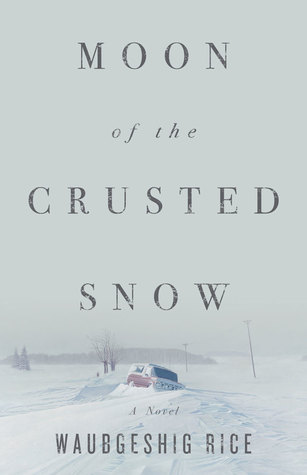
**Instructional Guide**



**Moon of the Crusted Snow**

by Waubgeshig Rice

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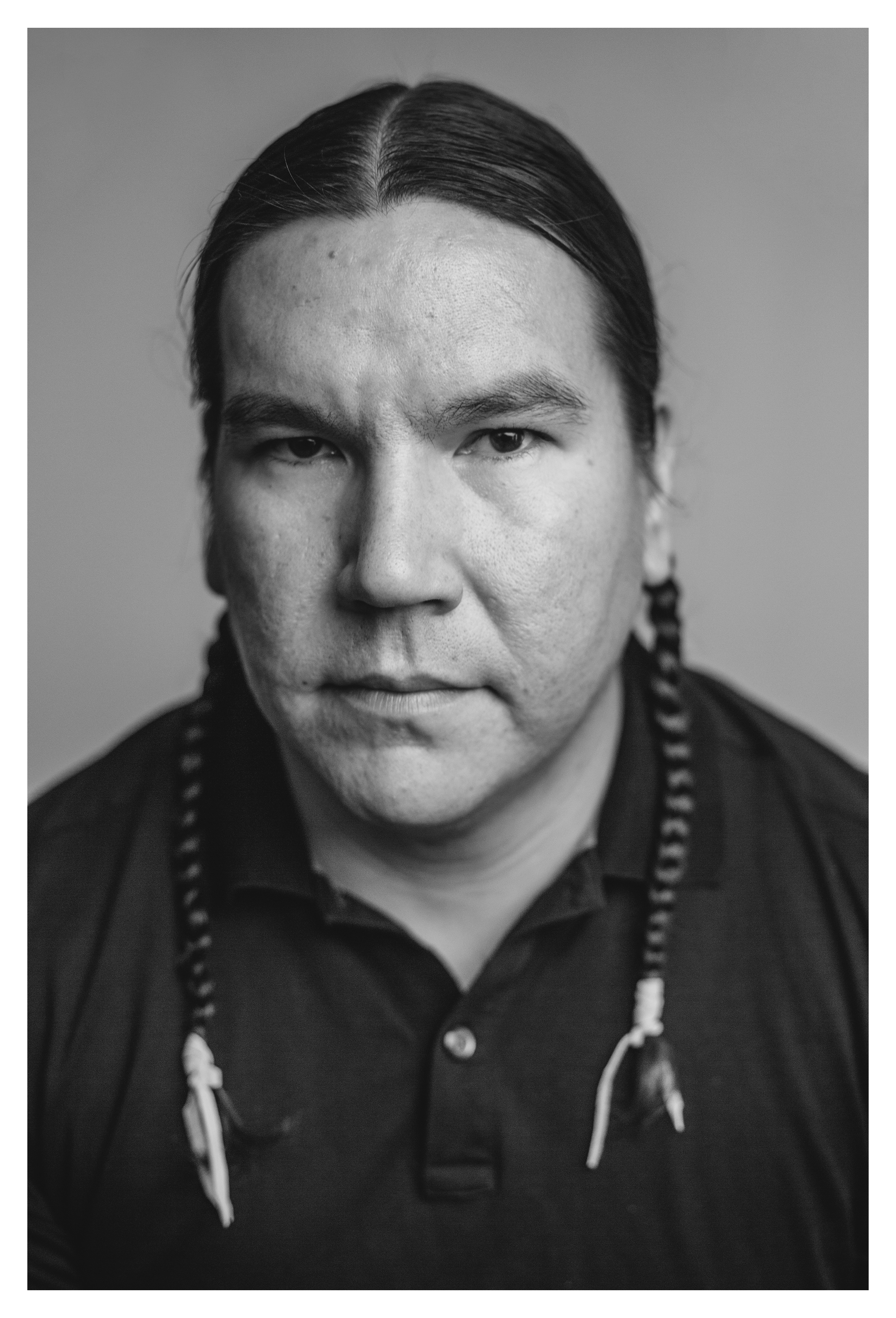
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**About the Novel**

“With winter looming, a small northern Anishinaabe community goes dark. Cut off, people become passive and confused. Panic builds as the food supply dwindles. While the band council and a pocket of community members struggle to maintain order, an unexpected visitor arrives, escaping the crumbling society to the south. Soon after, others follow.

