- Appleton, Cherie. "'Critical Friends', Feminism and Integrity: A reflection on the use of critical friends as a research tool to support researcher integrity and reflexivity in qualitative research studies." *Women in welfare education*, no. 10 (2011): 1.
- Backus, Ruth. Backus and Kinney Genealogy, the Ancestors of Sidney Kinney Backus. 1950-1980.
- Bawaka Country, Sarah Wright, Sandie Suchet-Pearson, Kate Lloyd, Laklak Burarrwanga, Ritjilili Ganambarr, Merrkiyawuy Ganambarr-Stubbs, Banbapuy Ganambarr, and Djawundil Maymuru. "Working with and learning from Country: decentering human author-ity." *cultural geographies* 22, no. 2 (2015): 269-83. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1474474014539248>.
- Bell, Sarah J., Lesley Instone, and Kathleen J. Mee. "Engaged witnessing: Researching with the more-than-human." *Area* 50, no. 1 (2018): 136-44. <https://doi.org/https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12346>.
- Bigelow, Edwin L., and Nancy H. Otis. *Manchester Vermont: A Pleasant Land Among the Mountains*. Manchester, VT: Town of Manchester, 1961.
- Billig, Michael. *Learn to Write Badly: How to Succeed in the Social Sciences*. Cambridge University Press, 2013.
- Bishop, George. *New-England judged, by the spirit of the Lord*. England: Printed and sold by T. Sowle, 1703, 1703.
- Brooks, Lisa. "'Every Swamp is a Castle': Navigating Native Spaces in the Connecticut River Valley, Winter 1675–1677 and 2005–2015." *Northeastern Naturalist* 24 (2017): H45-H80. <https://doi.org/10.1656/045.024.s701>.
- . *Our Beloved Kin: A New History of King Philip's War*. New Haven & London: Yale University Press, 2018. doi:10.12987/yale/9780300196733.001.0001.
- brown, adrienne maree. *Emergent Strategy: Shaping Change, Changing Worlds*. Chico, CA: AK Press, 2017.
- "Contemplative Ecologies: Work in Isolation," Harlan Morehouse ed. *UVM Blogs*, 2020, <https://blog.uvm.edu/tmorehou-tmorehou/2020/04/23/contemplative-ecology-creativity-in-a-time-of-pandemic/>.
- Cox, Jonathan M. "The source of a movement: making the case for social media as an informational source using Black Lives Matter." *Ethnic and Racial Studies* 40, no. 11 (2017/09/02 2017): 1847-54. <https://doi.org/10.1080/01419870.2017.1334935>.

