

Article

An Emergent Rebellion: Activist Engagement with Ann-Helén Laestadius' Coming-of-Age Novel *Stöld* (*Stolen: A Novel*)

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Abstract: This article is about how Elsa, a young Sámi girl in Ann-Helén Laestadius' *Stolen*, learns to resist hate crimes that seek to sever her roots in traditional Indigenous herding practices. The nine-year old Elsa witnesses the killing of her personal reindeer and is threatened into a decade-long silence by the killer. There are more attacks which we read as the violent enforcement of western linear time on traditional seasonal herding cycles. The novel charts Elsa's coming-of-age as a rebel able to seek retribution not just for herself and her reindeer but also to fight for a vital future for her culture. We read *Stolen* together with "revolutionary theory" to show how imposed settler temporality is harmful to sustainable modes of living. We emphasise a range of eco-activist responses to the novel, among them rebel reading itself as one of several forms of political engagement available for the eco-rebel. We consider teaching *Stolen* at secondary school level focusing on how readers can practice risk-taking engagement with a text while learning "how to read our world now" in solidarity with Elsa's struggle for her people's survival within an ecologically and socially just future for all. Ultimately, Elsa's emergent rebellion suggests forms of activism based on a commitment to ancestry, especially its future.

Keywords: Indigeneity; Sámi culture; YA literature; literature pedagogy



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1. Introduction

This article focuses on the much acclaimed coming-of-age novel *Stolen: A Novel*, translated in 2023 from Sámi author Ann-Helén Laestadius' original Swedish *Stöld* (2021). It has also been adapted for the screen, released by Netflix in 2024 and directed by Sámi artist, composer and producer Elle Márjá Eira. In our reading, *Stolen* is a scene of instruction for teaching what Diné poet Jake Skeets calls "radical remembering", a way of being in the past, present and future simultaneously. In *Stolen*, Elsa, a young Sámi girl, witnesses the killing of her personal reindeer and is threatened into a decade-long silence by the killer. The novel charts Elsa's coming-of-age as an eco-rebel able to seek retribution not just for herself and her reindeer but also to fight for a vital future for her culture and its traditional land. Throughout this dormant time of enforced silence, Elsa maintains a radical commitment to hold fast to the violent event by keeping an ear that was cut off from her dead reindeer.

For Western readers, reading in solidarity with Elsa's struggle can mean becoming aware of their own cultural biases embedded in narrative conventions such as linear storytelling. We provide concrete examples of how to incorporate creativity, reflection and collaboration as a method for what we call "rebel reading" in times of climate crisis. We are inspired by Elaine Castillo's cry in *How to Read Now* for a different reading practice that makes a break with business as usual: "If we don't figure out a different way to

read our world, we'll be doomed to keep living in it" (Castillo 2022, p. 4). The collective "we" pronoun used in this article signals a collaboration between supervisor and PhD student working in the intersection between literary studies and literature pedagogy. When we use the collective term Sámi, we follow the Sámi Information Centre (Samiskt informationscentrum) definition of a Sámi person as someone legally eligible to vote in Sámi Parliament, which is a person "who has or has had Sámi as a language at home and who considers themselves to be Sámi" ("*Vem är same?*" n.d.—our translation). At the same time, we acknowledge the diversity and richness of Sámi history, culture, languages and practices (Hornberger and Outakoski 2015, p. 10). Neither of us is Sámi, and it may be that some readers feel we have made assumptions that do not reflect their circumstances or experiences. This was not our intention.

Instead, our hope is that this article may serve as one of many departure points for collective and collaborative thinking around eco-rebellion, the Indigenous novel and the literature classroom. With this, we build on Madelen Brovold's claim that *Stolen* is an instance of "literary activism" (Brovold 2023, p. 192). Brovold makes this claim based in part on the inclusion of Sámi language as chapter headings and words scattered throughout a novel written primarily in Swedish—something that has also been retained in Rachel Willson-Broyles' 2023 translation of the novel to English. This, Brovold argues, draws attention to the erasure of Indigenous languages through colonisation. Brovold also considers the fact that the novel is "written from a Sámi perspective by a . . . Sámi female author" as a potential source of inspiration for readers to take action in the world beyond the novel (ibid.). Her focus on gender equality highlights an important issue that *Stolen* engages with and through which it can prompt active responses from readers.