The community leadership loses its grip on power as the visitors manipulate the tired and hungry to take control of the reserve. Tensions rise and, as the months pass, so does the death toll due to sickness and despair. Frustrated by the building chaos, a group of young friends and their families turn to the land and Anishinaabe tradition in hopes of helping their community thrive again. Guided through the chaos by an unlikely leader named Evan Whitesky, they endeavor to restore order while grappling with a grave decision

Blending action and allegory, *Moon of the Crusted Snow* upends our expectations. Out of catastrophe comes resilience. And as one society collapses, another is reborn.” (<https://ecwpress.com/products/moon-of-the-crusted-snow)>

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**About the Author**

“Waubgeshig Rice is an author and journalist originally from Wasauksing First Nation. His first short story collection, *Midnight Sweatlodge,* was inspired by his experiences growing up in an Anishinaabe community and won an Independent Publishers Book Award in 2012. His debut novel, *Legacy,* followed in 2014. A French translation was published in 2017. His latest novel, *Moon of the Crusted Snow*, was released in October 2018.

Waub got his first taste of journalism in 1996 as an exchange student in Germany, writing articles about being an Anishinaabe teen in a foreign country for newspapers back in Canada. He graduated from Ryerson University’s journalism program in 2002. He’s worked in a variety of news media since, reporting for CBC News for the bulk of his career. In 2014, he received the Anishinabek Nation’s Debwewin Citation for excellence in First Nation Storytelling. He currently hosts Up North, CBC Radio’s afternoon show for Northern Ontario.

His proudest roles are as dad to Jiikwis and husband to Sarah. The family splits its time between Sudbury and Wasauksing” (<https://www.waub.ca/about/)>

Prominent Themes

***Land –*** *The universe of the novel is rapidly deteriorating as modern luxuries such as power and technology cease to exist over a matter of days. Members of the small Anishinaabe community begin to panic as it becomes clear that the key to their survival may be their ability to live off the land, a skillset that many individuals within the community have lost as they have become increasingly disconnected from their own culture.*

“I think winter has always been the ultimate test of survival for humankind. Since time immemorial, people who’ve lived in climates that bring winter have always had this looming season of great challenges. Many cultures and nations would prepare for months to ensure communities made it through to spring. But that’s something we’ve largely forgotten, with the luxuries of modern infrastructure. The community in *Moon of the Crusted Snow* isn’t that far removed from the days of hunkering down for the winter. But in just a couple of generations, a lot of people have moved away from winter preparations like hunting and gathering wood, and have become more reliant on the amenities that bring them closer to the world to the south. So when they lose many of these conveniences, it’s a sobering wake up call to re-examine their roles and responsibilities to the land and their community as Anishinaabeg” (<http://hamiltonreviewofbooks.com/andrew-wilmot-interviews-waubgeshig-rice)>

“I think there’s an opportunity for richer conversations about the sustainability of communities and what we can learn from the land itself when things start to fall apart.” (<http://hamiltonreviewofbooks.com/andrew-wilmot-interviews-waubgeshig-rice)>

“Nations and cultures have survived since time immemorial on this land without the fragile luxuries we’re so dependent on today. If and when those things disappear, the answer to survival will be in the land, as it has always been.” (<http://hamiltonreviewofbooks.com/andrew-wilmot-interviews-waubgeshig-rice)>

“[in reference to the role of connection to the land in the book] I think it’s probably the most important relationship in this book. What it comes down to, in this community, hundreds of kilometers north of the city, the ones who are able to cope are the ones who know how to hunt, know how to build a shelter, know how to make a fire, know how to make clothing out of what they hunt, and that is knowledge that has passed down through countless generations” (<http://edenmillswritersfestival.ca/the-millwright/author-qas/waubgeshig-rice/)>

