



# Activating the Past to Intervene in the Present: The Aesthetics and Politics of Native American Removal Writing

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Indian Removal, the nineteenth-century policy of expelling Native peoples from their land, has generated a plethora of Native American writings up until the present day. All these writings negotiate forms of belonging: the identities of Native American collectives, their proprietary relationships, and their most intimate relations among one another. In my talk, I will introduce selected Removal writings in order to shed light on the ways in which they activate the past to intervene in the present. Through close readings of the literary texts and their legal contexts, I show how Native writers engage Indian Removal to work through and articulate forms of Native peoplehood that can serve the present and move toward the future.