# A Logico-Indigenous Critique of Atalia Omer's Critical Caretaker Binary

*Adam Stewart*

Crandall University

*Adam.Stewart@crandallu.ca*

## Abstract

In this article I do three things. First, I describe the logical coherence of the critic caretaker binary articulated by Russell T. McCutcheon, which argues that, in order to be successful at their work, it is necessary for scholars of religion to be critics, not caretakers, of the religions they study. Second, I describe the logical incoherence of the more recent critical caretaker binary proposed by Atalia Omer, which argues that, when they encounter conflict or social injustice, scholars of religion can successfully operate in a third mode of practice that combines those of critic and caretaker. Finally, using the example of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, I very briefly illustrate how the critical caretaker binary is not only illogical, but also ethically negligent, as its application among Indigenous subjects does violence to these individuals in ways that could be avoided by adhering to the critic caretaker binary.

## Introduction

I offer a critique of Atalia Omer's recent revision of Russell T. McCutcheon's well-known critic caretaker binary. To do this, I draw on resources from two academic disciplines that are foreign to most scholars of religion: information science and Indigenous studies. In developing the first part of my critique, I use the propositional language of Boolean algebra (a form of mathematical logic that is especially useful for representing the precise relationships within and between propositions) to demonstrate the fundamental logical incoherence of the critical caretaker binary. I petition readers who may lack a background in information science or the closely allied field of logic, to approach this portion of the paper with patience. I concede that the relevance of this exercise to the discussion of method

equinoxonline

within the academic study of religion might initially be unclear, but I do promise that, for those who stay the course, this procedure will prove beneficial, and provides what I believe to be the strongest corrective to the critical caretaker binary proposed to date. In order to assist readers, I have removed as much technical jargon as possible and have also included several figures that visually represent the key aspects of this first part of my critique.

The second part of my critique is much less demanding than the first, but is somewhat counterintuitive for those who are sympathetic to either the critical caretaker binary or the struggle for decolonization among Indigenous peoples. As an Indigenous Canadian—not unlike members of other populations such as women, racialized groups, and persons with disabilities—who is attuned to the severe harm that can be done when those who possess power attempt to act as advocates, carers, or protectors for those lacking power, I have always been uneasy about activism within the academic study of religion. Following McCutcheon, I think that instead of attempting to advance their careers through engaging in extracurricular political activism, scholars of religion should stick to doing what it is that they do best: describing and explaining religion's attendant economic, political, and social implications, the necessary foundational work that allows their research subjects, if they so desire, to intelligently engage in their own political discourses of activism, or, at the very least, have access to politically detached research of their own religious traditions. In this paper, I extend McCutcheon's argument to include not only scholars of religion, but also bureaucrats. When developing or implementing public policy involving religious data, I argue that, as is normal regarding public policy development and implementation relevant to disciplines such as education, engineering, health sciences, and sociology, it is reasonable to hold bureaucrats to the same standards as we do our colleagues. Using the example of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (TRC), I demonstrate how the application of the critical caretaker binary among Indigenous subjects does violence to these individuals in ways that could otherwise be avoided by adhering to the critic caretaker binary.

Before I begin in earnest, I feel that it is important to explain a few of the things that I do not intend to do in this paper. First, I do not describe the self-articulation of McCutcheon's critic caretaker binary in any great detail, nor do I chronicle the many debates that his proposal has generated (Griffiths 1998; Mack 2001; McCutcheon 1997a, 1997b, 1998; O'Connor 1998; Slater 2007). The critic caretaker binary is now so ubiquitous within the discipline of religious studies that I consider retracing its genealogy here redundant. Second, I similarly do not provide a forensic analysis of