***Relevant Textual Passages…***

“Evan ate southern meats when he had to, but he felt detached from that food. He’d learned to hunt when he was a boy out of tradition, but also necessity […] Most importantly, hunting, fishing, and living on the land was Anishinaabe custom, and Evan was trying to live in harmony with the traditional ways” (Rice 6)

“Our world isn’t ending. It already ended. It ended when the Zhaagnaash came into our original home down south on that bay and took it from us. That was our world. When the Zhaagnaash cut down all the trees and fished all the fish and forced us out of there, that’s when our world ended. They made us come all the way up here. This is not our homeland! But we had to adapt and luckily we already knew how to hunt and live on the land. We learned to live here.” (Rice 149)

***Eco-Grief/Climate Grief –*** *The environment and climate can be seen as one of the central antagonists in this novel. There is an extreme sense of grief and anxiety in individuals as the natural conditions threaten their personal safety and quality of life. In the most extreme cases we even see suicide as a response to this impending environmental doom. This can be paralleled to a real life rising sense of anxiety over natural disasters and the state of our environment.*

“The increasing visibility of climate change, combined with bleak scientific reports and rising carbon dioxide emissions, is taking a toll on mental health, especially among young people, who are increasingly losing hope for their future. Experts call it “climate grief,” depression, anxiety, and mourning over climate change” (<https://www.nbcnews.com/health/mental-health/climate-grief-growing-emotional-toll-climate-change-n946751?fbclid=IwAR3FvJ9tu-i6_p2I8qxC-gT80hrHuey-qH7MjhIBDsWnWMcsD-aWYosBc5E)>

***Dystopia*** *– Rice’s novel revolves around circumstances which can certainly be described as dystopic considering the rapid crumbling of society as it once was. The dystopic tone of this novel can be read both as a reflection of events in the near-cultural past of indigenous peoples as well as an expression of discontent with the current state of society within indigenous communities.*

“I felt that because indigenous nations have already endured apocalypse and largely exist in relative dystopia, a book about the end of the world that’s centred on an indigenous community would reflect a different spirit” (<http://hamiltonreviewofbooks.com/andrew-wilmot-interviews-waubgeshig-rice)>

“Indigenous nations in North America have already experienced apocalypse, and the world many communities inhabit now is a dystopia.” (<https://bookboxlove.ca/blogs/news/waubgeshig-rice)>

***Colonialism –*** *Rice represents the effects of colonialism in a variety of ways throughout the novel; there are overt allusions to the near-past of indigenous communities and the atrocities they experienced due to colonial ways of thinking and behaving. Colonialism is also referenced through the relative loss of culture in many of the individuals within the community. This can be seen through land theft, displacement, loss of languages, and residential schools, which can be seen to impact all members of the community depicted in “Moon of the Crusted Snow”.*

“I wanted to portray Evan as a rez “everyman” who embodies the paradox of modern Indigenous life, like many of us who grew up in a First Nation do. Within just a couple of generations, culture and language are scrubbed from his community due to the brutal impacts of colonialism. Even though he didn’t endure the violence of residential schools himself, because his grandparents did, very little of his Anishinaabe identity was passed down to him. It’s the common intergenerational trauma of these terrible assimilative measures” (<http://hamiltonreviewofbooks.com/andrew-wilmot-interviews-waubgeshig-rice)>

“[Referring to the character of Justin Scott] Basically, I wanted to write as detestable a character as possible. An outsider coming in to manipulate and exploit the community was always critical to the plot. I wanted to create an antagonist who was essentially an allegory for settler colonialism on this land.” (<http://hamiltonreviewofbooks.com/andrew-wilmot-interviews-waubgeshig-rice)>

“The other element to *Moon of the Crusted Snow* is that it is an allegory for colonialism … it’s like the second wave of colonialism in some ways in that people from the city start seeking refuge in the reserve.” (<http://edenmillswritersfestival.ca/the-millwright/author-qas/waubgeshig-rice/)>

“Everything I write about in terms of what this community is dealing with are real life experiences that I have seen and that I know that communities have gone through, so it’s basically like laying out things that have already happened… I’m able to collect all of these different kinds of things and put them into a work of fiction” (<http://edenmillswritersfestival.ca/the-millwright/author-qas/waubgeshig-rice/)>

***Relevant Textual Passages…***

“Many in the crowd watched intently, awaiting their turn. Others were skeptical, and a smaller few took offence to the ritual, though it was an integral part of Anishinaabe spirituality […] This protocol has once been forbidden, outlawed by the government and shunned by the church. When the ancestors of these Anishinaabe people were forced to settle in this unfamiliar land, distant from their traditional home near the Great Lakes, their culture withered under the pressure of the incomers’ Christianity. The white authorities displaced them far to the north to make way for towns and cities.