In this article, we take a slightly different focus. We want to learn about time and how to step away from linearity through a focus on Elsa's radical remembering and her conception of plural temporalities, including a commitment to an ecologically just future. She gains strength, especially from her resolution to honour the dead, including her friend and mentor Lasse. A constant source of support for the young Elsa while he is alive, Lasse continues to guide her after he takes his own life as a result of the precarity of his situation as a reindeer herder in an oppressive settler society. In a key passage towards the end of the novel, Elsa explains to her brother, Mattias, that she decided not to shoot Robert, the man behind the killing and torturing of her community's reindeer, and Elsa's tormentor, when she found him trapped beneath his overturned snowmobile, because "Lasse told me not to" (Laestadius [2021] 2023, p. 359). Here, Lasse shows Elsa a path towards a future that is rooted in continuing practices of care rather than in the violence and hatred that Robert and his allies have introduced to her life.

From her ongoing relations with the wider community, the living and the dead, Elsa's despair is thus coupled with hope that there is a future for the herders in spite of all the death and violence. The cut off ear from her beloved reindeer, who was killed by Robert, becomes a token of radical remembering that insists on traditional, cyclical, Sámi time as a refusal of the linear structure of settler time. We read this as an activist intervention into the narrative of colonialism as an event that is now over. It is, in other words, an example of Indigenous resistance as described by Nick Estes: one that "draws from a long history, projecting itself backward and forward in time" (Estes 2019, p. 27). Elsa keeps the ear all through her childhood and eventually passes it on to Lasse's nephew. It symbolises her refusal to move on and away from her people's roots as conventional Western history buries its crimes. Holding on to the remains of her reindeer helps Elsa keep faith in continuity with traditions upheld by the passing on of Indigenous knowledge in the form of stories to be heard and told again.

We argue that its particular combination of genre and content means that *Stolen* can be considered a didactic novel for non-Sámi readers. This is because it informs these readers about the urgent need to respond to the problem of continuing colonial violence towards Sámi communities and, through Elsa's own activist engagement, offers instruction on how to do this. Rupture plays an important part in this. Keskitalo describes the rupturing effect of "imperialist and colonialist time and rules" on the cyclic nature of time in Sámi epistemologies. For her, "controlling time separates people from a cosmological understanding" (Keskitalo 2019, pp. 566–67). Rejecting the strictures of Western generic form might seem an obvious way for an author to push back at this. Certainly, breaking form to question conventional understandings of the passage of time is nowadays a common Western literary practice (Kern [1983] 2003, p. 17). However, Laestadius' novel contrasts with this as it keeps with the generic conventions of the coming-of-age novel even while questioning linear concepts of time. The didactic potential of this is that, in the absence of a temporally disrupted form, readers are able to focus fully on the questions raised by the novel's content. The potential impact of this is profound. Understanding colonialism as vividly present today rather than a past event that we can all look back on invites attention to be paid to the ways that this continues to shape futures.

The reindeer that are central to *Stolen*'s narrative are key to this novel's particular engagement with time and colonial violence. Writing about a different story, Hornberger and Outakoski argue that "The reindeer corral" brings into focus the "complexity of time, space and place" in Sámi epistemologies. This is because it is a place "partly anchored in the present moment and partly in knowledge and actions reaching far back in time and into the future" (Hornberger and Outakoski 2015, p. 44). Here, Sámi cosmologies are entwined with Sámi practices and lives, making the reindeer corral "a site of overlapping, polycentric social and societal spaces" (ibid.). This resonates with Skeets' "memory field" as a site of "radical remembering" in which memory is intertwined with "time and land" (Skeets 2020). This is not the same as jumping back and forth between different points on a linear timeline—as is the case in the Western literary practice of fragmenting narratives. It is a form of memory that is embedded in the land, that "exists as a kind of spatiotemporal entity, because time, memory, and land are woven together" (ibid.). The practices and places of reindeer herding represented in Laestadius' novel connect Elsa's community to one another and to their past and future. The brutal attacks on reindeer and the relative lack of response by authorities to these crimes is a sharp reminder of the continued presence of colonial violence in Sweden's Sámi communities. Inaction in the face of this marks a belief in the passage of time that intrudes into Sámi communities and lives, rupturing these to the extent that it threatens their continuance.

We suggest that the reminder of the continuation of colonial mindsets and practices that *Stolen* serves for readers might prompt action to be taken to explore ways to bring an end to this violent system or to mitigate its effects. Here, we think of *Stolen* as supporting activism through working as a "call to action, a time and space for gathering, a message passed" (Levine 2023, p. 129). Further to this, realising that, for Indigenous peoples, the apocalypse that Western narratives routinely imagine in the future has already happened (Whyte 2018) can support the appreciation of Indigenous knowledges and practices outlined by the current climate scholarship.