Omer's self-articulation of the critical caretaker binary, nor do I narrate its related exchanges between Omer, McCutcheon, and others (McCutcheon 2012; Omer 2011, 2012, 2013a, 2013b; Simmons 2013a, 2013b). Again, this information is all quite accessible and does not help me to demonstrate my thesis. Finally, I wish to clearly state from the beginning that this paper is in no way an exercise in apologetics for the work of McCutcheon. Nor is this paper whatever it is that Omer understands as "parroting McCutcheon" (2013a). At the time of this writing, I have never spoken with, met, or otherwise communicated with McCutcheon. Rather, I am a scholar or religion who also happens to be an information scientist and an Indigenous Canadian who thinks that my somewhat peripheral perspective within the discipline might help to illuminate some of the fundamental problems with Omer's critical caretaker binary, the continued relevance of McCutcheon's critic caretaker binary within the academic study of religion, and the value that the critic caretaker binary could add to public policy discussions on matters involving religious data.

## The critic caretaker binary
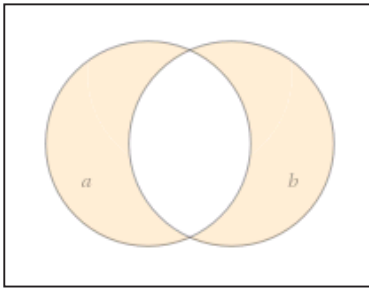


**Figure 1**: Venn diagram of the critic caretaker binary

Russell T. McCutcheon's critic caretaker binary (1997a, 1997b, 2001)—aptly summarized by the title of his book, *Critics Not Caretakers* (2001)—correctly argues that scholars of religion carry out their work in either one of two mutually-exclusive modes of practice: as a critic of cultural practices (*a and not b*) or a caretaker of religious tradition (*b and not a*), but not as both (*a and b or a or b*) nor as neither (*not a and not b*), and—moreover—that the only acceptable mode of practice is that of critic (*a and not b*) (see Figure 1). Put another way, the critic caretaker binary requires that scholars of religion always operate according to one or the other of these two modes of practice, but never both simultaneously, and that critic is the only correct mode of practice. Translated into the language of Boolean algebra, this type of argument is known as an exclusive disjunction, and can be symbolized in algebraic normal form as ($a \veebar b$). This formula is perhaps best semantically represented in Boolean algebra using the conjunctive normal form as (($\neg a \lor \neg b$) $\land$ ($a \lor b$)) or in common parlance as (*not a or not b and a or b*). As the truth table (a visualization of the truth or falsity of a proposition according to the variation of its components) for the critic caretaker binary illustrates less abstractly than does the Venn diagram (see Figure 2), only

one of the two modes of practice in the critic caretaker binary is ever true (or possible) at the same point in time, and when one mode of practice is true, the remaining mode of practice is always false.

| $a$ | $b$ | $a \veebar b$ |
|:---:|:---:|:---:|
| T | T | F |
| T | F | T |
| F | T | T |
| F | F | F |

Figure 2: Truth table for the critic caretaker binary

In other words, working our way up from the bottom to the top rows of the critic caretaker truth table (see Figure 2), it is not possible for scholars of religion to operate in neither the critic nor the caretaker modes of practice (*not a and not b*), it is only possible for scholars of religion to operate in the mode of caretaker when they are not operating in the mode of critic (*b and not a*), it is only possible for scholars of religion to operate in the mode of critic when they are not operating in the mode of caretaker (*a and not b*), and, finally, it is not possible for scholars of religion to operate in both the critic and caretaker modes of practice simultaneously (*a and b or a or b*). Whether or not one agrees with the practice of McCutcheon's critic caretaker binary, this methodological approach to the academic study of religion is, nonetheless, logically coherent.