But people like Aileen, her parents, and a few others had kept the old ways alive in secret. They whispered the stories and the language in each other’s ears, even when they were stolen from their families to endure forced and often violent assimilation at church-run residential schools far away from their homes. They had held out hope that one day their beautiful ways would be able to re-emerge and flourish once again.” (Rice 53)

***Traditional Teachings and Culture –*** *This novel represents the traditional teachings and culture of the Anishinaabe community. This is done in a way that reflects a loss of culture from a colonial lens, but there is also a celebration of the culture that has been preserved. There is a sense of hope in the novel that despite trials the culture has not been extinguished and it will continue to be passed on through generations to come.*

“From a cultural perspective, Anishinaabe people place a huge importance on dreams, if you are out fasting or doing something ceremonial. But as a literary device, I think they are excellent in terms of foreshadowing” (<http://edenmillswritersfestival.ca/the-millwright/author-qas/waubgeshig-rice/)>

***Relevant Textual Passages…***

“Evan ate southern meats when he had to, but he felt detached from that food. He’d learned to hunt when he was a boy out of tradition, but also necessity […] Most importantly, hunting, fishing, and living on the land was Anishinaabe custom, and Evan was trying to live in harmony with the traditional ways” (Rice 6)

“Aileen was the last of the generation raised speaking Anishinaabemowin, with little English at all. She was one of only a few dozen left who could speak their language fluently. She remembered the old ways and a lot of the important ceremonies. She had more knowledge than everyone else about the traditional lives of the Anishinaabeg” (Rice 147)

***Community –*** *One of the central themes in this novel is the importance of a strong community during times of crises. This is revealed through the stark contrast of the chaos in Gibson, a largely individualistic society, and the relative peace in the small Anishinaabe community the characters reside in, which is a much more collectivist culture. This is seen at a community level as well as at the family level as characters are seen to take the needs of their family just as seriously as their own needs.*

*Another aspect of the story that highlights this theme of community is Justin Scott’s character. Despite his attempts to divide the community to promote his own well-being, the spirit of community ultimately prevails over his selfish intentions.*

“Sharing stories is the foundation of culture and community. It strengthens bonds between people, and creates connections among different communities. It’s a way to document and share culture, and to ensure that subsequent generations understand the importance of their identity and history. Reading and storytelling helps develop empathy, which is essential to positive relationships in a increasingly divided world.” (<https://bookboxlove.ca/blogs/news/waubgeshig-rice)>

“I only ever wanted to tell this story from the perspective of the people in the community. It was really important to me to give the Anishinaabe characters the primary voice because I wanted to highlight their sense of community and relationship with the land as a means to survive” (<http://hamiltonreviewofbooks.com/andrew-wilmot-interviews-waubgeshig-rice)>

***Relevant Textual Passages…***

“Despite the hardship and tragedy that made up a significant part of this First Nation’s legacy, the Anishinaabe spirit of community generally prevailed. There was no panic on the night of this first blizzard, although there had been confusion in the days leading up to it. Survival had always been an integral part of their culture. It was their history. The skills they needed to persevere in this northern terrain, far from their original homeland farther south, were proud knowledge held close through the decades of imposed adversity. They were handed down to those in the next generation willing to learn. Each winter marked another milestone.

