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Critical Relationality: Queer, Indigenous, and Multispecies Belonging Beyond Settler Sex & Nature

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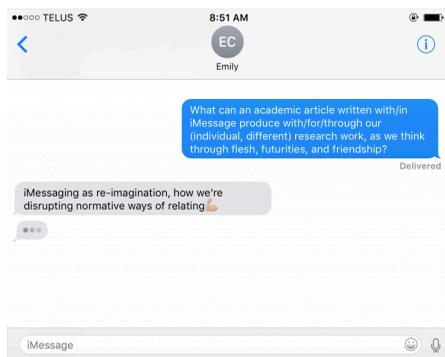
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MESSAGING FLESH, FRIENDSHIP, AND FUTURITIES

EMILY COON AND NICOLE LAND

Abstract: This article enacts our ongoing collaborative experiments utilizing “iMessaging” on iPhone as a practice of critical relationality toward building our Indigenous-settler millennial academic friendship. Holding written text alongside our iMessage conversations, we confront three threads that continually interject in our exchanges: (1) what happens with our fleshy bodies when we connect with iMessage; (2) how our co-created, but uncommon, iMessage-body exchanges are an experiment with potential modes of Indigenous-settler academic friendship; (3) and how our iMessaging practice makes real the academic futures that we hope, and need, to contribute to. Together, we grapple with how the iMessaged space we create in our friendship might enable us to be attentive to the disjunctures between Indigenous knowledges and feminist science studies. We wonder how we might think of iMessage as a mode of friendship that is potentially capable of challenging settler-colonial normativities and temporalities of academic relating, while also calling us to attend to the complexities of our bodied lifeworlds as we iMessage our (digital) flesh, futurities, and friendship as young, emerging scholars.

Résumé: Cet article est la représentation des expériences collaboratives que nous sommes en train de mener en utilisant la messagerie électronique sur iPhones comme une pratique relationnelle critique visant à construire notre amitié académique millénaire entre Autochtones et colons. En plaçant côte à côte les textes écrits et nos conversations sur messageries, nous sommes confrontés à trois fils directeurs qui réapparaissent continuellement dans nos échanges: 1) ce qui se passe dans notre corps de chair lorsque nous nous connectons par messagerie; 2) comment ces échanges entre corps et messages, créés ensemble, mais séparés, constituent une expérience de modes potentiels d'amitié académique entre Autochtones et colons; 3) et comment nos pratiques d'échanges par messagerie électronique concrétisent les avenir académiques que nous espérons et auxquels nous avons besoin de contribuer. Ensemble, nous nous efforçons de comprendre comment l'espace électronique que nous créons dans nos amitiés pourrait nous permettre d'être plus attentifs aux disjonctions entre les savoirs indigènes et les études des sciences féministes. Nous nous interrogeons sur la manière dont nous pourrions concevoir la messagerie électronique comme un mode d'amitié potentiellement capable de remettre en question les normalités relationnelles entre Autochtones et colons, ainsi que celles du monde académique, tout en tenant compte des complexités de notre vie corporelle lorsque nous échangeons électroniquement nos chairs, nos visions du futur et nos amitiés en tant que jeunes scientifiques en début de carrière.



4,595 kilometers, thousands of iMessaged words, and four years of negotiating graduate-school female friendship in a world of settler-colonial and neoliberal academic politics lay between us, Emily and Nicole. Emily is a Kanien'kehaka Master's student working within ruptures of urban indigenities to (re)map colonized lands and bodies, and grounds her work with Indigenous feminisms and resurgent imaginations of Drum-work ceremony; she currently

walks along Dish With One Spoon territories of the Haudenosaunee and Anishinaabe peoples. Nicole is a fourth-generation settler PhD student who thinks with fat(s), muscle(s), and movement in early-childhood education while integrating feminist science studies and post-qualitative education research methodologies; she inhabits the unceded territory of the Coast and Straits Salish peoples. As Indigenous and settler female graduate students, we understand our research and relationships with academia to be profoundly fleshed. We research bodies differently, care-fully interrogating, re-mapping, inhabiting, and re-configuring the gendered and generative, exhausted and unexpected, physiological and frustrating, reluctant and resurgent flesh we encounter in our work and lives. Uteruses, adipose tissue, blood quantum, and top-knotted hair animate our everyday transit within the academy and, as we both anchor our research work in bodies, we marvel at the paradoxical richness of the distance that separates our flesh from meeting in the same room.

As two female graduate students, born in 1990 and 1989, we proudly assert our allegiances to the “millennial” generational and negotiate our cross-country friendship—and the collaborative and contested conversations between our ontologically divergent research—over our iPhones' iMessage. Confronting the tensions of Indigenous-settler millennial academic relationships, we beam deeply corporeal experiences digitally, sharing our encounters with bodies through a machine made of neoliberal and colonial technoscience. Each time our thumbs tap the “send” key, we feel, differently, the legacies of abstraction, erasure, and

resource extraction that literally craft our iPhones. In the same instant, we take seriously the importance of iMessage as a tool of friendship as we work together, and apart, to nurture our mode of Indigenous-settler friendship in the academy.

Our feminist academic passion project has become reconfiguring how our iPhones function as a (de)colonial technoscience in our Indigenous-settler friendship. In our daily interactions with academia, mainstream Canadian popular culture, and the millennial-authored blogs we encounter on our Twitter feeds, we notice how our iPhones can be complicit in neoliberal narratives of anthropocentric progress, Euro-Western exceptionalism, and the maintenance of colonial heteropatriarchal notions of difference that both obscure difference in favour of multicultural diversity and cleave open the oppressive power of difference as a problem of access, platform, and publicity in a digital world with limited space (contrast Eve Tuck's [@tuckeve], an Alaska Native feminist scholar with 2962 Twitter followers with Justin Trudeau's [@JustinTrudeau], the Canadian Prime Minister with 2.4 million followers; January 2018). Disguised in a flashy rose-gold finish, we follow the aluminum in our iPhones as it travels from stolen Land brimming with resurgent ancestral memories of care-fully tended soil, through violent politics of resource extraction rooted in ongoing settler colonialism that is then justified through the iPhone's complicity in narratives of human progress. As we clutch our iPhones, we know that while Euro-Western science and technology, rooted in unquestionable facts, continue to be used against Indigenous peoples—providing scientific justifications for Residential Schools, blood quantum logics of identity, and forced sterilizations—Indigenous peoples have been practicing their own complex forms of scientific knowledge and technology. Adjacent to, but divergent from, these differently lived sciences, feminist science studies scholars chisel at the hegemonic ontological foundations of universalized Euro-Western Science, tracing how Science inserts itself as a technique of governance made real in fleshed possibilities for life (see Haraway, *Simians, cyborgs, and women*; Harding, *Science and social inequality*; Landecker, *Culturing life*; Roy and Subramaniam, *Matter in the shadows*; Whitt, *Science, colonialism, and Indigenous peoples*; Willey, *Undoing monogamy*). Understanding science as embedded in specific social and historical contexts, we can understand

how this knowledge serves to marginalize, silence, and erase groups of people (see Sanabria, “Circulating ignorance”; Subramaniam, *Ghost stories for Darwin*). Embracing the relationship we have generated with our iPhones and iMessaging conversations, we activate the ironic potential of utilizing this colonial item as the very thing we have used to disrupt settler colonialism and tend to our resurgent forms of allyship and solidarity.