### The critical caretaker binary
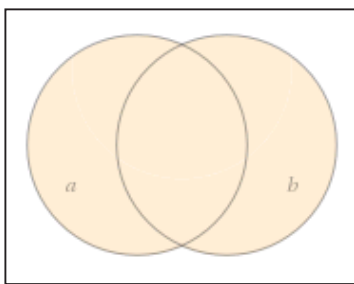


Figure 3: Venn diagram of the critical caretaker binary

Atalia Omer has recently proposed a revision of McCutcheon's critic caretaker binary (2011, 2013b) that, in addition to the two modes of practice described by McCutcheon, allows for a third mode of practice that she calls critical caretaker (see Figure 3). Like the critic caretaker binary, working our way up from the bottom to the top rows of the critical caretaker truth table (see Figure 4), the critical caretaker binary argues that it is not possible for scholars of religion to operate in neither the critic nor the caretaker modes of practice (*not a and not b*), it is possible for scholars of religion to exclusively operate in the mode of caretaker (although, like in the critic caretaker binary, this is discouraged) (*b and not a*), and that it is possible for scholars of religion to operate exclusively in the mode of critic (*a and not b*). Unlike the critic caretaker binary, however, the critical caretaker binary allows scholars of religion to combine the roles of critic and caretaker when they encounter conflict or social injustice, resulting in a third possible mode of practice (*a and b*).

When mapped onto Boolean algebra, the critical caretaker binary is, like the critic caretaker binary, an exclusive disjunction, and in algebraic normal form appears as ($a \veebar b \veebar (a \wedge b)$). When converted into conjunctive normal form, the formula is greatly simplified as ($a \vee b$) or in English as (*a or b*) or for our purposes as critic or caretaker. As should now be clear, by revising McCutcheon's critic caretaker binary to include critical caretaker as a third mode of practice, Omer eliminated any mutual-exclusivity that previously existed between the modes of critic and caretaker, making either mode of practice not simply possible, as is even the case in the critic caretaker methodology, but acceptable, which is strictly prohibited in the critic caretaker binary.

| $a$ | $b$ | $a \veebar b \veebar (a \wedge b)$ |
|---|---|---|
| T | T | T |
| T | F | T |
| F | T | T |
| F | F | F |

**Figure 4**: Truth table for the critical caretaker binary

By erroneously blurring the unique objectives of the critic and caretaker modes of practice, Omer effectively disengaged the inherent safeguard contained within the critic caretaker binary that ensures that the scholar of religion is always cognizant of which mode of practice they are in fact operating in: if scholars of religion are advocating, caring, or protecting, then they know that they are acting as caretakers and not critics given that the two modes of practice are mutually exclusive. Put even more directly, there is no difference between, on the one hand, Omer's critical caretaker binary which argues that scholars of religion can operate exclusively in the mode of critic (*a and not b*), operate exclusively in the mode of caretaker (although this is discouraged) (*b and not a*), or operate in the dual mode of critical caretaker (*a and b*) and, on the other hand, that scholars of religion can operate in either the mode of critic or caretaker at their own discretion (*a or b*). From a purely logical perspective, Omer's critical caretaker binary ($a \veebar b \veebar (a \wedge b)$) is no different than a methodological approach that allows scholars of religion to choose the mode of critic or caretaker at will ($a \vee b$), a fact that is clearly demonstrated when one compares the truth table for the critical caretaker binary with the truth table for ($a \vee b$), which are identical (see Figures 4 and 5).

| $a$ | $b$ | $a \vee b$ |
|---|---|---|
| T | T | T |
| T | F | T |
| F | T | T |
| F | F | F |

**Figure 5**: Truth table for $a \vee b$

In other words, Omer's revision of McCutcheon's critic caretaker binary does not contribute anything new to the longstanding debate within the academic study of religion regarding the methodological approach that scholars should adopt in relation to the religions that they study. Even this brief logical analysis demonstrates that because, as I have shown: $(a \vee b \vee (a \wedge b)) = (a \vee b)$, Omer's proposal for a third mode of practice amounts to nothing more than saying that it is acceptable for scholars or religion to use their own discretion to determine when they would like to act as either a critic or a caretaker, which is hardly a new argument. More seriously, perhaps, is the fact that, not only does Omer's critical caretaker binary allow scholars of religion to slide in and out of the critic and caretaker modes of practice at will, but this methodology removes any possibility of a truly critical role for the scholar of religion as it, unlike the critic caretaker binary, contains no structural mechanism that allows the scholar of religion to know which mode of practice they are operating in at any one time.