- Cresswell, Tim, Deborah P. Dixon, Peter K. Bol, and J. Nicholas Entrikin. "Editorial." *GeoHumanities* 1, no. 1 (2015/01/02 2015): 1-19. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2373566X.2015.1074055>.
- Cronon, William. *Changes in the land: Indians, colonists, and the ecology of New England*. 1st ed. New York: Hill and Wang, 1983.
- Cruikshank, Julie. *Do glaciers listen?: local knowledge, colonial encounters, and social imagination*. Vancouver: UBC Press, 2007.
- Davidson, Joyce, and Christine Milligan. "Embodying Emotion Sensing Space: Introducing emotional geographies." Editorial. *Social & Cultural Geography* 5, no. 4 (2004): 523-32. <https://doi.org/10.1080/1464936042000317677>.
- Deleuze, Gilles, and Félix Guattari. *A Thousand Plateaus: Capitalism and Schizophrenia*. Minneapolis & London: University of Minnesota Press, 1987.
- Dowling, Robyn, Kate Lloyd, and Sandra Suchet-Pearson. "Qualitative methods II: 'More-than-human' methodologies and/in praxis." *Progress in Human Geography* 41, no. 6 (2017): 823-31. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0309132516664439>.
- Dunbar-Ortiz, Roxanne. *Not "a nation of immigrants": settler colonialism, white supremacy, and a history of erasure and exclusion*. Boston: Beacon Press, 2021.
- Elmhirst, Rebecca. "Introducing new feminist political ecologies." *Geoforum* 42, no. 2 (2011/03/01/ 2011): 129-32. <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.geoforum.2011.01.006>.
- Foster, David R., and John F. O'Keefe. *New England Forests Through Time: Insights from the Harvard Forest Dioramas*. Cambridge: Harvard Forest, Harvard University, 2000.
- Fung, Amy. "Is Settler Colonialism Just Another Study of Whiteness?". *Canadian ethnic studies* 53, no. 2 (2021): 115-31.
- Great Bay 101." Great Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, New Hampshire Fish and Game Department, accessed March, 2022, <https://greatbay.org/learn/great-bay-101/>.
- Greenhough, Beth. "More-than-human Geographies." In *The SAGE Handbook of Human Geography*, edited by Lee et al., 94-119. Los Angeles, London, New Delhi, Singapore, Washington DC: SAGE reference, 2014.
- Gumbs, Alexis Pauline, "the problem with the passive past tense," *Black Perspectives*. AAIHS, 2018, <https://www.aaihs.org/the-problem-with-the-passive-past-tense/>.
- Haraway, Donna. "Situated Knowledges: The Science Question in Feminism and the Privilege of Partial Perspective." *Feminist Studies* 14, no. 3 (1988): 575-99. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3178066>.
- Harcourt, Wendy, and Ingrid L Nelson. *Practising feminist political ecologies: moving beyond the 'green economy'*. London: Zed Books, 2015.
- Hawkins, Roberta, and Ingrid L Nelson. "Where are Rooted Networks in Digital Political Ecologies?". *Frontiers in Human Dynamics* (2022): 37.
- Hernández, KJ. "Land and ethnographic practices—(re)making toward healing." Article. *Prácticas de tierra y etnográficas: (Re) Haciendo Hacia la Curación*. 21, no. 7 (2020): 1002-20. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2020.1744703>.
- Hersey, Tricia. Rest is anything that connects your mind and body." The Nap Ministry, 2022, accessed March 2022, <https://thenapministry.wordpress.com/2022/02/21/rest-is-anything-that-connects-your-mind-and-body/>.
- . *Rest Is Resistance: A Manifesto*. Hachette Audio, Imprint: Little, Brown Spark, 2022.
- hooks, bell. *Where We Stand: Class Matters*. New York, NY: Routledge, 2000.



