Norgaard, Kari Marie. 2019. *Salmon and acorns feed our people: colonialism, nature and social action.* New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press. ISBN 9780813584195. $36.95.

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In her book, *Salmon and acorns feed our people: colonialism, nature & social action*, Kari Marie Norgaard weaves insights from the Karuk Tribe with examples from the ecological management of the Klamath River to highlight the ecological aspects of settler-colonialism. Throughout the book, Norgaard conveys the narratives and insights of the Kuruk people to demonstrate the need to include Indigenous epistemologies and priorities in environmental sociology and food studies, as well as in political ecology more generally.

In the Introduction to the book, she introduces readers to the lands surrounding the Klamath River—a highly biodiverse temperate with a complicated history of environmental management, a region spanning Oregon and California, USA. Norgaard foregrounds her book by decrying the mainstream discursive "disappearance" of Indigenous lifestyles, beliefs, and ecological practices in the United States (p. 6). A central "aim of this book is to be part of the reweaving of Native presence, experience, and cosmologies back into [her] own discipline—to lend [her] mind to the efforts to 'unsettle' and 'decolonize' academic theory, especially sociology"—including recognizing the United States as a settler-colonial state (p. 7). To center these goals, Norgaard highlights the guiding principles of Karuk ecological management: the Karuk term *Pikyav*, or "to fix or repair", and cross-species relationships. Using new forms of sociological investigation, Norgaard explores the resulting need to restore this sophisticated non-Western ecology to the lands of the Klamath River.

Chapter 1 highlights the connections between constructions of race, and the history of environmental management in Kuruk lands. Norgaard argues that state actions including genocide and the lack of recognition of Karuk land tenure were parts of a racial project intent on extracting wealth from Indigenous communities. The chapter illustrates that the "present-day poverty and hunger in the Karuk Tribe have been produced through state processes that have centrally involved control and manipulation of the natural environment" (p. 31). Furthermore, she contends that increasing environmental degradation demonstrates the close ties between racial dominance and extractivism: "The natural environment has been crucial on a material level for the consolidation of state power and the generation of capitalist wealth for whites, on one hand, and at the symbolic level in shaping the perception that these processes were both inevitable and good, on the other" (p. 67). At its core, the chapter makes an argument that the management of the environment is a form of social power.

Chapter 2 distinguishes itself from other contemporary accounts of Indigenous communities and Indigeneity. Norgaard contends that to understand Karuk communities today requires sociologists to use a different lens of analysis that is appropriate for status quo power dynamics;

> …if settler-colonialism reorganizes the material flows of organisms and bodies and alters the spiritual flow of energies that move in and out of human communities, these ecological dynamics are fundamental to social and political power in ongoing, nuanced, and complex ways." (p. 73)

The chapter uses fire policy to explore a broader definition of ongoing colonial violence. While traditional Karuk land management practices created fire-resistant ridge systems, state-led fire suppression activities destroyed Karuk cultural artifacts, erased traditional ecological knowledge present in the fire ridges, and utilized practices that harmed the local ecology (p. 103-104). Norgaard's key takeaway here is that racial theories predominantly fail to acknowledge that the project of colonialism manipulates the natural world, manifesting in ecological alteration. The denial of Karuk fire management is part of an assimilationist goal. Norgaard explains how settler-colonialist frameworks avoid the need to consider such regimes through control of land as a central focus of power inequalities.

Chapter 3 shifts the book's focus to food, highlighting the links between the environment and human health. Norgaard's analysis does not use the common sociological analysis of individualistic medical and food practices and consumption. Instead, she focuses on how the Karuk Tribe has framed their community's ongoing health problems (including diabetes and cardiovascular disease) as a direct consequence of government land management policies that have prevented access to healthier foods present in traditional Karuk diets. The

chapter also highlights how the understanding of diet requires the tools of the prevailing Western notion of science, and the traditional ecological knowledge of the Karuk people. Unfortunately, as she points out, studies of environmental health, environmental justice and food have failed to center Indigenous perspectives.

Chapter 4 expands on the discussion of food, through an analysis of the role of salmon and fishing in the construction of gender identity in Karuk society. As Norgaard notes, tribal fishermen have a critical role in providing salmon for food, celebrations and ceremonies. The 'right' to fish is passed down through generations. Unfortunately, Chapter 4 primarily explores how river degradation has threatened the ability of Karuk fishermen to harvest salmon. Given the importance of this role for Karuk masculinity, Norgaard asks: what happens to masculine social roles in a world without salmon fisheries? Given that the natural world influences Karuk constructions of gender, she argues that colonial and racial violence is responsible for a significant disruption of the Karuk peoples' efforts to perform gender and practice traditional gender roles. Norgaard, in concert with other literature on Indigenous gender constructions, contends that gender "[has] been forcibly transformed through colonialism" and that "this trajectory of gendered colonial violence continues through environmental degradation today" (p. 168).

However, gender is just one way in which the emotions and identity of the Karuk interact so intimately with natural landscapes and non-human species. Thus, Chapter 5 forces an engagement with the emotional dynamics of environmental decline, and the intimate emotions the Karuk face given this decline. She engages with these significant mental health impacts. Norgaard asks a critical question: do the emotions associated with environmental change ascribe notions of racialized environmental hierarchy? There is a poignant argument that environmental justice scholarship highlights unequal physical health impacts, while failing to fully explore the mental harms of environmental injustices.

This book may be of significant value to political ecologists—especially those working in the field of environmental sociology because, as Norgaard notes, "Even disciplines such as political ecology, where understanding of the relationships between the natural world and political power is most developed can benefit from further integration of Indigenous experiences and perspective" (p. 15). The book underscores the general underrepresentation of Indigenous thought and perspectives in the social sciences. Increasing this representation requires a broader admission by non-Indigenous scholars that colonialism and cultural genocide are ongoing processes that must be countered, and that control of natural resources is one such expression of ongoing colonial violence. While even Norgaard admits her work in decolonizing sociological research is limited at times because she is a white, non-native scholar, the book demonstrates "how U.S. sociology and other social sciences developed on this continent have been shaped by settler-colonialism as much as or more than they have been shaped by postcolonialism" (p. 8). This realization makes it ever more important to engage with the Tuck and Yang's call to ensure that efforts to 'decolonize' methods are not simply metaphorical; instead, these efforts require tangible efforts at decolonization, work to recognize Indigenous sovereignty and the "contributions of Indigenous intellectuals and activists to theories and frameworks of decolonization" (2012, p. 3). Norgaard's work provides valuable insight into the importance of the environment for sociology, arguing that it is necessary to further theorize the role of the natural environment in the social environment. This work will also be useful for the field of food studies, as Norgaard also demonstrates the value in moving past commodified understandings of food that dominate the discipline.

References

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