2. The Reader Making a Crack in History

Stolen introduces the primarily Western YA reader to the precarity of traditional seasonal herding cycles impacted by the often-violent enforcement of Western linear time, for example, in schooling or higher education (Keskitalo 2019, pp. 566–67; Kuokkanen 2007). This tension between traditional perceptions of cyclical time and linear time has come

into focus when considering efforts to address or mitigate the climate crisis. Linear temporality is associated with continual economic growth and progress, which are known to be direct contributors to environmental harm. Indigenous knowledge and practices, on the other hand, are increasingly recognised as invaluable for developing adaptation strategies in response to climate change. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) reports underscore the role of Indigenous knowledge since the fourth report in 2007. However, Sámi people and their activities continue to be under pressure by mainstream society seeking to exercise “more strict management and control” of remote and arctic communities in Nordic regions (Helander-Renvall and Markkula 2017, p. 113). Lakota community organiser and author Nick Estes writes that Indigenous knowledge is often erroneously defined as “static” or “trapped in the past” (Estes 2019, p. 29), a view that is increasingly challenged precisely due to Indigenous contributions to climate change research. Echoing this objection for arctic communities, Sámi author and academic Elina Helander-Renvall and Inkeri Markkula have written about the present-day responsiveness to rapidly changing living conditions as a key feature of traditional ecological knowledge (TEK):

TEK is living and evolving knowledge. When TEK is documented, it easily becomes “frozen” in time. However, TEK includes both old and new knowledge and its continuity is rooted in the past. [...] Today, in Arctic regions, the temporality of TEK is partly determined by the climate warming: Arctic nature is changing fast and therefore knowledge founded on it changes at the same rate. In the era of climate change, it might even be that indigenous knowledge, which is based on constant observations, changes faster than scientific knowledge.

(Helander-Renvall and Markkula 2017, p. 116)

Within this context, it must be noted that Laestadius’ novel is a coming-of-age novel that adheres to a more conventional Western narrative form as it responds to changing perspectives on history and the future. Traditionally, the *Bildungsroman* genre stems from an Enlightenment conception of *Bildung* (education, development, even progress) that often overlooked the sometimes violent and traumatic social development of marginal or less privileged people (Castle 2012, p. 369) whose exploitation or oppression is routinely a feature of that development. This has given way to narratives that reflect systemic injustice and oppression as these conditions impact identity, social relationships and so on. The contemporary *Bildungsroman*, consequently, is sometimes apocalyptic, often with an explicitly ecological lesson addressed to a young adult readership (Matz 2015, p. 270). *Stolen*, while being a coming-of-age novel, nevertheless challenges ideas of progress as moving beyond past events and of distance from apocalyptic events seen as located in the future by providing readers with a Sámi perspective on these.

Rather than a future threat of violent forces impacting lives, readers of *Stolen* encounter the lived realities of this violence in the continuous theft, murder and torture of reindeer, the numerous threats to the lives and wellbeing of Elsa and others in her community and the impacts of already-altered weather systems on the livelihood of the reindeer herders. Here, the future that readers might fear for themselves is revealed as being already present. Furthermore, it is shown to be rooted in colonialism in a way that exposes this as an ongoing event, still very much part of the present rather than having been left behind in the past (Whyte 2017, p. 154; Wolfe 2006, p. 389). In this way, the novel challenges the Western concept of time as linear and, at the same time, foregrounds the implications of this for Indigenous and other lives.

While we refer to *Stolen: A Novel* as a text from which we and our students learn, we simultaneously wish to dispel a common misperception of didactic literature as an overly emphatic expression of the author’s desire to instruct. Even though the novel comes with an explicit political message, it does not lack nuance or complexity. Helpful here is to recall

the many essays published in *World Literature Today's* autumn 2019 issue guest-edited by Allison Hedge Coke. This issue is in part devoted to literary activism to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the Alcatraz occupation when Native Americans took back Alcatraz Island as Indigenous land from 1969 to 1971. The poems, essays and prose are intended to “present ways of being present, engaged, active, and completely alive despite maneuvers to oppress and terminate” (Coke 2019, p. 54). In that same issue, Skeets thinks through the question of how words can stabilise a field of enquiry or a practice of attentiveness and, in that way, be a form of activism. He suggests that, for him, poetry is “the field, bringing function back to art [...] with its connection to deep time and ancestral time” (Skeets 2019). Skeets begins with a creation story about how language “created worlds”, and from there, “time builds and leads to an open field”. His contribution to literary activism, the topic of the special issue, is in regard to fighting against colonial oppression through this alternative field:

These worlds built with time and language are an act against conquest. Their existence contradicts the existence of conquest. The more they are told, the more they are moving against what is told against us.

