At first glance, Indigenous and Diasporic literatures can appear to be diametrically opposed, given Indigeneity’s associations with roots (groundedness in land or place) and diaspora’s associations with routes (forced exile or global migrancy). But as we’ll see, experiences of Indigeneity and diaspora are entangled within what Lisa Lowe calls “the intimacies of four continents.” Sometimes the relationship between Indigenous and diasporic experiences is one of irreconcilable difference … and sometimes it is one of solidarity based on similar histories of forced removal from a homeland, survival within a hostile “host” nation, and a decolonial or abolitionist struggle to imagine the world otherwise.

In this course, we’ll study a range of fiction, poetry and criticism by Indigenous writers (Heiltsuk, Anishinaabe, Cree, Syilx) alongside writers of the Black, Jewish, Lao, Chinese, and South Asian diasporas in Canada. Whatever their similarities and differences, reading Indigenous and diasporic literatures in tandem unsettles normative assumptions in settler-colonial Canada about citizenship, racialized belonging, gender fixity or fluidity, home and homelessness, memory and trauma, extractive capitalism and sovereignty.

**Proposed texts:**

Jeanette Armstrong, “Blood”  
Dionne Brand, from *Inventory*  
David Chariandy, *Soucouyant*  
Wayson Choy, *All That Matters*  
Tomson Highway, *Kiss of the Fur Queen*  
Eden Robinson, “Terminal Avenue”  
Leanne Simpson, *Noopiming: The Cure for White Ladies*  
Souvankham Thammavongsa, “The School Bus Driver”  
M.G. Vassanji, *The In-Between World of Vikram Lall*

*(plus critical readings by Daniel and Jonathan Boyarin, Robin Cohen, David Chariandy, Lily Cho, Daniel Coleman and more)*

**Proposed Assignments:**

3 short response papers  
Short essay  
Final Essay