Readers who are familiar with the details of Omer's proposal for the critical caretaker methodology may rightly ask: "does not Omer's criteria of conflict or social justice as a prerequisite for operating in the critical caretaker mode of practice function as a structural mechanism that indicates to the scholar of religion when it is sometimes acceptable to transition from the mode of critic to that of critical caretaker?" Moreover, readers with a background in logic may also rightly ask: "does not the fact that Omer's critical caretaker methodology proposes not only two (e.g., true and false) but three (e.g., true, false, and sometimes) variables or truth values, qualify her methodology as a ternary rather than a binary, thus allowing for the possibility of additional acceptable modes of practice?" These are both excellent questions.

What makes the critical caretaker methodology a binary rather than a ternary is the fact that Omer's criteria of conflict or social injustice as a prerequisite for operating in the critical caretaker mode of practice are far too ambiguous to be applied in any kind of scientific manner, necessitating their removal from the evaluation of the methodology's logical coherence. Even temporarily ignoring the larger issue of who gets to decide what qualifies as conflict or social injustice at any given time and in any given place, it is difficult to imagine a situation when scholars who study any aspect of human behaviour, culture, or society do not encounter some form of conflict or social injustice. This implies, both logically and practically, that the critical caretaker methodology leaves only one possible mode of practice available to the scholar of religion: caretaker.

### The ethical negligence of the critical caretaker binary

That Indigenous peoples have been exploited and even seriously harmed by the scholars who study them is hardly a new observation. In disseminating the sacred stories and selling the material culture of my own ancestors—the Mi'kmaq of the Maritime Provinces and the Province of Québec's Gaspé Peninsula—nineteenth century Nova Scotian Baptist missionary, ethnologist, and philologist, Silas Tertius Rand, for instance, used the religious heritage of his Indigenous research subjects to both advance his career and help to facilitate their assimilation into Settler[1] society (Abler 2006; Rand 1894). This form of religious violence—reaching its apogee in the Indian residential school system—has now been proven as a primary cause of contemporary Indigenous social problems in Canada (Aboriginal Healing Foundation 2006; Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015a). As damaging as this type of religious abuse was, other scholars were the perpetrators of even greater violence against Indigenous subjects. The forced sterilization of, and nutrition and medical experimentation on, Indigenous peoples in Canada, were largely justified by scholarly explanations—often fueled by eugenics theory—of Indigenous religion[2] as inferior to that of their Settler colonizers, therefore designating Indigenous peoples as acceptable subjects for these dangerous and often deadly procedures intended to enhance the lives and empires of Settlers (Malacrida 2015; Mosby 2013).

Given that we are currently in the very early stages of Settlers coming to terms with these and many other acts of violence committed against Indigenous peoples, it has become increasingly fashionable for Settler scholars who discuss Indigenous religion to argue that, by adopting the orientation that they call "ally" or "witness" which are synonyms for the critical caretaker binary, they are able to not only describe and explain the various relationships between Indigenous religion and related economic, political, and social structures, but also directly advocate for the use of particular elements of Indigenous religion in order to help ameliorate the observed economic, political, and social injustices experienced by their Indigenous subjects (Niezen 2013; Regan 2007, 2010).

---

1.   In this paper, the term Settler refers to all non-Indigenous Canadians (both European and non-European).

2.   The concept of Indigenous religion used in this paper is more expansive than the dominant western understanding that tends to isolate religion as a category of experience separate from that of culture. Many Indigenous Canadians would have a difficult time distinguishing what Settlers identity as religion and culture as separate categories of lived human experience.