Grape Twizzlers inaugurated our friendship, when Nicole offered Emily a snack during a multi-day childhood studies symposium on children’s multispecies relations within colonized worlds. We exchanged contact information and began iMessaging to support one another through a stressful mid-semester paper season. Our ongoing friendship owes to this institutional academic space where we were introduced, having both begun graduate programs at the same university two weeks earlier. Our friendship thus also began with iMessage, as we both hold iPhones and have laboured to craft a friendship intertwined with emoji, blue conversation bubbles, and touchscreen-typed words. As our Indigenous-settler friendship evolves, we care for different threads of our friendship differently: we pull at the “academic” threads of our constant collaborations as we trace how our scholarly projects converse and diverge. We tug at frictions, wondering how we might maintain the tension in our friendship—the uneven consequences, the differently risky labour, and the work of forging female millennial Indigenous-settler bonds that might cultivate futures. We carry our iPhones every day, tending to the words we share with one another, just as we critically trace how this technology affects our work together. Importantly, we do not wish to foreground iMessage—the patented and monetized technological interface that enables our digital conversations—as a magical or exceptional participant in our friendship. Our iMessaging is situated, rooted in Emily’s practices of carrying her iPhone SE in her well-loved crossbody bag and Nicole’s habit of popping her chipped iPhone 8 in her sports bra. In a world where our friendship evolved with a different platform, perhaps text messaging, WhatsApp, or Facebook Messenger might have also cared for our friendship.

In our practice of iMessaging Indigenous-settler millennial academic friendship, we confront three threads that continually interject in our

conversations: (1) what happens with our fleshy bodies when we connect with iMessage; (2) how our co-created, but uncommon, iMessage-body exchanges are an experiment with potential modes of Indigenous-settler academic friendship; (3) and how our iMessaging practice makes real the academic futures that we hope, and need, to contribute to. As a response, we trace the rhythms of our iMessage friendship and we imagine what, and how, our academic bodies are capable of creating with iMessage: how might theorizing through gifs and memes create degrees of relationality that lend space for us to put our theoretical loyalties, from Indigenous feminisms (see Arvin, Tuck, and Morrill, “Decolonizing feminism”; Goeman and Denetdale, “Native feminisms”; Simpson, “Anger, resentment & love”) to feminist science studies (see Roy, “Somatic matters”; Warin, “Material feminism, obesity science, and the limits of discursive critique”; Wilson, *Gut feminism*; Willey, *Undoing monogamy*) into conversation, while colonial technosciences concurrently contribute to the ongoing marginalization of Indigenous bodies in academia? How can the iMessaged space, open and closed, in our friendship enable us to be attentive to the disjunctures between Indigenous knowledges and feminist science studies, and to return continually to these tensions to move with their uncertain potentialities? Can we think of iMessage as a mode of friendship that is potentially capable of challenging settler-colonial normativities and temporalities⁴ of academic relating, while attending to the complexities of our bodied lifeworlds as we iMessage our (digital) flesh, futurities, and friendship?

Over three days, we combed through our histories of iMessaging, layering upon what we know in our bodies to be generative conversations and articulations of how iMessaging is an experiment in critical relationality. In what follows, please find traces of both our iMessages and our individual academic writing practices. We write with formal bodies of text and iMessages as we thread flesh through our emojis and trace the contours of our bodied tensions through digital conversation. At points we claim our writing with our names, while in other moments we write together as we toggle between responding to one another and developing our theorizing independently. We invite a reading of our iMessages alongside our paragraphs of text, but we also offer a formatting experiment that allows for an uneven attention to ei-

ther aspect of our iMessaged/written performance. Our iMessage conversations are dotted with Emily’s grey message blocks and Nicole’s blue blocks. Embracing iMessage as a form of colonial technology that cares for our conversations, we work towards a millennial theorization and visualization of friendship and solidarity in academia. Together, and apart, we experiment with how iMessaging is, and might be, productive of co-creative, relational, propulsive provocations for exploring the futurities of (our) Indigenous-settler (millennial) friendship(s) in academia.

IMESSAGING (NOT/DIGITAL) FLESH

iMessage (Re)mapping Bodies

Emily

okay well, when we iMessage headaches or cramps or coldness, what are we doing?
I suspect that's more complex than just taking a headache, writing it into words, and hitting send?

Why do we do that.

I have coupled the praxis of (re)mapping from Seneca scholar Mishuana Goeman (*Mark my Words*) with a Drum-work methodology to explore and expand the ways urban bodies engage with their identities, kinship relationships, and the land.

Locating my work in Kingston, Ontario is significant, as this is a city saturated in settler-colonial permanence: a place where (Sir) John A. MacDonald is toasted each year on his birthday, tours of Kingston Penitentiary are eagerly anticipated and quickly sold out, and Indigenous culture, representation, and peoples are erased. Being Indigenous in this city is not easy. Within settler-colonial logic, Indigenous bodies are dissected into manageable cuts of (non)belongingness. Our bodies and lands are rendered into empty spaces, easily mapped with settler notions of power and crisscrossed with binaries of inclusion/exclusion.

Can the fragmented-temporal-shifting snapshots of contemporary Indigenous identities shared through digital iMessaging bodies begin to ease the clutches of settler colonialism? My remapping of Drum-work methodology fights to leave vibrational traces that smudge dividing lines of racism, layering decolonial relationalities over settler spatialities to rupture colonialism and allow Indigenous stories to (re)emerge.

iMessaging, configured as digital flesh, has become a pocket of resurgent potentiality in my research–recording drumming–laughing–singing voices, capturing fuzzy pictures of drumsticks connecting with deer hide, and sending those moments to the phones of community members and friends with whom we walk this land. Thinking with bodies differently–human bodies, Drum bodies, land bodies, iPhone bodies–matters as we work together to generate a resurgent practice of community that can flourish in the shadows of limestone walls and blossom in the barren wastelands of impoverished neighbourhoods, shattering the damaging narratives and stereotypes being told about us and re-writing those stories with our contemporary iMessaging bodies.

iMessage Muscles

Nicole



Thumbs are my favourite digit, the anatomical articulation point that most captures my attention: my thumb can circumduct, rotating around its base, sketching tiny circles into the air; it cradles the corners of my iPhone in its pudgy muscle bellies; it abducts and adducts as I touch my pinky finger and

bounce my thumb back across my palm; it taps out letters and emojis, leaving smudged greasy thumb prints across my iPhone screen; my extensor pollicis longus tendon pulls my thumb upwards as I type words I care for deeply; and it fatigues as marathon iMessaging sessions gain momentum. I often watch how my thumbs move across space–become displaced–when Emily and I iMessage, and I debate often what the movement that ceases in this displacement entails (see Manning, “Wondering the world directly”)? How are my thumbs doing (with) this movement: *how* are iMessaging muscles? My muscles are never abstract and they refuse to be representational, and my digits are entangled with the digitalism(s) of my iPhone. To say that my muscles make movements that become translated into words that another purposeful muscle contraction then beams off to Emily seems not just inadequate but incorrect. Following Manning’s *Relationships*, I wonder how

thumb-iMessage “movement is always in the infinity of a crossroads between a where and a how, and never a who” (167): how does iMessage do muscles? How does iMessage do with, or demand different things from, my muscles, Emily’s muscles, or with our muscles (and bicep emojis) of Indigenous-settler academic friendship?