***Language –*** *Language and the loss of language is a prominent theme throughout the novel. Evan laments his own lack of connection to his language, but he intends to pass down to his children what he can to maintain their connection to their cultural origins. Older characters like Aileen are revered for their connection to the traditional Anishinaabe language. Language is represented as a highly important way for transmitting culture between generations; Rice also explores the devastating effects of colonialism taking language away from cultural groups.*

“Sharing stories is the foundation of culture and community. It strengthens bonds between people, and creates connections among different communities. It’s a way to document and share culture, and to ensure that subsequent generations understand the importance of their identity and history. Reading and storytelling helps develop empathy, which is essential to positive relationships in a increasingly divided world.” (<https://bookboxlove.ca/blogs/news/waubgeshig-rice)>

“It was important to me as an Anishnaabe person to try to reflect some of the language to the best of my own ability. It was just about reflecting the day-to-day parlance that thrives in a lot of our communities… there is some decent knowledge still in a lot of places of Anishinaabemowin… it exists. It’s part of council meetings and family gatherings but just to have it live on the page, especially in a book, that is somewhat widely distributed, that a lot of non-Indigenous people will read, I just wanted them to know what the language looks like.” (<https://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/theme-language/)>

“Within just a couple of generations, culture and language are scrubbed from his community due to the brutal impacts of colonialism. Even though he didn’t endure the violence of residential schools himself, because his grandparents did, very little of his Anishinaabe identity was passed down to him. It’s the common intergenerational trauma of these terrible assimilative measures. Fortunately, he still has links to the old ways, and they become clearer and more important during this crisis. But basically, I wanted to convey that there are a lot of people like Evan, wanting to learn about Anishinaabe but finding it hard to connect with those old ways even though they live immersed in an indigenous community” (<http://hamiltonreviewofbooks.com/andrew-wilmot-interviews-waubgeshig-rice)>

***Relevant Textual Passages…***

“He still felt a little awkward, saying this prayer of thanks mostly in English, with only a few Ojibwe words peppered here and there. But it still made him feel good to believe that he was giving back in some way. Evan expressed thanks for the good life he was trying to lead. He apologized for not being able to pray fluently in his native language and asked for a bountiful fall hunting season for everyone.” (Rice 4-5)

“Aileen was the last of the generation raised speaking Anishinaabemowin, with little English at all. She was one of only a few dozen left who could speak their language fluently. She remembered the old ways and a lot of the important ceremonies. She had more knowledge than everyone else about the traditional lives of the Anishinaabeg” (Rice 147)

“Often, Aileen shared a teaching or an old story with the young men when they came to visit. Once in a while, someone would bring a group of children or teens to hear some old Nanabush stories or her memories of the old days. There had been no electricity in this community when she was a child and parents sometimes brought the young ones to her to remind them that life was possible without the comforts of modern technology. Now it was critical that they learn how the old ones lived on the land” (Rice 148)

“The children were learning their language earlier and better than their parents had. Evan and Nicole had grown up in an era when Ojibwe wasn’t spoken much with the younger generation at home. It was only two generations before Nicole and Evan that speaking Ojibwe was punished at the church-run schools that imprisoned stolen children, and the shame attached to it lingered. Evan and Nicole had vowed to make things different for their kids. They had given them Anishinaabemowin names with pride – Maiingan meant “wolf” and Nangohns “little star”” (Rice 128)

***Gender –*** *Gender is a theme that is explored in a variety of ways throughout the novel. Notions of femininity, masculinity, and gender roles are explored from an Indigenous perspective. While this is not the central focus of the novel, gender is still an important theme to consider.*

(36:02) “On the other hand Evan, I think what I was trying to get at with him and his family is that there are healthy, functional families on reserves and these are the stories that we aren’t hearing enough of in the mainstream… and by and large modeled after my own family. I grew up in a healthy and safe environment. That was also an antidote to toxic masculinity at the same time. The women in both my families, my father’s and mother’s, were by and large the leaders… that was normal and I don’t think we see it enough in art, in culture and the mainstream media (<http://cantlit.libsyn.com/066-cant-lit-waubgeshig-rice?tdest_id=201220)>

***Relevant Textual Passages…***

“Evan thought of Nicole at home, trying to prepare herself for the skills they would need if the power was gone for good while struggling to keep the children occupied” (Rice 147)

“The boy was eager to join his father on his first hunt but that was still a few years away. Evan first went on an actual hunt with his own father when he was nine, after spending years learning about the land. He had shot his first buck that fall. They didn’t offer tobacco when they killed animals to eat back then – Evan only learned about that ceremony years earlier, when an elder took it upon herself to teach him and some of the other young people the old ways (Rice 14)

Reviews/Criticism

**Cardwell, Kathryne. “Dystopian reservation fiction delivers.” *Winnipeg Free Press,*** [**https://winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/entertainment/books/dystopian-reservation-fiction-delivers-500195041.html**](https://winnipegfreepress.com/arts-and-life/entertainment/books/dystopian-reservation-fiction-delivers-500195041.html)**. Accessed 16 May 2019.**

This review describes *Moon of the Crusted Snow* as a “captivating story that seamlessly blends apocalyptic fiction with thoughtful social observation”. Though Cardwell views the story as an incredibly readable narrative that can easily be enjoyed “it is at heart an insightful allegory about the dangers of colonialism. In the era of reconciliation, it’s an important read for Canadians.”