(Skeets 2019)

Non-Indigenous poets will not be able to produce work with a similar function as Skeets describes. However, one way to practice eco-rebellion in the literature classroom is to resist reading in such a way that evokes or endorses the passage of time as linear and other narratives of conquest. This is important because unquestioned acceptance of linear time supports the kind of settler conquest that sees colonialism as an event that happened in the past and is now over and done with (Estes 2019, p. 24). Thus, along with its function to gather together and be that field of attentiveness, literary activism is also about rupture, the refusal to be absorbed, as Estes puts it in another context: “The revolutionary potential of these colonized peoples had to do with the inability of the settler state to seamlessly ‘absorb’ them into mainstream political and social life as individuals” (Estes 2019, p. 154).

In *Stolen*, Elsa refuses to accept the lack of attention to the ongoing violence of settler-colonialism in her community. As the local police make light of the thefts and abuse of reindeer, relegating ongoing violence to the past, Elsa’s persistence acts as a force against this, disrupting the passage of linear time and the fading of each occurrence of violence with it. As such, she joins a movement of Indigenous resistance concerned with both righting the wrongs of the past while noting ongoing abuse in the present. Estes writes the following:

Indigenous resistance draws from a long history, projecting itself backward and forward in time. While traditional historians merely interpret the past, radical Indigenous historians and Indigenous knowledge-keepers aim to change the colonial present, and to imagine a decolonial future by reconnecting to Indigenous places and histories. For this to occur, those suppressed practices must make a crack in history.

(Estes 2019, p. 27)

An awareness of the entanglement of the past with the present and, thus, also the future is not exclusive to Indigenous peoples today. Nevertheless, active engagement is needed to move away from the mindsets and behaviours rooted in linear conceptions of time. As *Stolen* reminds us, these permit dismissive attitudes to the very real issue of colonial violence towards Indigenous peoples. In line with this, we think of the readers themselves as emergent, as coming-of-age by coming into the age in which we live, through the metaphor of the crack. In other words, they are themselves these cracks revealed or provoked during reading, when a new appreciation of the acute ongoing presence of

past violence and injustice opens up in them. Through being the crack in history, they learn to distance themselves from Western assumptions about the past and future. In other words, rather than assuming that reading can bring about change in the world, we focus on reading as supporting changes in readers. We also think of this as in line with Coke's hope that reading can provide ways of being "engaged, active, and completely alive" (Coke 2019, p. 54).

Specifically, we are inspired by the many pedagogical activities proposed by collaborators in the network Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures (GTDF), activities which aim at supporting individuals in revealing themselves *to themselves*. One such activity is "the bus", which invites individuals to think of themselves as a bus filled with many passengers, some of whom occupy more controlling, dominant positions (such as the driver), while others take a back seat. This thought experiment and many more like it are designed to help individuals see themselves as complex and indeterminate: to acknowledge and accept their "internal complexity, diversity or contradictions" in a way that allows for them to reflect on the multiple, sometimes conflicting responses and resistances to the uncomfortable insights GTDF teaches (Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures n.d.). We are suggesting that reading approaches that do this have the potential to elicit readings from individuals that they might otherwise neglect to see or attend to—that is, to bring forth stories created between readers and texts that would otherwise continue to lie dormant.

The implications for readers coming to know themselves as cracks in history are that they might be better equipped to accept the world as complex, indeterminate and messy. The GTDF network sees a need for individuals to undergo this work on the understanding that "if we cannot sit with our own complexity and indeterminacy, we will not be able to sit with the complexity and indeterminacy of the world around us" (Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures n.d.). This acknowledgement of the self as crack, then, is an important step towards learning to live and work within a world in crisis. In *A Field Guide to Climate Anxiety: How to Keep Your Cool on a Warming Planet* (2020), Sarah Jaquette Ray speaks of Generation Z's dual response to our times. She refers to their eco-grief and trauma, but she also emphasises their unprecedented show of strength and resourcefulness to "face an existential crisis with resilience and solidarity" (Ray 2020, p. 7).

