

# Kent Academic Repository

## Full text document (pdf)

### Citation for published version

Richardson, Robbie J (2017) Review of 'Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire' by Coll Thrush. Review of: Coll Thrush . Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire. The Henry Roe Cloud Series on American Indians and Modernity. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Pp. 328. by UNSPECIFIED. Journal of British Studies . pp. 704-705.

### DOI

### Link to record in KAR

<https://kar.kent.ac.uk/71292/>

### Document Version

Updated Version

#### Copyright & reuse

Content in the Kent Academic Repository is made available for research purposes. Unless otherwise stated all content is protected by copyright and in the absence of an open licence (eg Creative Commons), permissions for further reuse of content should be sought from the publisher, author or other copyright holder.

#### Versions of research

The version in the Kent Academic Repository may differ from the final published version.

Users are advised to check <http://kar.kent.ac.uk> for the status of the paper. **Users should always cite the published version of record.**

#### Enquiries

For any further enquiries regarding the licence status of this document, please contact:

[researchsupport@kent.ac.uk](mailto:researchsupport@kent.ac.uk)

If you believe this document infringes copyright then please contact the KAR admin team with the take-down information provided at <http://kar.kent.ac.uk/contact.html>

*Waste into Weapons*, then, is an important book, one that firmly establishes recycling as an area of historical research and hints at possible avenues for future investigation. It is recommended reading for anybody who wishes to delve into the rich history of the Second World War.

Henry Irving  
 Leeds Beckett University  
[Henry.Irving@leedsbeckett.ac.uk](mailto:Henry.Irving@leedsbeckett.ac.uk)

COLL THRUSH. *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire*. The Henry Roe Cloud Series on American Indians and Modernity. New Haven: Yale University Press, 2016. Pp. 328. \$38.00 (cloth).  
 doi: 10.1017/jbr.2017.95

London, as writer and psychogeographer Iain Sinclair suggests, is a “city of disappearances,” marked as much by palimpsests and absence as it is by enduring monuments and geography. With *Indigenous London: Native Travelers at the Heart of Empire*, Coll Thrush picks up on this notion in order to add “another fugitive layer” to the spectral metropolis, telling the stories of Indigenous people from North America, New Zealand, and Australia who came to London by force and by choice from the sixteenth to the twenty-first centuries. Thrush is not the first to cover such visits, and the subject has been discussed in books such as Kate Fullager’s *The Savage Visit* (2012), Jace Weaver’s *The Red Atlantic* (2014), and Alden Vaughan’s *Transatlantic Encounters* (2006), but what makes *Indigenous London* valuable and unique is its more direct focus on the sites of London itself and its consistent effort to challenge “the narrative estrangement of urban and Indigenous histories” (13). It is a history of London centered on Indigenous experiences, and it makes two related and convincing claims about the connection between the city and Indigenous history: first, that “London has been entangled with Indigenous territories, resources, knowledges, and lives from the very beginning of its experiments with colonization,” and second, that “the urban spaces of London have been one of the grounds of settler colonialism” (15). Thrush admits that the term “Indigenous” is often necessarily vague in definition, but he broadly uses it to refer “to peoples who have been on the receiving end of capitalist imperialist expansion, primarily European in origin, over the course of the past five hundred years” (259n4).

The book is organized chronologically, with each chapter after the first focused around a time period and a theme, or “domains of entanglement” (23), and a series of six interludes between chapters. These interludes are written in free-verse poetry constructed partly out of archival fragments, each centered on an object that evokes Indigenous presence. Notably, many of these objects also evoke tragic or violent histories or the effacement of Indigenous people from historical record. For example, one such piece focuses on Robert Adam’s 1761 monument to Lieutenant-Colonel Roger Townshend in Westminster Abbey, which depicts two identical Native American warriors in a classical style. Townshend had died from a cannon ball in North America during the Seven Years’ (or French and Indian) War, and his elder brother George, another military man, brought a young Odawa boy back to England as a gift for a nobleman. This boy, treated as if he were nothing more than a curious souvenir, was used as a model for the monument, which still stands in the Abbey as a fraught and deeply troubling reminder of those who were taken to London by force and summarily forgotten. Thrush claims these interludes are meant to “refract the intimacies of encounter in a way that is not so much about academic arguments as it is about the soul of the matter” (26), and certainly they help orient the reader toward a deeper and affective engagement with the subjects of Indigenous London.

Thrush's chapters proceed chronologically. The first provides an overview of the shape and scale of the project, beginning with an historical fragment that refers to three men from the "Newe ffound Ile land" who were in London in 1501 or 1502. Though there is next to no concrete information on these strangers, who were guests of Henry VII and stayed for at least two years, they serve as a starting point for the entanglements between London and Indigenous people around the world. Thrush is careful to point out that while many of the people discussed in this book have been forgotten in London, they were never hidden at the time so much as they, like other histories, were disregarded by elites.

Chapter two recovers Algonquin visits to London from 1580 to 1630, including perhaps the best known of all Indigenous visitors, Pocahontas. These representatives of various eastern North American nations are framed alongside Tudor London's rise in power and global reach. Continuing the story, chapter three looks at perhaps the most widely studied series of visits, covering the various diplomatic missions from North America between 1710 and 1765. The so-called "Four Indian Kings," representatives of the Iroquois confederacy who visited London in 1710, have in particular been the subject of extensive scholarship. However, in connecting urban disorder with the upheaval in Indigenous societies—both focused around alcohol, violence, and gender relations—Thrush usefully reframes these visits and reveals the interconnectedness of Indigenous territory and metropolitan space. The fourth chapter similarly considers travelers from the latter half of the eighteenth century, including five Labrador Inuit, Mohegan preacher Samson Occom, and Mohawk leader Joseph Brant (Thayendanegea), revisiting their critiques and navigations of a city that featured both Enlightenment and squalor. In chapter 5, Thrush turns to Maori and Hawaiian visitors in the nineteenth century, exploring the Indigenous use of both their own and British customs and protocols. The sixth chapter, perhaps the most compelling in its choice of entanglements, he looks at various Indigenous visitors in the Victorian period, including sports teams and athletes, alongside the rise in suburban life and so-called muscular Christianity.

In the final chapter, Thrush looks at the more recent ways that various Indigenous peoples have reclaimed their history in the heart of empire. From numerous political visits by First Nations delegations from Canada looking to consult with the crown, to a 2006 monument installed at Southwark Cathedral to commemorate a Mohegan sachem who died in London in 1736, this chapter shows that Indigenous people have not entirely lost or forgotten their connections to a city whose history seems anything but Indigenous. The appendix features a series of three walks that the reader can take through the city and encounter the spaces and sites described in the book. This grounding in the landscape of London itself owes much to the psychogeography of walker-writers like Sinclair and Will Self, and is a useful exercise in reimagining the city as Indigenous space. It is this attention to concrete specificity that makes *Indigenous London* such an evocative book, vividly depicting scenes of the city from different periods while attempting to recover an ignored, but not hidden, Indigenous presence.

Robbie Richardson  
 University of Kent  
[R.richardson@kent.ac.uk](mailto:R.richardson@kent.ac.uk)

DANIEL TODMAN. *Britain's War: Into Battle, 1937–1941*. New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. Pp. 827. \$34.95 (cloth).  
 doi: 10.1017/jbr.2017.96

The first of two volumes, Daniel Todman's *Britain's War: Into Battle, 1937–1941* is a panoramic analysis of Britain's greatest challenge since 1066. Todman's is a serious book, but it