**Carter, Sue. “Dystopian novel pays ‘homage to the everyday people on reserves across Canada’.” *Toronto Star Books,*** [**https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/books/2018/10/12/dystopian-novel-pays-homage-to-the-everyday-people-on-reserves-across-canada.html**](https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/books/2018/10/12/dystopian-novel-pays-homage-to-the-everyday-people-on-reserves-across-canada.html)**. Accessed 16 May 2019.**

This review speaks of Rice’s many influences for writing the novel; *Moon of the Crusted Snow* is described as being influenced by traditional dystopias but coming through an Indigenous lens. The central protagonist Evan Whitesky is described as a “rez everyman” who does not give into the intensely masculine archetype that often pervades the apocalyptic genre.

**Kosoris, Alex. “Moon of the Crusted Snow.”** [**http://kosoris.com/reviews/moon-of-the-crusted-snow/**](http://kosoris.com/reviews/moon-of-the-crusted-snow/)**. Accessed 16 May 2019.**

This review does not speak positively of the plot structure of *Moon of the Crusted Snow.* Kosoris notes that the lack of conflict in the early stages of the novel causes the plot to drag. It is noted that “the author spent too much time and too many words explaining things unimportant to plot or character development”. This points to an important balance in the novel which is the overt explanation of the novel’s allegorical functioning and the anti-colonialist narrative and the actual development of a readable plot. Kosoris raises the question of whether the dragging narrative and disconnected anecdotes act as a hindrance to the important message Rice is trying to send through his allegorical narrative.

**Nevius, Mandy. “Moon of the Crusted Snow: A Novel.” *Seattle Book Review,*** [**https://seattlebookreview.com/product/moon-of-the-crusted-snow-a-novel/**](https://seattlebookreview.com/product/moon-of-the-crusted-snow-a-novel/)**. Accessed 16 May 2019.**

This review of Rice’s *Moon of the Crusted Snow* gives it a rating of 5/5 stars. Nevius described the plot of the novel as “frighteningly plausible”. Rice’s ability to create realistic characters is championed in the review as one of the best aspects of the novel. The claim is made that “[t]he most memorable elements of the novel are Rice’s honest depictions of human reactions and their interactions with one another; through a colorful cast of characters, he reveals the complex and multifaceted nature of humanity.”

**Schingler, Michelle Anne. “Moon of the Crusted Snow.” *Foreword Reviews,*** [**https://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/moon-of-the-crusted-snow/**](https://www.forewordreviews.com/reviews/moon-of-the-crusted-snow/)**. Accessed 16 May 2019**

This review discusses the anti-colonialist narrative that permeates *Moon of the Crusted Snow.* The novel is described as “sombre and controlled” as it builds a story full of struggle and terrifying circumstances; “there’s a hunger, there’s desperation, and there’s death, but it’s all familiar”. *Moon of the Crusted Snow* is described here as an “anti-colonialist allegory” as well as an “uncommon dystopia, both wistful and tough, in which there’s nothing all that new about the end of everything.”

**“Kevin Hardcastle’s favourite Canadian book of 2018: *Moon of the Crusted Snow* by Waubgeshig Rice.” *CBC Books,*** [**https://www.cbc.ca/books/kevin-hardcastle-s-favourite-canadian-book-of-2018-moon-of-the-crusted-snow-by-waubgeshig-rice-1.4956299**](https://www.cbc.ca/books/kevin-hardcastle-s-favourite-canadian-book-of-2018-moon-of-the-crusted-snow-by-waubgeshig-rice-1.4956299)**. Accessed 16 May 2019.**

This review describes *Moon of the Crusted Snow* as a novel which renews the post-apocalyptic genre. Instead of perpetuating “tired old tropes”, *Moon of the Crusted Snow* creates a world of characters “who have already lived through their own apocalypses, through colonialism and displacement and the uprooting of culture […] they are equipped with cultural and social knowledge that allow them to meet this new cataclysm with strength and cunning.” The characters genuine humanity is referenced in this review (as it is in others) as one of the most outstanding components of this novel.