Hannah Landecker writes of “fat knowledges” (“Postindustrial Metabolism” 498) as a mode for tracing the epistemological effects of adipose tissue while attending to how fat knowledges generate possibilities for life (as opposed to debating what causes adipose tissue/metabolisms that then necessitate inquiry). In my research, I borrow fat knowledges into physiological knowledge(s), speculating how physiologies generate propositions with early-childhood education pedagogies. I trace how physiological knowledges might collaborate with my iMessaging thumbs, with our iMessaged Indigenous-settler academic friendship.

I think I have permanent iMessaging injuries 🙄

I have iMessage thumb fatigue, the best kind of writing body strain 🙄

A muscle-anatomy physiological knowledge makes my thumb muscles perceptible as parcels of contractile proteins that produce contractile force. Contractile proteins that are made

knowable as actin and myosin layer upon one another to form myofibrils, which are knitted together to compose muscle fibres (see Krans, “The sliding filament theory of muscle contraction”; McArdle, Katch, & Katch, *Essentials of exercise physiology*). With this physiological knowledge, these active muscle fibres are fashioned together to compose a muscle belly. Within a muscle, actin and myosin myofilaments meet and enact a crossbridge, as myosin slides actin along the length of the actin filament to generate motion. This actin-myosin crossbridging entails a sliding of filaments, a coordinated but asynchronous bridging tediously enacted across a multitude of bridges and through many muscle fibres to propel my thumbs. Actin-myosin crossbridging: my thumb muscles are a cascade, a torrent of collective force that participates in my iMessaged words to Emily. With physiological knowledges of aerobic metabolism and adenosine triphosphate energy molecules, I wonder iMessage as a space “where the messy grooves of our organs present openings without clear endings” (Roy, “Somatic Matters” para. 3): when I beam Emily a citation that I am captured by, what

are my thumb muscles entangled with? How am I accountable to the shared, gathered, and fleeting electron energies and non-Nicole moving thumb muscles that iMessage collaborates with—to my iMessaged coextensiveness? I marvel at how the collective contractions of my thumbs against my iPhone, of our thumbs against different iPhones, disrupt Euro-Western narratives of bounded human skeletons or of flesh that can be contained, controlled, and commodified.

iMessaging (Indigenous-settler) Friendship

Even, why are we friends? What does our (Indigenous-settler) (millennial) (grad school, academic) (cross-country) (feminist) friendship do, collaboratively and differently, for us?

And, what does it mean to find, and create, safe spaces with people.

Because so many friendships developed, and quickly dissolved that year.

But ours progressed from grape twizzlers to a place where we could talk about decolonizing and desettling.

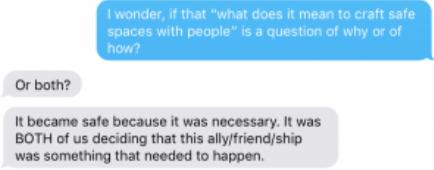
That didn't happen with anyone else.

We hold our friendship between our bodies but we cannot write about friendship without centering the friendships that circle our understanding of what friendship demands. We have many millennial female academic friendship citations that escape citationality, both because we live them and because we witness friendships lived on Twitter and in articles written by scholars

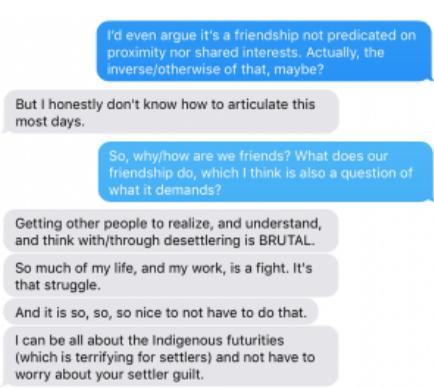
we have never met. How might we cite friendships that unknowingly build up our friendship? We take great inspiration from Billy-Ray Belcourt and Maura Roberts' conversations on caring for friendship kin capable of weathering the messes of settler colonialism ("Making Friends"); from Zoe Todd (@ZoeSTodd) and Erica Violet Lee's (@EricaVioletLee) Twitter storms of building Indigenous feminist friendship; from the heartbreakingly tough and necessary writing of Naomi Sayers (@kwetoday) and Sarah Hunt (@thesarahhunt) as they both celebrate and fight for the lives of Indigenous sex workers, trans folk, and Two Spirit youth who face unimaginable violence and stigma in this country; and from Susan Blight (@Blightboo) and Melody Mckiver (@m_melody) swapping resurgent Nish words over Twitter and considering Anishinaabeg governance over Snapchat voice changer. We are learning to write our Indigenous-settler friendship into words from Cathy Richardson and Vicki Reynolds ("Here we are, amazingly alive"), from Elicia Loiselle, Sandrina de Finney, Nishad Khanna, and Rebecca Corcoran ("*We need to talk about it!*"), and from Te Kawehau Hoskins and Alison Jones ("Lessons in fluid encounters").

KEEPING SWEETGRASS IMESSAGE TENSIONS

Emily



Keeping the tension in our friendship immediately brings an image of a taut rope to mind: frayed pieces entangled and twisted together, a back and forth exchange of energy, ideas, and margaritas. Nicole at one end and me at the other.



To echo the words of Billy-Ray Belcourt (“Making Friends”), doing decolonizing work feels selfish—centring my Indigenous body, my Haudenosaunee knowledge systems, my expansive kinship networks, and the land in spaces where that intellect is rendered worthless, mythical, and irrelevant in favour of white bodies and reconciliation rhetoric—and endlessly exhausting. Every breath I take is an act of resistance, refusal, survival—my body constantly coiled with the tension of existing in a world where

I should not. Keeping the tension is a chore I have no choice but to perform everyday: vacuum the carpet, dust the shelves, scour “honourary” appropriation, mop up settler tears. Yet I know how to walk and talk as a functional Canadian because Indian bodies have been assimilated to do so. Doing decolonization work and bringing my decolonizing self into this iMessaging friendship means learning how to navigate the complex anxiety of calling out “settler moves to innocence” (Tuck and Yang, “Decolonization is not a metaphor”), unapologetically carving out space for ancestral ontologies (see Simpson, *Dancing on our turtle’s back* and “Land as pedagogy”; Watts, “Indigenous place-thought & agency amongst humans and non-humans”),

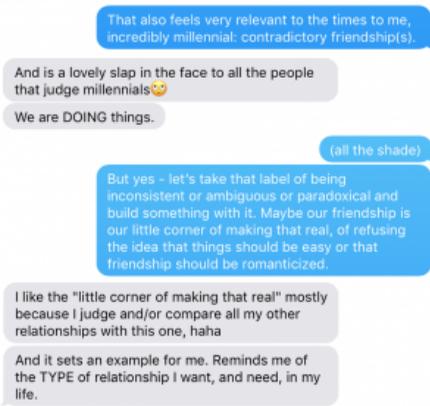
and tentatively-carefully-determinedly pressing send on iMessages that transform an easy, romanticized friendship into a productively complex one that nurtures the tension of expanding our comradeship as Indigenous and settler friends.