To be clear, I do not, and I certainly hope that none of my religious studies colleagues would either, bemoan the legally protected rights of Indigenous peoples to access their own religious traditions in their attempts to find healing from the abuses that they suffered and continue to suffer under colonial domination. Whether or not it offends one's sensibilities, the fact remains that $475 million of publicly-funded Canadian research demonstrated that reconnection with one's Indigenous religious practices was the, by a very large margin, single greatest determinant of a positive outcome among Indian residential school survivors seeking treatment for their shared trauma (Aboriginal Healing Foundation 2006; Dewar, Favell, and Stewart 2015). To recognize this fact, however, does not provide the scholar of religion with a license to practice this type of treatment. In addition to the facts that the utilization of the critical caretaker binary among Indigenous subjects could possibly violate both Indigenous protocol and federal law (at least in Canada), adopting this methodological posture constitutes an act of—although subtle—violence against Indigenous subjects (Health Canada 2016).

"Just exactly how," some readers might ask: "can scholarly attempts at advocating, caring, and protecting harm Indigenous research subjects? Are not such scholars simply adding their voices to the crowd of allies and witnesses who work tirelessly for justice among Indigenous peoples?" This is a fair question. In the cacophony of voices that have been heard in Canada during the last roughly two decades since the release of the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* in 1996, the announcement of the Government of Canada's *Gathering Strength: Canada's Aboriginal Action Plan* and the establishment of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation both in 1998, the finalization of the *Indian Residential Schools Settlement Agreement* in 2006, the formation of the TRC in 2008, the publication of the TRC's *Calls to Action* in 2015, and the creation of the National Inquiry Into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls in 2016, it is perhaps understandable to assume that any offer of advocacy, care, and protection on behalf of Indigenous peoples is welcome. But the matter is not so straightforward. Sometimes, frequently, even, the advocacy, caring, and protection offered by Settler scholars does not advance the decolonization of Indigenous peoples, but, unintentionally, perpetuates colonial economic, political, and social structures, that, in the end, harms the very Indigenous peoples that were the object of this well-intentioned activism. Moreover, this harm can be perpetrated on a much larger scale when, not only scholars of religion, but also bureaucrats developing or implementing public policy involving religious data, similarly apply the critical caretaker binary to their work. One prominent illustration of this

type of violence can be observed by examining the way that bureaucrats conceptualized the very structure of the TRC, which, rather ironically, was the body tasked by the Government of Canada with documenting and disseminating knowledge about the violence committed against Indigenous Canadians by another federally-administered initiative, the Indian residential school system (Miller 1996; Milloy 2017).

The TRC collected nearly 7,000 statements from survivors, intergenerational survivors, Indian residential school staff, those with special knowledge of the Indian residential school system, and prominent Canadian public figures. These statements formed the most important component of the approximately five million total documents gathered by the TRC. In fulfilling their mandate, however, the TRC implemented a specific religiocultural principle of witnessing (Korteweg and Root 2016, 184) held by—not all Indigenous peoples in Canada as was claimed by the TRC, but rather just two Indigenous groups: the Coast Salish and Interior Salish peoples of the Pacific Northwest. By ignoring the inherent diversity of different Indigenous Canadian principles of witnessing, which can vary quite substantially, well-meaning bureaucrats effectively reduced multiple Indigenous principles of witnessing into a single, manageable discourse, perpetuating a longstanding colonial practice of homogenizing Indigenous differences by the Government of Canada in an attempt to more easily manage the colonized (Gaertner 2014, 2016; Wise 2000). If the TRC had, instead, took the necessary time to critically investigate the cultural differences and associated implications represented within the diversity of the full variety of Indigenous principles of witnessing—that approach advocated by the critic caretaker binary—this rather egregious essentialization of Indigenous experience could have been avoided. This act is especially troubling due to the fact that the economic, political, and social significance of the TRC will very likely mean that its misunderstanding and misapplication of the Indigenous principle of witnessing will cast a long shadow as it is implemented as a model for successful Canadian, and perhaps even global, Settler-Indigenous relations in the future.