We suggest a reading activity that we call "Reading on the Bus", which specifically encourages young readers to think of themselves as split in two. The key here is that both reader 'selves' adopt a different stance in relation to a text. One of these 'selves' should be closely aligned with the person the reader considers themselves to be. They then create a second 'self' with qualities they do not presently admire or feel comfortable with. In GTDF's account of the bus, individuals are encouraged to acknowledge the complexity of their responses to uncomfortable aspects of their accountability for global crises traceable to the colonial period. GTDF recommends they "check their bus" (Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures n.d.) when responding to uncomfortable or unpleasant information, meaning that each reader is understood to contain multiple, conflicting, sometimes productive sometimes resistant responses to what they are reading. Students are then instructed to read twice from the same text for each of these selves. The reading of the first self will of course be the one most aligned with who they think of themselves as being. The other reading will identify a less prominent aspect of themselves (perhaps someone on the GTDF network's bus who "want[s] to hide from you" (Gesturing Towards Decolonial Futures n.d.)). By comparing these two possible readings, individuals can be encouraged to ask themselves what they feel lies behind them and which they think is the most desirable given the current state of the world. Reflecting on this might lead readers to identify aspects of their own lifestyles that need to be attended to, for example, patterns of consumption.

Thinking back to the stories that we compose with texts, this awakening of dormant stories in readers means that they have more options to choose from, more flexibility as readers and storytellers in the broader work of storying the world for more ecologically just futures. It can mean the difference between inaction brought about by anxiety and the feeling of being overwhelmed and action buoyed up by a sense of agency even in the face of wicked problems that cannot be solved. Vanessa Machado de Oliveira considers this capacity to distinguish between stories that have “expired” and those “that are dancing or getting ready to dance” (Machado de Oliveira 2021, pp. 15, 16) to be crucial to the work needed if we are to contribute to much-needed change in the world. The potential for teachers in the classroom is to support young eco-rebels towards a different way of belonging in the world that involves care, obligation and close attention.

3. The Reader as Making Topographical Readings

Plural temporalities serve a purpose in Laestadius’ novel, enabling Elsa to mature into an adult without leaving behind the powerful events that will motivate her eco-rebellion. Having witnessed Robert in the act of killing her reindeer, this knowledge lies dormant within Elsa after he threatens her to silence. This effectively arrests the progress of her narrative towards justice and reparation. And yet, the ear from her dead reindeer helps keep the event present to Elsa even as she grows into adulthood. While keeping sight of the perennial nature of the yearly cycle, the narrative perspective in *Stolen* is also keenly aware of the violent impact of climate change on seasonal changes as they become increasingly erratic. Readers learn of how Elsa’s community was frightened by the “Rain in the middle of winter” and had “raised the alarm” only to find that “as always, their voices were too weak” and their warnings were consequently ignored (Laestadius [2021] 2023, p. 167). Together with this, the hatred and racism of the non-Indigenous population also grow at an accelerating rate. Repeated theft and, in some cases, torture of reindeers belonging to Elsa’s family and other Sámi people contribute to the feeling of profound insecurity already caused by the extreme weather. When their herds can no longer graze because of the rain that uncharacteristically falls in winter and freezes to ice, herders have to apply for emergency feed for their animals (p. 178). The plural temporalities that Elsa is committed to facilitate in her the crack in history that Estes considers essential for rebellion.

Thinking of each and every reader as a potential crack comprised of the stories they have been committed to as well as new ways of seeing the world means also thinking of each and every reading of each and every text as emerging from this. That is, reading as coming-of-age is a product of the reader and a reckoning with the past in their encounter with text. Rebel reading is when the reader rebels against their own privileged condition in which they are always positioned as the “expected reader” (Castillo 2022, p. 35). We are inspired by what Castillo says about the potential of a togetherness with difference:

Committing to being an unexpected reader means committing to the knowledge that what bonds us together is neither the sham empathy that comes from predigested ethnographic sound bites passing as art in late capitalism, nor the vague gestures at free speech that flatter the tenured powerful and scold their freelance critics—but the visceral shock, and ultimate relief, of our own interwoven togetherness and connection.