This friendship is a space I return to again and again, because it stands firm in reminding me of what I am fighting for. It holds space for me to flesh out the resurgent future I am dreaming of and generates space for me to iMessage my way towards a more inclusive reality. iMessage is a place where I do not have to explain why I choose to pick up decolonization while refusing reconciliation; a place where I can complain about being skirt-shamed and then strategize ways to (re)embrace my Indigenous feminisms (see Lee, “Seek spaces of Indigenous Feminist liberation without compromise”; Simpson, *Dancing on our turtle’s back*; Todd, “Moon lodge this way”) in the face of internalized Indian Act traditionalism and misogyny. The friendship negotiated between Indigenous-Emily and settler-Nicole is not afraid to pick up rigid boundary lines and jump rope with them, to utter the raw words of privilege that are often swept under the allyship rug, to expose the painful and resilient realities of co-existing as uneven bodies in this settler-colonial nation-state called Canada.

While keeping the tension in my social life is masked as an ugly obligation, keeping the tension in this friendship makes it easier to face the tensions that are waiting outside of our iMessaging bubbles. As Erica Violet Lee (“Seek spaces of Indigenous Feminist liberation without compromise”) calls for Indigenous women to find spaces that smell like sweetgrass, nurturing and holding up this friendship smells like sweetgrass. Carrying the sweetness of this iMessaging friendship in my pocket, I am reminded of the challenging generosity we continue to negotiate as we dream, create, and fight our way forwards as Indigenous and settler friends.

KEEPING DEMANDING IMESSAGE TENSIONS

Nicole



I cannot think the concept of “tension” without “extension” interjecting. I thread back to marathon anatomy study sessions during my undergraduate degree, memorizing quantifications of what muscles can do. I rehearsed my extension definition countless times: moving a limb into extension intensifies the angle between body parts. Anatomy-extension extends as it activates lengthening contraction tension in muscles (see McArdle, Katch, & Katch, *Essentials of exercise physiology*; Unglaub Silverthorn, *Human physiology: An integrated*

approach). When I grip my iPhone in my palm and extend my elbow, my hand travels toward my waist, expanding the space between my shoulder and my fingers. When I do extension with our Indigenous-settler friendship, what happens? I think first of *exten(d)sion*; a stretching, a moving into the felt pressure of tension in a muscle belly and in friendship. As a white settler, our friendship moves my body into differently-perceptible tension(s). For me, this is less a question of naming these tensions than it is a question of accountability, of being response-able (Haraway, “Anthropocene”) to the tensions that Emily and I generate together. Our friendship extends the spaces of tension that my settler body can inhabit, generously extending my possibilities for participating in desettling, anti-neoliberal, inventive politics. In the same pulse, the tensions I can extend into are necessarily limited. I think of Erin Manning’s articulation of an emergent politics, where “it’s the movement of thought pulled forth from the relations of tension that make up the work” (“Creative propositions for thought in motion”, 16). It is *how* the Emily-Nicole friendship extends my/our tensions that actually create the tensions that Emily and I confront in our Indigenous-settler friendship.

At the same time, I'm also thinking a lot about what is required to maintain that

And I think it is a lot. Like, how demanding is keeping the tension?

I suspect it is also unevenly demanding, no?

Okokok, and I struggle with this sometimes because.. I don't want to make excuses for settlers (hello, colonialism!) but at the same time I'm learning how to say no. I'm learning how to not just create, but to maintain boundaries. Saying, "I need to drum now" is very complex. Do I just walk away, and drum and sing until I'm ready to come back? Or, do I expect settlers to create a safe space so I CAN drum? Not that this is an either/or.

But friendship-wise? I feel like you always have to be on your toes, always on. Seems exhausting.

Especially when Indigenous peoples are all like, DONT ALWAYS ASK US WHAT TO DO (which is very valid), but then.. what do you do?

And maybe this isn't my responsibility. Believe me, I would LOVE to not pick up desettling work, but.. I kinda have to. Realities of living in a settler colonial country.

Boundaries are hard.

It matters that the space of tension is between us, just as extending my elbow is filled with different potential than when I extend my knee. This is our *extension*, one that I have to make tense because our tension demands accountability. This tension, our relational space of co-created, uneven, nourishing tension, needs to be cared for because it is what we have in (un)common. We are generating a collective but un-shareable node of tension, a Emily-Nicole tension, where the tension demands that I can only ever strain against a small fraction of the messes of ongoing settler colonialism. I know that there is an unimaginable mass of tensions that my body being on this stolen land engenders—for

Emily, for myself, for all of the people and lives that I might never meet—but that to keep the tension demands that I make the tension perceptible and trace how I make tensions matter.

My ethic of caring for tension echoes Isabelle Stengers, who argues that those who are embedded within a delimited genealogy of knowledge must never “consider that problems ‘are’ transversal, but see that connections are something that must be created ... this is the only way of succeeding in creating problems rather than receiving them ready-made” (“History” 9). I do not assume that there should be tension at the heart of Emily-Nicole friendships, nor that the tension we have cultivated will endure; if I let my extended elbow dangle by my side, it is no longer loaded with the same elastic energy. I also do not assume that Emily should confront the tensions I create. Rather, I take tension as something that requires tending: *extend*. Keeping the tension then, for me, is a practice of extension (of limbs and friendship). It matters to our friendship that I bring physiology to this article, a knowledge built upon the voyeurism of colonial scientists who crafted a knowledge on the un-consenting flesh of minoritized humans and animals, but also a knowledge that, as a settler, I have been trained in (or financed in-

to)—a knowledge that I must claim in order to disrupt (Willey). Keeping the tension as friendship: *extending, extension, extend.*

DEPLOYING FRIENDSHIP TENSION

Emily + Nicole

so, that's why I think a heavier half of the demands of maintaining the tension tilts toward you. Because, sure as a settler its is certainly much easier for me to layer myself in a nice little space of non-tension and never confront settler colonialism in a meaningful way, so I guess there is something about foregrounding it that is demanding of me. But, I am privileged enough to be able to even use the words "foregrounding tension". I'm reading you say that you don't get to do that, that settler colonialism makes it so you can't dabble with tension.

maybe it's not a useful question - which is harder, maintaining tension from here or there, from within or elsewhere?

or, maybe only settlers can think that it isn't a useful question. Ha.

Not this friendship.

But I'm so.. consumed in colonialism, that I diminish the pain, the fear, the shame.. that lives inside my body.

I wonder though, with what you said about being entrenched in colonialism, does our friendship change how that consuming happens? I feel like it does refigure what parts of me (and my work) and when and where and how, are vulnerable to colonialism.