The TRC's misuse of the Indigenous principle of witnessing is a helpful illustration of how the well-intentioned actions of not only scholars, but also bureaucrats operating in the mode of critical caretaker can harm Indigenous peoples in two important ways. First, due to the fact that it removes any assurance of a truly critical study of religion, the critical caretaker binary necessarily positions those using this methodology as paternalistic caretakers of Indigenous religion. This not only results in poor scholarship or public policy development and implementation, but also a clear violation of well-established Indigenous rights to religious decolonization

and well-being (Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada 2015b; United Nations 2008). Second, the critical caretaker binary similarly positions its users as part of the "Aboriginal Industry," that complex of clergy, consultants, lawyers, scholars, and bureaucrats, who benefit by way of career advancement and remuneration from the uncritical study of Indigenous religion, further impoverishing Indigenous individuals and communities by depriving them of the scientific study of their religions, which is the only methodology capable of effectively elucidating Indigenous religion's attendant economic, political, and social implications (Widdowson and Howard 2008, 39–46). Both of these outcomes can clearly be seen in the example of the TRC's misuse of the Indigenous principle of witnessing in the very earnest attempt to act as advocates, carers, and protectors of Indigenous Canadians.

## Conclusion

In this article I have attempted to demonstrate that Atalia Omer's critical caretaker binary is not only logically flawed, but, more seriously, the source of uncritical and potentially harmful research. I have concomitantly attempted to demonstrate that the critic caretaker binary is not the disinterested, heartless methodology that it is sometimes unfairly characterized as. Rather, the critic caretaker binary establishes clear methodological boundaries for both scholars and bureaucrats that can help to ensure that both research and public policy involving religious data produces as much public good, and as little harm, as possible.

## References

Abler, Thomas S. 2006. "A Mi'kmaq Missionary among the Mohawks: Silas T. Rand and His Attitudes towards Race and 'Progress.'" In *With Good Intentions: Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada*, edited by Celia Haig-Brown and David A. Nock, 72–86. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Aboriginal Healing Foundation. 2006. *Promising Healing Practices in Aboriginal Communities*. Vol. 3 of *Final Report of the Aboriginal Healing Foundation*. Ottawa: Aboriginal Healing Foundation.

Dewar, Jonathan, Rosalie Favell, and Adam Stewart. 2015. *Celebrating Resilience*. Exhibited at the Closing Ceremonies of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada, Ottawa, Ontario, May 31–June 3. Aboriginal Heritage Component, Museums Assistance Program, Department of Canadian Heritage, Government of Canada.

Gaertner, David. 2016. " 'Aboriginal Principles of Witnessing' and the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada." In *Arts of Engagement: Taking Aesthetic Action In and Beyond the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada*, edited by Dylan Robinson and Keavy Martin, 135–56. Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press.

Gaertner, David. 2014. "20 October 2008: Translating Reconciliation." In *Translation Effects: The Shaping of Modern Canadian Culture*, edited by Kathy Mezei, Sherry Simon, and Luise von Ftotow, 444–458. Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Griffiths, Paul J. 1998. "Response: Some Conclusions about Critical Intelligence: A Response to Russell T. McCutcheon." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 66 (4): 893–96. https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/66.4.893

Health Canada. 2016. "Indian Residential Schools Resolution Health Support Program." http://www.hc-sc.gc.ca/fniah-spnia/services/indiresident/irs-pi-eng.php

Korteweg, Lisa, and Emily Root. 2016. *"*Witnessing Kitchenuhmaykoosib Inninuwug's Strength and Struggle: The Affective Education of Reconciliation in Environmental Education." *Canadian Journal of Environmental Education* 21: 178–197.

Mack, Burton. 2001. "Caretakers and Critics: On the Social Role of Scholars Who Study Religion." *Council of Societies for the Study of Religion Bulletin* 30: 32–38.