(Castillo 2022, p. 35)

The unexpected reader becomes the reader who can encounter unexpectedness in themselves and the world. Reading, thought of in this way, is not a smooth passage through the text from point A to point B, to C, then D, and so on. It is the creation of an individual journey through and with the text that we think of as more closely resembling a

three-dimensional topography or what Skeets refers to as “field”. In a more recent article, Skeets expands on this by noting that the field in question is composed of memory that can unfold through language and storytelling. He refers again to time and now also more explicitly to land: “I call this terra-temporal matrix the ‘memory field’ because of memory’s unique engagement with time and land” (Skeets 2020). In what follows, we want to explore the possibility of text as a memory field, when the reader becoming a crack engages with it. Further to this, we ask the following: what kind of field does rebel reading accompanied by the reader’s reckonings with their past turn the text into? What rifts and ridges happen to the text after its encounter with eco-rebels making or becoming a crack in history?

The terrain forming we have in mind is produced by reading as the making of a memory field. The resulting topography, as we will show, is a feature and artefact of a reader’s new rebel reading practices. As such, it serves as a record of readers’ own experiences of and with a text, foregrounding the knowledge, expectations and biases that they bring to it. For example, any impasse or obstacle encountered by the reader in the text can be thought of as that which makes a gap, rupture or disjunction from familiar or habitual reading. A ravine created of and with a text might be a section marked by a reader as a point in which confusion saw them coming out of the text or skipping lightly over a section in order not to become stuck. This can serve as a call for another reader to return to this particular site of rupture with them to help shed light on it or for a teacher to support slow and gentle exploration of the passage by posing specific questions or referring readers to carefully selected secondary materials. Some parts of a reading might look more like stepping stones, where readers have been able to move along by grasping fragments and skipping over parts of a text. Studying their own reading topographies and those of their classmates is a way for readers to be alerted to the polyvalency of texts and to understand individual readings as relating to what individual readers bring to them: their memories, expectations and experiences.

Importantly, readers need to be encouraged to practice rebel reading in an individualised manner. This means not setting passages for them to read against the clock (for example, a set passage to be read in the second half of a lesson). Rather, it means giving readers leave and support to set their own pace and to map their own journey through a text. This is not the same as giving them free rein to stop after a single sentence or the first page. It does mean expecting the time of reading to be visible in some way. Perhaps one reader will not make it past the first sentence in a given amount of reading time, but here, teachers can expect the reading to have built a ‘mountain’—that is, a thickening of the text at this precise point. What exactly this will look like can be adjusted by readers themselves or by teachers. It might be a set of reflections in response to the sentence or a list of hyperlinks that take other readers down the path of the associations the individual has in response to this. It might be a creative rewriting of this sentence or even a short critical analysis of it. Perhaps it is a chain of mountains, where several readers have responded differently to this same sentence, or a single, towering peak built of collaborative work.

If readers are encouraged to keep track of the topographies of their reading, noting either by sketching or writing in a separate document the mountains, ravines, mires, stepping stones and so on of their own readings, a second activity is to share these with other readers, comparing the maps that they have made. Doing so allows for individuals to learn from the reading experiences of others, and they can be encouraged to learn about themselves by comparing these concrete records of different readings and reflecting on why they might have responded in ways different to others. Building on this collaborative approach, readers can be invited to work together to produce new topographical records shaped by the multiple readings and also the reflections that follow from the comparative work. For example, if the insights of a classmate help one reader find a route through a

mire in their reading topography, the relevant section might need to be altered, perhaps by replacing the mire with stepping stones. Where there was an open plain indicating little to no pausing in a reading, a mountain might rise up following a new concentration of readerly attention brought about by questions raised by another reader.

4. Conclusions

Elsa's emergent rebellion amounts to a refusal to let herself and her people's way of life be relegated to the past in order to make room for others, such as Robert. Through what Skeets calls "radical remembering", she insists that the past is not 'over' as it would be according to a linear approach to time. Her insistence helps to assure an Indigenous future as well as a past and a present. As such, we argue that Elsa is what Estes calls a "crack in history" but so are potentially those YA readers of her story. What we are calling rebel reading is a coming-of-age for the reader appropriate to these times of climate crisis. Here, coming-of-age of readers/of reading is growth that occurs in the same place through repetitions, revisitings, etc., rather than the classic 'journey' or moving on trope. Elsa's ten-year silence is an incubation period that takes her as far as any conventional *Bildungsroman* journey. The approach of rebel readers, as we see it, constitutes a thickening of responses to texts or understanding of them, often in collaboration with others. The eco-rebellion, as in the action itself, the response, takes place in the classroom, the wider world and in the readers themselves. Thus, we see the novel as a site for coming together as if for a demonstration. In this case, it is both a demonstration calling for change and one that proclaims that social change is already underway in every reader of this novel.

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