We are in the forest with a group we know well. Emily is Drumming, Nicole is kicking a deflated soccer ball, and a stranger interjects, asking Emily about Drum. I notice this lady immediately, and am very aware of how loudly she is crashing through the forest to get to me/us. I do not have to notice the presence of this interjector immediately, as I am focused on the moving bodies and rhythms that surround Drum. The lady approaches me and I am immediately uncomfortable with how close she is to my body and to Drum's body. I catch her disruption when I hear a strange adult voice over the sound of children's boots on the forest floor. I try to move backwards as her hand reaches out to

touch Drum. I look over and see Emily wrap her arms, shoulders, neck over Drum. I look around to see if anyone else has noticed the entitled human standing in front of me, asking too many questions and causing my heart to pound harder in my chest. I share eye contact with a colleague as I debate if I should interrupt this conversation, trying to assess what my interjection might pause. I find angry looks being thrown at the unwelcome stranger by colleagues' eyes. I worry about the limited words that I might put together accidentally camouflaging Emily's refusal or somehow settler-softening the power of confrontation for this stranger and I stay crouched on the forest floor. I feel a numb coldness flow through my blood, paralyzed by the unexpectedness of her presence, her questions, her body too close to mine; while this happens more than I care to admit, I am thrown off-guard by her appearance in

the forest with raging words refusing to tumble off my tongue. I am so unsure how to negotiate allyship when I haven't been invited into this encounter, and as I debate why I am allowing my need for a signal to silence friendship, I do not move. I hastily turn away from the woman, the unease of this encounter lingering, her thick French accent creeping along my skin, unsettling anxiety burning in my body.

Of course, but I also think that I have to know that me, my skeleton, even being here does that too, right? There's one thing in me saying those words, and thinking that I can say them as a way of me reminding myself to be accountable to the privilege (and absurdity) in noticing that the labour of tension can even be optional for me (but you reading those words as another kind of reminder), but there's also a gap in settler accountability if I think words are the only way that I remind you of that too (at least, in my head). That I'm here, on stolen land, feels like it does the same thing, differently?

so then, keeping the tension, caring for that tension, has to also involve me attending to how I make it visibly accountable and quietly accountable?

That's really painful to think about. You remind me of the permanence of settler colonialism, Nicole. What do we even do with that?

This moment lingers as I pick Drum up in public spaces, fear prickling in my mind when I raise my voice to match Drum's heartbeat, dreading the next settler intrusion into these moments of ceremony. Scrolling through the words so carefully written by Indigenous women, I have found a strange and unexpected comfort in knowing that I am not alone in these invasive encounters. Unraveling this settler entitlement to Indigenous bodies, Erica Violet Lee shares how "beaded earrings are "beau-

tiful" magnets for white folks who can never resist grabbing at our ears without our consent, as if they expect we're made of the same hard plastic as the little Indian dolls sold in Canadiana gift shops" (Lee, "My ancestors survived colonization" para 20.). White hands reach out to claim flesh that was never meant to survive under the policies of the Indian Act.

This moment lingers while I hear Te Kawehau Hoskins and Alison Jones ("Lessons") speak of uneven risk as a question made real in Indigenous-settler friendship. I trace how my settler body necessarily confronts a different regime of risk than Emily, a (de)settler "risk" that (absurdly) allows for me to even debate my participation.

I think I'm also getting stuck because, really, what's in this for you? Indigenous futurisms do not concern themselves with settler futurities.

It's like this weird play, where Indigenous peoples have to be super self-centred, but settlers that are allies, are considered self-sacrificing.

that makes me think also about unlearning how to grapple with tensions

I've definitely been taught ways to take on tension. But I think that maybe there's also a forgetting of those strategies required for our friendship?

So, would keeping the tension be more like a "neutral" resting state of our friendship - tending to energies and emojis and maybe making space to acknowledge, but not necessarily grapple with the unknowable/uncommon tensions between us? And then deploying the tension, is like.. when we write, when we present, when we put the tension to work. Deploying the tension means taking seriously the ebbs and flows of our friendship that you had mentioned before.

maybe it's a process, period?

being accountable to any Indigenous-settler scholar friends ethic/label is overwhelming. Necessarily terrifying, and something that I very much want to learn my way into, but intimidating?

But. It's deploying that tension outside of iMessage? That's intimidating.

Have we done that?

I know that I did not want, or need, a settler saviour to bravely fly in and save me from the white hands that felt entitled to my Indian body. Yet I grapple with the budding tensions that emerged in our Indigenous-Emily and settler-Nicole friendship, where boundaries between help and safety became blurry: what do I expect/demand/need from a radical friendship that is committed to solidarity? Reflecting on this moment, I did not want another settler body to take up space, but my best friend heart ached at Emily describing the magnitude of the disruption, the violence it did to her resurgent decolonial self-love, and we debated what our friendship asks of one another in places with limited space: what do I need if I want to care for radical friendships that truly keep the tension, even when tracing tension becomes very (unevenly) tough? We created ways of coping-attending-deploying together, with iMessaging the

tensions; we iMessaged for hours, days, and even weeks and months through this encounter, imagining what it demands of our Indigenous-settler friendship. We are still unsure what the possibilities for deploying our tensions, without always knowing what our tensions are capable of, might entail. We debate our processes of friendship and iMessage through our deploying of the tensions we keep in a productive, safe, politicized, confronting, and imperfect way; we foreground deploying our tensions, not tensions we have deployed.

IMESSAGING (OUR FEMINISMS + ACADEMIC) FUTURITIES

iMessaging (as) Survivorship Futurities

Emily

Hmm. So, I was just about to write, "And for me, I'll deploy your words of 'you remind me of settler colonialism' as 'benefitting, complicity, perpetuation of ongoing colonialism'". But then, I think I just need to hear it as you wrote it, as 'I remind Emily of the permanence of settler colonialism'?

because, otherwise it seems like re-centering nice settler words. Complicity in ongoing settler colonialism feels a lot different than, I remind Emily of the permanence of settler colonialism. I choose to be accountable to your words, here.

I think it's very, very important that we think about the language we're using. What does it mean to recentre nice-settler-academic words in the face of words that are real and maybe painful?

I refuse to entertain an illusion of "decolonizing the academy." My decolonizing projects will not attend to the dismantling of a colonial institution. Yet as an Indigenous woman who haunts the hallways of the ivory tower, I demand an academia that is softer, more forgiving, and accountable. This academic world is always in flux, expanding into new fields of study and proudly proclaiming the innovation of their carefully chosen students—how is it that Indigenous intel-

ligence is still re-labelled with colonial theoretical titles? In the face of rapidly spreading knowledge about the cultural genocide of residential schools (see Sinclair, Wilson and Littlechild, *Honouring the truth, reconciling for the future*), and the incorporation of land acknowledgments into university protocol, why do Indigenous students continue to grapple with the debilitating anxieties of navigating post-secondary education? You cannot dispossess us from our lands, wrap up our identities with assimilative Indian Act policies, and then laugh when you try to ruin our bodies in academia. Canadian universities are built on ancestral bones, stand on top of bloody legacies, and interrupt land pedagogies (see Simpson, "Land as pedagogy") with manicured green-spaces creeping with English ivy. I need an academia that is steeped in responsibility to Indigenous peoples, cleaving open room for survivorship while working diligently to move beyond this.