Malacrida, Claudia. 2015. *A Special Hell: Institutional Life in Alberta's Eugenic Years*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

McCutcheon, Russell T. 2012. "A Direct Question Deserves a Direct Answer: A Response to Atalia Omer's 'Can a Critic Be a Caretaker Too?'" *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 80 (4): 1077–1082. https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfs071

———. 2001. *Critics Not Caretakers: Redescribing the Public Study of Religion.* Albany: State University of New York Press.

———. 1998. "Talking Past Each Other—Public Intellectuals Revisited: Rejoinder to Paul J. Griffiths and June O'Connor." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 66 (4): 911–917. https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/66.4.911

———. 1997a. "A Default of Critical Intelligence? The Scholar of Religion as Public Intellectual." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 65 (2): 443–468. https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/65.2.443

———. 1997b. *Manufacturing Religion: The Discourse of Sui Generis Religion and the Politics of Nostalgia*. New York: Oxford University Press.

Miller, J.R. 1996. *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

Milloy, John S. 2017. *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System.* Second edition. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.

Mosby, Ian. 2013. "Administering Colonial Science: Nutrition Research and Human Biomedical Experimentation in Aboriginal Communities and Residential Schools, 1942–1952." *Histoire Sociale/Social History* 46(91): 145–172.

Niezen, Ronald. 2013. *Truth and Indignation: Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission on Indian Residential Schools.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press.

O'Connor, June. 1998. "Response: The Scholar of Religion as Public Intellectual: Expanding Critical Intelligence." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 66(4): 897–910. https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/66.4.897

Omer, Atalia. 2013a. "In the Critic vs. Caretaker Dichotomy A Magic Dwells: Parroting McCutcheon, Policing 'Religion' (A Rejoinder to Merinda Simmons)." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 25(4–5): 382–402.

———. 2013b. *When Peace Is Not Enough: How the Israeli Peace Camp Thinks about Religion, Nationalism, and Justice*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

———. 2012. "On Professor McCutcheon's (Un)critical Caretaking." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 80(4): 1083–1097. https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfs079

———. 2011. "Can a Critic Be a Caretaker too? Religion, Conflict, and Conflict Transformation." *Journal of the American Academy of Religion* 79(2): 459–496. https://doi.org/10.1093/jaarel/lfq076

Rand, Silas Tertius. 1894. *Legends of the Micmacs*. London: Longmans, Green, and Co.

Regan, Paulette. 2010. *Unsettling the Settler Within: Indian Residential Schools, Truth Telling, and Reconciliation in Canada.* Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

———. 2007. "An Apology Feast in Hazelton: Indian Residential Schools, Reconciliation, and Making Space for Indigenous Legal Traditions." In *Indigenous Legal Traditions*, edited by the Law Commission of Canada, 40–76. Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press.

Simmons, K. Merinda. 2013a. "Protective Parroting: A Rejoinder to Atalia Omer." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 25(4–5): 403–407. https://doi.org/10.1163/15700682-12341302

———. 2013b. "Regulating Identities: The Silences of Critical Caretaking." *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 25 (4–5): 362–81.

Slater, Michael R. 2007. "Can One Be a Critical Caretaker?" *Method and Theory in the Study of Religion* 19 (3–4): 332–342. https://doi.org/10.1163/157006807X243098

Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada. 2015a. *Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.* Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

———. 2015b. *Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada: Calls to Action*. Winnipeg: Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada.

United Nations. 2008. *United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.* New York: United Nations.

Widdowson, Frances, and Albert Howard. 2008. *Disrobing the Aboriginal Industry: The Deception Behind Indigenous Cultural Preservation.* Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press.

Wise, Todd. 2000. "Speaking Through Others: *Black Elk Speaks* as Testimonial Literature." In *The Black Elk Reader*, edited by Clyde Holler, 19–39. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press.