- Howey, Meghan C. L., and Christine M. DeLucia. "Spectacles of Settler Colonial Memory: Archaeological Findings from an Early Twentieth-Century "First" Settlement Pageant and Other Commemorative Terrain in New England." *International Journal of Historical Archaeology* 26, no. 4 (2022/12/01 2022): 974-1007. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10761-021-00635-2>. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s10761-021-00635-2>.
- Indigenous NH Collaborative Collective. Indigenous NH Collaborative Collective StoryMap." 2021, accessed March 2022, <https://www.arcgis.com/apps/MapJournal/index.html?appid=693c9b595c5847cfb07d100935e423ef>.
- . "An Indigenous Tour of Lake Winnepesaukee." YouTube, 2019. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3ATIwQK6i74>.
- Jemisin, N.K. *The Fifth Season*. The Broken Earth. New York, NY: Orbit, 2015.
- Katz, Jo Kent. "Transcending Jewish Trauma." accessed 2022, <https://www.transcendingjewishtrauma.com/>.
- Kern, Leslie, Roberta Hawkins, Karen Falconer Al-Hindi, and Pamela Moss. "A collective biography of joy in academic practice." *Social & cultural geography* 15, no. 7 (2014): 834-51. <https://doi.org/10.1080/14649365.2014.929729>.
- Kimmerer, Robin Wall. *Braiding sweetgrass: Indigenous wisdom, scientific knowledge and the teachings of plants*. Minneapolis, Minnesota: Milkweed, 2013.
- Kizuk, Sarah. "Settler Shame: A Critique of the Role of Shame in Settler-Indigenous Relationships in Canada." *Hypatia* 35, no. 1 (2020): 161-77. <https://doi.org/10.1017/hyp.2019.8>.
- Lasky, Kathryn. *Legend of the Guardians (Guardians of Ga'Hoole Collection)*. New York, Toronto, London, Auckland, Sydney, Mexico City, New Delhi, Hong Kong: Scholastic Inc., 2010.
- Le Guin, Ursula K. *The Word for World is Forest*. New York: Berkley/Putnam, 1976, 1972.
- Lee, Robert, and Tristan Ahtone. "Land-grab universities." *High Country News*, 2020. <https://www.hcn.org/issues/52.4/indigenous-affairs-education-land-grab-universities>.
- Liboiron, Max. *Pollution is colonialism*. Durham North Carolina: Duke University Press, 2021.
- Massey, Doreen. *For space*. London, Thousand Oaks, New Delhi: SAGE Publications, 2005.
- Menakem, Resmaa. *My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending Our Hearts and Bodies*. Las Vegas, NV: Central Recovery Press, 2017.
- Million, Dian. "Felt Theory: An Indigenous Feminist Approach to Affect and History." *Wicazo sa review* 24, no. 2 (2009): 53-76. <https://doi.org/10.1353/wic.0.0043>.
- Ministry, The Nap. "Our work has a framework: REST IS RESISTANCE!" The Nap Ministry, 2021, accessed March 2022, <https://thenapministry.wordpress.com/2021/01/11/our-work-is-has-a-framework/>.
- Moss, Pamela, and Kathryn Besio. "Auto-Methods in Feminist Geography." *GeoHumanities* 5, no. 2 (2019): 313-25. <https://doi.org/10.1080/2373566X.2019.1654904>.
- Moss, Pamela, and Karen Falconer Al-Hindi. "Rhizomatic Encounters and Encountering Possibilities." *Geography and Geology Faculty Publications* 49 (2009). <https://digitalcommons.unomaha.edu/geoggeolfacpub/49>.
- Nelson, Ingrid L. "Sweeping as a site of temporal brokerage: Linking town and forest in Mozambique." *Critique of Anthropology* 36, no. 1 (2016): 44-60.
- Njee, Nyambura. "Share cropping Blackness: White supremacy and the hyper-consumption of Black popular culture." *McNair Scholars Research Journal* 9, no. 1 (2016).

- Okun, Tema. WHITE SUPREMACY CULTURE CHARACTERISTICS." 2022, <https://www.whitesupremacyculture.info/characteristics.html>.
- Osborne, Mary Pope. *Magic tree house series*. New York: Random House, 1992.
- Perl, Sondra. "Understanding Composing." *College Composition and Communication* 31, no. 4 (1980): 363-69. <https://doi.org/10.2307/356586>.
- Pettibone, Judge John S. "The Early History of Manchester." In *Proceedings of the Vermont Historical Society*, 147-66. Montpelier VT: Vermont Historical Society, ~1857, published 1930.
- Pitt, Hannah. "On showing and being shown plants - a guide to methods for more-than-human geography." Article. *Area* 47, no. 1 (2015): 48-55. <https://doi.org/10.1111/area.12145>.
- Powers, Richard. *The Overstory: A Novel*. New York & London: W. W. Norton, 2018.
- Proulx, Annie. *Barkskins: A Novel*. New York: Scribner, 2016.
- Rocheleau, Dianne, Barbara Thomas-Slyter, and Esther Wangari. "A feminist political ecology perspective." *Feminist political ecology: Global issues and local experiences* (1996): 3-26.
- Rosevitsky, Nathan. *A Short Story About the Life of Your Father, Grandfather, and Great-grandfather*. 1987.
- Saltonstall, William Gurdon. *Ports of Piscataqua: soundings in the maritime history of the Portsmouth, N.H., Customs District from the days of Queen Elizabeth and the planting of Strawberry Banke to the times of Abraham Lincoln and the waning of the American clipper*. New York: Russell & Russell, 1968.
- Savageau, Cheryl. *Dirt Road Home*. Willimantic CT: Curbstone Press, 1995.
- Scales, John. *History of Dover, New Hampshire (Tercentenary ed.): Containing historical genealogical and industrial data of its early settlers, their struggles and triumphs*. Vol. I, Manchester, NH: John B. Clarke Co., Printed by authority of the City Councils, 1923.
- Scott, Charlie Amáyá. "Indigenous Feminism: An Entry to Understanding an Indigenized Feminism." 2022. <https://dineaesthetics.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/04/Indigenous-Feminism.pdf>.
- Simard, Suzanne W. *Finding the Mother Tree: Discovering the Wisdom of the Forest*. Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, 2021.
- . "Mycorrhizal Networks Facilitate Tree Communication, Learning, and Memory." In *Memory and Learning in Plants*, edited by Frantisek Baluska, Monica Gagliano and Guenther Witzany, 191-213. Cham: Springer International Publishing, 2018.
- Smith, Linda Tuhiwai, and Eve Tuck. "INQ13 | Linda Tuhiwai Smith and Eve Tuck - "Decolonizing Methodologies"." YouTube, 2013. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1ZXQC27tv8&t=2907s>.
- TallBear, Kim. "APC/GSWS Presents Kim TallBear." In *Beyond Survival: Eco-Feminist Imaginings in Precarious Times*. YouTube: Alice Paul Center, 2021. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=yQj2dIcPmQ8&t=339s>.
- . "Identity is a poor substitute for relating: Genetic ancestry, critical polyamory, property, and relations." In *Routledge Handbook of Critical Indigenous Studies*, edited by Hokowhitu et al., 467-78. London and New York: Routledge, 2021.
- Taylor, Sonya Renee. "ASL TRANSLATION: Why Talking to Your White Family About Black People is the Wrong Approach." YouTube, 2020. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8n-vaCQqWEY&t=99s>.