(Side note: Eve Tuck always throws me off a little bit with her "i'm not saying not to write about pain. I'm saying that's what they want you to do" and that's very salient in my mind right now)

(Triiiiicky. Because, I want to ask if there are kinds of pain that are differently accountable to what Eve Tuck is saying - like, if writing about caring for tension and deploying tension differs from just writing about tension. But I also have absolutely no business wondering that question)

I honestly have NO idea. I feel like I'm biased because I'm going through a lot of pain right now and I want to write about it. It matters. And it matters when settlers easily dismiss it.

One of my fav tweets is from Joshua whitehead, "sometimes a decolonial "love you" sounds like, "im in pain with you""

The complexities of decolonial love and ally/friend/ships.

Speaking to survivorship in academia means generating space for the complexities of Indigenous love and pain—not a pain that is expected from settlers with an “at risk” label, greedily gobbled up as a certificate of lived Indigenous authenticity (see Tuck and Yang, *R-words*), or even one that is easily dismissed with an impatient eye roll. I need space for the tensions of being an Indigenous body swimming in a sea of white theorists, white theories, and white classrooms. I need an academia that is not afraid to centre the pain-full,

anxiety-riddled, extraordinarily resilient experiences of Indigenous peoples, unraveling this expectation that Indigenous minds do not belong in “higher” colonial education systems.

A survivorship academic futurity is both radical and gentle; a decolonial love coupled with pain and rage (see Flowers, “Refusal to forgive”) will unapologetically push against the restrictive rules of academia, elbowing appropriative theoretical books in the spine, speaking justifiably angry words that unplug fingers from ignorant settler ears—making space and demanding space for itself in institutions simmering with impatience, fear and hate. The embodied ethics I expect from my corner of the academy is for Indigenous survivorship to be present in our universities, rooting our academic futurities in gentle kindness and tender generosity (see Justice, “Carrying the fire”).

As millennial female graduate students, Nicole and I have iMessaged extensively about our respective experiences as feminist women in the academy. Our emoji-studded conversations repeatedly return to the ethics and practices we hope to embody as emerging writers, researchers, and instructors; our iMessaging relationship hints at the academic futurities we both dream of as radical Indigenous and settler allies. As I seek to (re)map dissected Indigenous bodies, and Nicole aims to engage fatty-moving-muscling bodies, we each tend to our respective feminisms that inspire us to research bodies differently. Envisioning an academic world that refuses the permanence of cis-het-

ero-white-settler-men with our feminist “softness,” we embrace the destructive strength of our menstrual cramps, the power of our perfectly timed eggplant emojis, and the ass-kicking abilities of our moccasin boots and Birkenstocks, as we take on the tired, old ways of *doing* in the academy.

iMessaging (as) Transdisciplinary Futurities

Nicole

Ha. And I've been thinking a lot about transdisciplinarity lately, and what that might mean for our friend-scholarship. I've been dropping a lot of 'transdisciplinary's in my writing and I'm not sure that what I mean by it is even what it means.

Or, if what it does in my work (and our messages) is what the academy intends it to do.

Because I think it is still, an in-the-works thing.

What DOES that look like?

The word “transdisciplinary” makes 12 appearances in my latest dissertation article draft. My transdisciplinarity owes to numerous brilliant feminist science studies and feminist new materialisms scholars, as I echo their calls to fashion “incorporations, appropriations, and rerecordings of inherited discourses in affective transdisciplinary labour” (Roosth and Schrader 6) capable of cultivating “epistemologically eclectic mode[s] of engaging with the body” (Pollock 3). I am so inspired by invitations to make critiques of Euro-Western sciences proliferate and be bodied otherwise (see Willey), to trace pedagogies as they animate physiologies (Lenz Taguchi, “The concept as method”), and to inhabit the borders of dominant disciplinary silos (Stengers, “Introductory notes on an ecology of practices”). I can endeavor to do this in my research and craft productive, rigorous, precarious amalgamations of transdisciplinarity; I can activate what an immediately accessible academic transdisciplinarity might ask of me. In doing so, I often fall into drawing finessed onto-epistemological loops around my transdisciplinary imaginings as I participate in an exciting but coherent transdisciplinarity. This is my practiced shortcoming, not that of the feminist science studies, feminist new materialisms, or post-qualitative education scholars I owe. Although the parts of my transdisciplinary bundles might profoundly trouble one another, it remains that these dual/multiple knowledge fragments are made perceptible and hospitable to one another when I transform them into text. That physiologies and pedagogies can forge collective provocations is the crux of my doctoral research, which assumes the possibility of transdisciplinarity and requires a specific sort

of transdisciplinarity. While I work hard to articulate methodological experiments that do not “approach practices as they are—physics as we know it, for instance—but as they may become” (Stengers, “Introductory Notes” 186) and orient toward productivity and problems rather than mounting multidisciplinary response-solutions to problems of pedagogies and physiologies, I wonder how I double back on myself to tie together bundles of a very partial sort of transdisciplinarity.

When Emily and I iMessage transdisciplinarity, we are not doing a transdisciplinarity where each moment, nor the content of each message, is wholly intelligible to another. Emily and her Indigenous feminisms and resurgent (re)mapping interventions do not dialogue with ease with myself and my post-qualitative early-childhood education feminist science studies allegiances. There exists no manageable cross-talk, no traversing of a parallel disciplinary plane. We are typing into practice a tense—an extended—transdisciplinarity, one where what it is to transit and what it is to be disciplinary are crafted differently and momentarily (Lather, “Top ten+ list”). In our conversations, movement requires digital space, the fast taps of our thumbs, and fleshed intellectual motion across ontological and political spaces that necessarily refuse entrance (or that we refuse to trespass) and force us to work in the spaces where we become incomprehensible to one another. I think of the “trans” in our transdisciplinarity as a precise mode of moving, of “politics as movement, not as ‘a’ movement, [where] we open it to the outside rather than understand it as an intrinsic, predetermined relationship. This is not a politics that rests on representing or speaking for a single group of people to a wider audience, but is grounded in bringing bodies together in and through space” (Rotas and Springgay 386). This transit demands immediacy, unintelligibility, and accountability, but it never expects that this answerability will ever rest with one of us holding the other to account; it is an accountability to what we negotiate together, not an expectation that accountability will emerge by virtue of our being in digital conversation. Our iMessaging transdisciplinarity needs to be content in being unable to transit, as Emily and I often find ourselves saying to one another “I have absolutely no idea what that means for your project, but I would think the problem like this...”.

(I'm excited to read this, because yeah, what even is transdisciplinary?)

(and I'm excited to read your words, because yeah, what even is imessaged millennial Indigenous-settler friendship feminism?)

