
Allison Hargreaves. *Violence Against Indigenous Women: Literature, Activism, Resistance*. Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2017. 281 pp. ISBN: 9781771122399.
www.wlupress.wlu.ca/Books/V/Violence-Against-Indigenous-Women

Shannon Speed. *Incarcerated Stories: Indigenous Women Migrants and Violence in the Settler-Capitalist State*. University of North Carolina Press, 2019. 163 pp. ISBN: 9781469653129.
www.uncpress.org/book/9781469653129/incarcerated-stories/

Shannon Speed's *Incarcerated Stories* presents in unflinching fashion the lived experiences of Indigenous women migrants seeking asylum. Speed argues that the resulting violence—which she dubs “neoliberal multicriminalism”—is rooted in the convergence of the anti-Indigenous systems and ideologies of the United States. Using the means available, Speed's practices in collecting these stories are a story unto themselves, and the resulting guerilla methodology brings a tangible sense of urgency to the ideas being explored in this work.

Speed's title refers not just to the brick and mortar detention centers that hold these Indigenous women but also reminds readers that these stories “are not normally heard, are locked away and silenced, and reflect the women's entrapment in the structural cages of the settler capitalist state” (Speed 7). Facing obstacles of access, language barriers, and material lack, the fact that these women's stories have even made it to publication is a great victory. Indeed, the precarity of the Indigenous woman migrant's life extends beyond the violence and discrimination against her body, onto the printed page in the form of resistant questions of validity, legality, and worth.

The stories are presented in chapters centered around home, journey, detention, and post-detention. Though the structure is familiar—evoking Campbell's Hero's Journey, to a certain extent—the lives on display are anything but. Time and again I found myself moved by Speed's style and her ability to balance such moving narratives with critical commentary. These are truly dramatic stories, made even more so by the knowledge that the violence is real and the systems employing such violence are still in place. As Speed notes, these women's lives and stories are the very definition of *survivance*, survival + resistance. The levels of violence these women face are matched only by the lengths they go to in resisting them.

Throughout the text, Speed puts in the work to create a context for the reader in such a way that the uninitiated will have little trouble placing these stories into the existing conversation surrounding violence against Indigenous women, while also leaving open areas for deeper exploration. Ultimately, one of Speed's arguments that resonated deeply across the various narratives was that a shift needs to occur from making claims *about* these stories to making claims *from* these stories. The violence of the settler-colonial state is not an artifact of the past, and these stories are not only evidence of that but demand further engagement.

The idea that we begin to make claims from stories instead of about them is explored in a recent work by Allison Hargreaves. Her 2017 book from Wilfrid Laurier University Press, *Violence Against Indigenous Women*, recognizes the position and capacity of Indigenous women's literature as a site of knowledge and resistance. Hargreaves examines several works—including cinema, poetry, plays, and memoir—to discover the claims they make and to “demonstrate the

important theoretical and practical contributions made by Indigenous literature in helping all readers to imagine beyond the possibilities, limits, and gaps” of settler-colonial policies and initiatives. Hargreaves is, in no uncertain terms, demonstrating the embedded Indigenous futurisms present in the works she includes. That is to say, by centering Indigenous literature and its claims, Hargreaves allows audiences to see for themselves an envisioned future where Indigenous people and perspectives are not only present but require no validation for that presence.

It should come as no surprise that two works scrutinizing the structures of violence against Indigenous women grapple with similar problems. Speed’s notion of “incarcerated stories,” or those stories coming from perspectives that have historically been silenced, contained, and in some cases literally caged, could be applied to many of the stories Hargreaves examines in interesting ways. In a chapter exploring the politics of commemoration, Hargreaves states, “storytelling has emerged as an inveterate strategy of anti-violence campaigns; what, then, of those recurring figures whose individual stories are told and retold” (133). In other words, we are seeing a trend develop in the anti-violence struggle to put a human face to the violence with these narratives—which Hargreaves argues become certain “faces” in particular. Stories and faces that are deemed less successful are silenced and removed from circulation, while those considered successful become locked in place, “enact[ing] the very hierarchization of human life they protest against” (133). The resulting cycle of violence and commemoration creates a blind spot for the well-meaning white liberal subject and is evidence of Speed’s “neoliberal multicriminalism.” The colonial violence of the present is obscured from view, and no reckoning takes place precisely because of the recognition and commemoration of the victim of past violence (Hargreaves 151). Hargreaves goes on to explore how Indigenous literature raises important questions about the public systems of memorial and the agency of the actual bodies impacted by the violence in question.

Both Hargreaves and Speed reveal through their work a belief in the vitality and necessity of Indigenous women’s stories. The systems enabling violence against Indigenous women’s bodies remain in place, but these texts demonstrate the survivance on display in the lives and narratives of Indigenous women. Speed shares narratives that expose the systematic violence of the settler-capitalist state, while Hargreaves reminds us that our storytellers have shown us alternative ways of being that address that system. Both recognize that we must confront the notion “that colonialism is a historical phenomenon to learn about, rather than an ongoing set of relationships to be transformed” (Hargreaves 166). Each text promotes Indigenous feminisms that honor the bodies and experiences related in their pages and are excellent additions to the growing scholarship around violence against Indigenous women. These works contribute to the discourses surrounding structural violence, Indigeneity in North and South America, and neoliberalism, while also opening clear avenues for further exploration relating to the material rhetorics of precarity, memorial, and necropolitics that these stories embody. Scholars in Indigenous studies, Gender studies, Anthropology and/or Literary studies would benefit greatly from engaging with the ideas presented here.

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