**“Moon of the Crusted Snow: History repeats itself as the world ends.” *Fantast Literature,*** [**http://www.fantasyliterature.com/reviews/moon-of-the-crusted-snow/**](http://www.fantasyliterature.com/reviews/moon-of-the-crusted-snow/)**. Accessed 16 May 2019.**

This review speaks about the important theme of community in *Moon of the Crusted Snow*. The reviewer states that “survival isn’t just an issue of preparation here – in order for any one person to thrive, the community must be strong”. The depiction of life on “the rez” is described as realistic and honest, and is listed as one of the merits of the novel. One complaint that is listed here is the vague treatment of Evan’s fate at the end of the novel following his interaction with Justin Scott.

Discussion Questions

***Pre-Reading***

1. Reflect on what land-based knowledge means to you before reading the novel (connected post-reading question #1)

**Thematic Connections –** Land, Traditional Teaching and Culture

1. In your opinion, what are the connections between the language that you speak and your identity?

**Thematic Connections** – Language, Traditional Teaching and Culture

1. How would you feel if you were told that speaking English (or French) was forbidden and that you were to now speak in another language that is unfamiliar to you?

**Thematic Connections** – Language, Colonialism, Traditional Teaching and Culture

1. Many Indigenous languages are on the verge of extinction in Canada. Do you think it’s important to make sure these languages don’t disappear? If yes, how do you propose ensuring these languages are preserved and learned by future generations?

**Thematic Connections** – Language, Colonialism, Traditional Teaching and Culture

1. Consider the concept of climate grief (discussed in this NBC article <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/mental-health/climate-grief-growing-emotional-toll-climate-change-n946751?fbclid=IwAR3FvJ9tu-i6_p2I8qxC-gT80hrHuey-qH7MjhIBDsWnWMcsD-aWYosBc5E)>. How do you see climate grief affecting individuals around you? What is the affect of climate grief on individuals’ behaviour?

**Thematic Connections** – Land, Eco-Grief

***During Reading***

1. The novel begins with Evan hunting a moose. In what ways is Evan connecting with his Anishinaabeg identity when harvesting the moose?

**Thematic Connections –** Land, Traditional Teaching and Culture

1. “Scott stood straighter. ‘Well, Chief Meegis, I’m a hunter, much like you are, I assume. I can help provide for your community. I’m a survivalist. I know how to live on this land without the comforts and luxuries people in the South have become too dependent on. I know all about emergency management. I can help your people adapt to this situation.” (Rice 107).

What is your first impression of Justin Scott? What might he represent? Compare and

contrast Justin Scott’s way of “living on the land” with Evan’s (see pg. 124).

**Thematic Connections –** Colonialism, Land, Traditional Teaching and Culture

1. On pg. 149 Aileen states that:

“Our world isn’t ending. It already ended. It ended when the Zhaagnaash came into our original home down south on that bay and took it from us. That was our world. When the Zhaagnaash cut down all the trees and fished all the fish and forced us out of there, that’s when our world ended. They made us come all the way up here. This is not our homeland! But we had to adapt and luckily we already knew how to hunt and live on the land. We learned to live here.”

Do you agree with Aileen when she says to Evan that their community has already experienced the apocalypse? Justify your answer.

**Thematic Connections:** Colonialism, Dystopia, Land, Traditional Teaching and Culture

***Post-Reading***

1. Reflect on what land-based knowledge means to you after reading the novel (connected pre-reading question #1)

**Thematic Connections –** Land, Traditional Teaching and Culture

1. Reflect on how Indigenous land-based knowledge has been impacted by treaties

**Thematic Connections –** Land, Colonialism

1. In what ways does Justin Scott’s actions in the book seem to be characteristic of practices associated with colonization?

**Thematic Connections** – Colonialism

1. Explain how Evan’s Anishinaabe identity is impacted by the residential school system

**Thematic Connections** – Language, Colonialism, Traditional Teaching and Culture, Land

1. Compare and contrast the community depicted in the novel with what you have personally seen or heard about First Nations in Canada

**Thematic Connections** – Community, Colonialism

1. Do you feel that the members of this community are better equipped to deal with the aftermath of the blackout due to having been subjected to colonialism? If yes, explain why.