Our iMessages are filled with artifacts, from GIFs to academic quotes, screen captures of Twitter threads to moments of writer's block, emojis to lengthy narratives about our research days. We are

disciplinary, but loyal to the disciplines beget by the tensions we keep and deploy in our friendship conversations. We are academic, but perhaps not in a way the academy might welcome (or publish). I think of Haraway's articulation of tentacular thinking, of the need to generate modes of collective inquiry that cultivate practices that "make a difference, they weave paths and consequences but not determinism" (*Staying* 31). I imagine our iMessages layering on top of tentacular thinking, an iPhone screen-protector sheen of partiality; our iMessaged transdisciplinarity is about paths and consequences but also about the uneven imperfections of the paths and consequences we generate together (see Hoskins and Jones, "Lessons in fluid encounters"). Our iMessaged transdisciplinarity is hard, and it often undoes my critical early childhood and feminist science studies propositions as they are in the process of unfurling. My iMessaged transdisciplinarity is not often Emily's iMessaged transdisciplinarity. We do a transdisciplinarity that exposes my words to the trouble in being transdisciplinary in millennial Indigenous-settler academic friendships. It highlights how the work in which I invest calls for increased academic transdisciplinarity and can be complicit in perpetuating existing forms of scholarly engagement and conversation; it also makes clear how collaboratively divergent transdisciplinarity are already threaded through our theorizing and spurs me toward an ethic of transdisciplinarity that allows for neither the transit nor disciplines that my settler body (of scholarship) knows now.

Writing Knowledge Futurities with iMessage

Emily

Why can Emily iMessage and then totally seize up in front of a computer.

Valid questions.

#oralculture

Ugh. I'm trying to make this sentence work: "why is it a bajillion times easier to iMessage than to write an article?"; but EASIER is not the right word. I'm not trying to say easier, different?

iMessaging has evolved into a space where words flow, ideas are fleshed out, and the block that exists between my heart, thoughts, and posed fingertips on laptop keys disappears. In academia, the knowledge that escapes from the lips of Indigenous women is often silenced.

This erasure, as a purposeful violence enacted in the academy, mirroring the greater systemic issue of colonial gender-based violence in Canada—where the rape, kidnapping, and murder of targeted bodies is not just widespread, but normalized (see Arvin, Tuck and Morrill; Simpson, “Anger, resentment & love”). Turning to Facebook status updates, Instagram captions, tweets, and blog posts, Indigenous women have found “alternative” ways to raise their voices and hold up the enduring efforts and resilience of Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit folks in the midst of targeted violence. Yet these methods of sharing have also been cast aside as holding little weight in the academy. As a young Indigenous graduate student, I am endlessly inspired by the unapologetic fierceness and fearlessness of Indigenous women and Two Spirit scholars that are paving the way for me to do the same (@KimTallBear; @tuckeve; @justicedanielh; @apihtawikosisan; @sammynock; @BillyRayB; @kwetoday; @ZoeSTodd; @EricaVioletLee; @thesarahhunt; @betasamosake; @RedIndianGirl¹). Collecting pieces of Indigenous intelligence and truths to store in my bundle, these women lend me life with their words, nudging me to hold my head up high in this hostile world.

It's more.. like.. fluent? Or some word similar to that. It flows so much easier. There's no block.

I think it's interesting you think that. I actually think I have more words when I write.

Because, in a word doc I can go back.

in iMessage, it's gone once I hit that button and I usually hit the button before my brain has caught up to my fingers.

I think that's why I like it.

But, honestly, it comes back to pain for me.

I do EVERYTHING to not feel because of the colonial traumas I carry in my body.

And my Haudenosaunee teachings are all about listening to my heart knowledge.

It's about being in my body.

So that.. effortless flow of words, is necessary.

Otherwise they get stuck.

it matters that our iPhones are with us, that they count our steps and catch our iMessages

Hm.. yes, the pace/temporality of iMessaging really does matter for me. I think formal academic writing still feels too.. disconnected for me. Being a good speaker is ESSENTIAL in Haudenosaunee culture (ask anyone, we are such a chatty people). But being a good speaker is nurtured in a web of relationships.

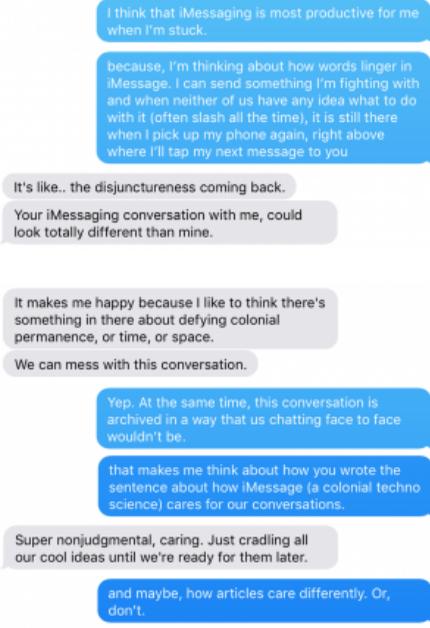
iMessaging feels closer to that tradish knowledge, then articles.

In light of this, I have found that the quickened pace and fleeting temporality of iMessaging matters for my writing. I often feel disconnected from the rigidity of formal academic writing. The frustration that mounts inside my body, as I stutter to translate heart knowledge and ancestral teachings into academic jargon is paralyzing. I overthink every letter, losing myself in the process, allowing doubt, fear, and insecurity to navigate and overtake my writing. As a Haudenosaunee woman, I gather inspiration from how we are well-known for our lengthy ceremonies. As peoples of an oral culture, every word we speak is significant, dripping with knowledge, carefully shared and crafted between generations. In our Creation Story, as Sky Woman danced and sang this world into existence, she outlined the original instructions by which the Haudenosaunee live their lives—we are the

ones responsible for weaving a complex web of loving kinship relations. My body, my voice, and my words must be accountable to more than just the academy. As Nicole and I found our way to an iMessaging friendship that cares for our conversations, I have found myself tiptoeing closer to a writing praxis that resonates with my embodied Haudenosaunee knowledge. iMessaging fragmented words, fractured ideas, and relevant memes carves open a path where my voice can flourish and my words are cradled in a digital web of human interaction. My writing, freed from the heaviness of colonial expectation, is effortlessly transported across the country, instantly appearing in the Messages app of Nicole's iPhone—a space we both nurture so that my words are able to take on a persistence that defies the systemic silencing and erasure of Indigenous women, girls, and Two Spirit people in Canada.

Writing Careful Futurities with iMessage

Nicole



Writing articles is immensely comforting to me. I take (often indulgent) joy from filling the vibrant white pages that live on my laptop screen with words made of pedagogical inquiry, Photoshop art, scholars whose texts nourish me, and my own histories of knowledge. I am overtly aware that my cozy relationship with writing owes to the “*perceptual style* and *habits of seeing*” (Jackson and Mazzei, *Thinking* 134, original emphasis) that I have been trained into; I am often reminded that I am in “grade 22,” having been, for my entire adult life, a constantly complicit participant in the dominant Euro-Western systems of normative education that my ancestors built. I do not take the same comfort in iMessaging as Emily. iMessage demands of me a different habit of seeing, an

interruptive perceptual pace, and an unfamiliar pattern of making words real (see Jackson and Mazzei, “). Plugging on text into another”; Koro-Ljunberg & MacLure, “Provocations, re-un-visions, death, and other possibilities of “data””; Pacini-Ketchabaw, Taylor, and Blaise, *Decentering the human in multispecies ethnographies*). We cultivate iMessage tempos that are both urgent and slow—urgent, as we pull out our iPhones in moments of crisis to tap into our collaborative brain trust, and with a slowness that for me resonates with slow science as I work “to activate the possible, and not to describe the probable, that is, to think situations with and through their unknowns when I can feel them” (Stengers, “Another Science” 1). iMessage makes itself felt in a mode that co-writing in a shared Word document does not. To schedule “iMessaging time” into my day feels ludicrous, as our iMessaging has its own momentums that announce themselves with phone vibrations and that ebb and flow in concert with the unfolding of our days.