- . *The body is not an apology: The power of radical self-love*. Oakland CA: Berrett-Koehler Publishers, 2021.
- Trees of the Adirondacks: Eastern White Pine (*Pinus strobus*)." Wild Adirondacks, 2021, accessed September 27, 2021, <https://wildadirondacks.org/trees-of-the-adirondacks-eastern-white-pine-pinus-strobus.html>.
- Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. *The Mushroom at the End of the World: On the Possibility of Life in Capitalist Ruins*. Princeton NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015. doi:10.2307/j.ctvc77bcc.
- Tuck, Eve. "Biting the Hand that Feeds You: Theories of Change in the Settler State and its Universities." YouTube, 2015. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IXEEzqIjA3I&t=212s>.
- . Recordings: Felt Theory Felt Sense Guided Meditation for Writing, with music." 2022, <http://www.evetuck.com/recordings>.
- Venet, Alex Shevrin. *Equity-Centered Trauma-Informed Education*. WW Norton, 2021.
- Vermont." Eugenics: Compulsory Sterilization in 50 American States, 2011, <https://www.uvm.edu/~lkaelber/eugenics/>.
- Vietze, Andrew. *White Pine: American History and the Tree That Made a Nation*. Guilford, CT: Globe Pequot, 2017.
- Viren, Sarah. "The Native Scholar Who Wasn't." *NY Times*. (2021). Accessed April 2022. <https://www.nytimes.com/2021/05/25/magazine/cherokee-native-american-andrea-smith.html>.
- Watts, Vanessa. "Indigenous place-thought and agency amongst humans and non humans (First Woman and Sky Woman go on a European world tour!)." *Decolonization: Indigeneity, Education & Society* 2, no. 1 (2013).
- Wessels, Tom. *Reading the forested landscape: a natural history of New England*. 1st ed. Woodstock, VT: Countryman Press, 1997.

## Appendix A

[Mill Rd run 3/7/22](#)<sup>197</sup> is an album of photos I took during a 4-mile run on a rainy afternoon on the Monday of my spring break week off from school. I started from my parents' house in Littleton, MA, and about a mile in I started to take photos, noticing connections I saw and felt to white pines, how our daily lives are entangled with trees, and my sense of home in this place. There are image descriptions for the first ten photos out of twenty-five.

[People & trees & places: thesis pics](#)<sup>198</sup> is a more comprehensive photo album that includes pictures that felt relevant to this work. Most of the photos were taken by me during the course of this project, though it includes earlier photos as well.

---

<sup>197</sup> “Mill Rd run” photo album link address: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/4tKnZ3v1NxiHywXt8>.

<sup>198</sup> “people & trees & places” photo album link address: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/HRFSNnDvcKoUUREA>