I carry our iMessage threads with me, pulling out my iPhone in the middle of the grocery store to add to our conversations about smashing the colonial heteropatriarchy as I throw an industrially farmed and water-devouring avocado in my basket. Often I cannot iMessage perfectly articulated bundles of words, because my fingers are too cold to keep the pace. There is no “save” function with iMessage, no space where my words hang in limbo on a page but not logged; I hit “send” and my thinking transits to Emily. iMessage, then, enacts a curatorial care for our conversations; it carries our chats, keeping them constantly within arm’s reach, while we nurture our own urgency that is patient and slow and generous and contradictory.

I like the idea of how our iMessaging friendship hints at the academic futurities we’re dreaming and creating.

I think it’s cool, because I feel like this paper was actually us deploying our tensions. Working through that awful moment in the forest, and swapping things we had written and then fangirled over lines the other one had written.

Like.. C’mon, world. Catch up. Millennial academic bestie friendships are KILLING it. 🙌🙌

I re-read that paragraph and chuckle at how so-called millennial it sounds. I always have my iPhone near me. We iMessage all the time. Such a summary lacks the precision with which Emily and I iMessage, where we write with tensions that demand a generous urgency. I think of Erin Manning’s imagining

of an ethic of research-creation performance that “is emergent anew each time, yet carries a precision of technique” (“The Dance” 344), of how Elizabeth Adams St. Pierre (2014) writes of her own collaborative potentialities “but only in a certain way” (374), and how Elizabeth Wilson stakes a terrain that resolutely “does endorse biology” (27). Our iMessaging methodologies are bounded differently than those Manning, St. Pierre, or Wilson inhabit, but I borrow from them to trace the contours of our practice as a method of caring. This is a precision that is not prescriptive but one of intentionality, of keeping and deploying the tension, and of iMessaging survivorship and transdisciplinarity. I iMessage many friends, but Emily and I allow for a different ethos of messaging that is more laboured, that tugs at more precision. I do not simply need iMessage to finish my dissertation or to imagine what my research contributions might look like into the future. I need to *iMessage (with) Emily*. I need to iMessage our Indigenous-settler friendship because of the tensions we keep and the precision we curate, because this is a precision that gives to iMessage the power to make us think how we can activate the unknowns between

our lives (see Stengers, “Introductory notes on an ecology of practices”). To deploy the tensions our iMessaged friendship cares for feels like an ethics relevant to the academic futures that I need to help create.

**IMESSAGING PROCESS AND PAUSE, AGAIN AND AFTER,
ACROSS AND APART**

As we look toward how our iMessage collaborations might continue to evolve, we have only tentative responses to question, “*how* does iMessaging flesh, friendship, and futurities matter?”: iMessage is present in our collaborations and throughout this article, because our iMessaging practices are entangled with the engagements, flesh, friendship, and futurities we make possible through the bodies, tensions, and temporalities we craft with iMessage. Thinking with flesh, we take seriously how our hands clutch our iPhones as our fingerprints leave traces of the digital words we have beamed to one another across their screens. As we consider how tension matters to our Indigenous-settler millennial academic friendship, we sit with the messiness of relying on expensive, commoditized technologies to sustain collaborations we hope might chisel at the heteropatriarchal habits of our academic communities. We do not have any interest in deploying our friendship toward traditional academic ends, such as increasing our publication count, or mounting “interdisciplinary” or “reconciliation” research collaborations. We carry the tensions of our friendship alongside the uneven, difficult work of inheriting and inhabiting shared and incommensurable worlds. Imagining futurities, we notice how iMessage lends a patient urgency to our scholarship, leaning into a temporality of collaborative work we cannot otherwise access in the academy, wherein notifications of our messages instantaneously light up our iPhone screens but then faithfully linger until we are ready to read, reply, debate, or return to the unintentional archive of scholarship our iPhones hold for us. We take seriously iMessaging, not iMessage: iMessage matters as our mode of Indigenous-settler millennial academic friendship *only with* the kinship we make real.

We extend these partial responses to how our friendship has become entangled with iMessage into to questions of how we might continue to hold up the tensions of our friendship in our academic work: if mobili-

ty matters to how we iMessage bodies in our Indigenous-settler millennial academic friendship, how might we generate active, lively conversational spaces that stretch beyond academic conversational conventions with our students, colleagues, and collaborators? Where our work of maintaining our tensions becomes the generative backbone of our Indigenous-settler friendship, how might we cultivate gentle and uncompromising, demanding and evolving tensions throughout our academic communities, while *doing tension* as a method of love, friendship, and scholarship? How might we enact our iMessage transdisciplinarity and temporalities beyond the skeletons of our iPhones, working to collaboratively imagine not-yet-present academic practices that value lingering and urgency, perfect sentences and inexact wonderings, returning and responding, and tension and intention as modes of relating that do scholarship and Indigenous-settler millennial academic friendship in the same breath?

this was definitely the most nourishing, tricky, fun + hilarious, absolutely most challenging co-writing process that I've ever been part of. The best three grad school days that I've had in a while. Thank ya.

Yaaas! I'm excited we pulled this together 🥳 having these pieces of our iMessaging academic friendship FINALLY on paper is going to be so, so worthwhile! Now, time to hit pause, indulge in all the chocolate and wait for edits.

Do you think that the colonial heteropatriarchy, and our iPhones, feel the teeny critical relationality smash we tried to create these last couple days?

100

Um, absolutely. I like to think that the fragile egos composing the structure of settler colonialism have sensed a disturbance in how our allyfriendship is iMessaging it's way to an Indigenous-settler relationship otherwise.



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NOTES

1. Our understanding of how we might begin and the necessity to reimagine futurities and temporalities borrows inspiration from Indigenous scholars who emphasize the urgency in resisting and reconfiguring settler-colonial conceptions of space and time (see Belcourt, "On 'moving too fast', or decolonial speed"; Morrill et al., "Before dispossession, or surviving it"; Rifkin, "Queering Indigenous pasts"; Rowe and Tuck, "Settler colonialism and cultural studies"; Tuck and Ree, "A glossary of haunting"). We situate our work as a tentative, partial practice of making public how our iMessaging orients us toward specific pauses, archives, words, and exchanges that matter to our Indigenous-settler millennial academic

friendship because they complexify the temporal and disciplinary contours of our (scholarly) writing and reading habits.⁴¹

2. At the time of publication, @RedIndianGirl has been continually censored by Twitter and their account has been blocked multiple times. We are citing the account that was active as we wrote this article, but want to note that this Twitter handle has necessarily changed, and continues to change, to avoid ongoing censorship.⁴²