**Thematic Connections** – Colonialism, Community

1. In the book, the band council is shown to be caring, competent and interested in doing the best for the community. In what ways does the depiction of the chief and councillors in this community contrast with the ways band councils are typically portrayed in popular culture?

**Thematic Connections** – Community, Colonialism, Traditional Teaching and Culture

1. How do you see climate grief at play in the novel? How does it affect the behaviour of individuals? What lessons should we learn from this example of environmental catastrophe?

**Thematic Connection** – Land, Eco-Grief

1. How is gender represented in the novel? From you’re perspective are these representations mostly positive or negative? How do these gender representations connect to culture?

**Thematic Connection** – Gender, Traditional Teaching and Culture

Textual Connections

1. ***CBC Radio: Unreserved – Tuesday Teachings*** *–* In these short videos CBC Radio: Unreserved endeavours to allow Indigenous individuals to share lessons about their culture and explain the reasoning behind a variety of their cultural practices.
2. ***CBC News – I Am Indigenous –*** This initiative created by CBC News is a compilation of seven short video interviews with Indigenous individuals. These individuals discuss different aspects of their lives and how they connect to their own Indigenous cultures.
3. ***“Indigenous Concepts of Gender” from the course by University of Alberta (***[***https://www.coursera.org/lecture/indigenous-canada/indigenous-concepts-of-gender-ckZ0u)***](https://www.coursera.org/lecture/indigenous-canada/indigenous-concepts-of-gender-ckZ0u)) **-** this video provides some helpful information regarding the conceptualization of both gender and sexuality within various indigenous cultures. Topics such as gender roles and gender fluidity are discussed.
4. ***Dystopias: Definition and Characteristics from Read, Write, Think (***[***http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson\_images/lesson926/DefinitionCharacteristics.pdf)***](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson926/DefinitionCharacteristics.pdf)) ***-*** This resource provides a one page break down of the dystopic literary genre. This resource provides some interesting context, as Rice describes his novel as a dystopia but in various ways it does not match up with the conventions of the genre. The differences in genre provide opportunities for conversation as to how it still fits within the genre despite not looking exactly like other texts within the genre.

Anishinaabemowin Language Guide

All definitions are taken from The Ojibwe People’s Dictionary (<https://ojibwe.lib.umn.edu/)>

**Aaniin** – greetings!; hello!

**Aaniish na** – How are you?

**Asemaa** – tobacco

**Biboon** – it is winter

**Biindigeg** – come inside!

**Boozhoo** – greetings!; hello!

Chi – a common short form of the pre-verb gichi, some elders strongly prefer the full form.

**Gaawiin** – no, not

**Gbakdem** – hungry

**Gchi-Manidoo** – great spirit, god

**Gichi** – very, quite; big; great, shortened form is chi

**Gichi-manidoo** – great spirit, god

**Goongwaas** – Chipmunk

**Jidmoo** – Squirrel

**Maajaa** – s/he leaves, goes off, departs

**Mandaamin** – corn, a kernel of corn

**Miigwech** – thanks!

**Miijim** – food

**Mino** – good; nice; well

**Mino gizheb** – good morning

**Moozoo** – moose

**N’daanis** – my daughter

**Nimishoomis** – my grandfather

**Nookomis** – my grandmother

**Onaabenii Giizis** –The moon of the crusted snow

**Piniik** – potato

**Unable to define**:

N’gwis (p. 14)

Moozoo gojing (p. 15)

Niniwag (p. 38)

Nishnaab (p. 41)

N’nohnshehnyag (p. 42)

Mino shkwaa naagweg kina wiya (p. 51)

Binoojiinyag (p. 119)

Zhaagnaash (p. 124)

Ezhebimaadziiyin (p. 147)

Bazgim (p. 147)

Resources Consulted

1. Waubgeshig Rice’s Website – [www.waub.ca](http://www.waub.ca)
2. York University’s Educational Resource – <https://teachingcommons.yorku.ca/educational-resource-for-moon-of-the-crusted-snow/>
3. Andrew Wilmot in Conversation with Waubgeshig Rice – <http://hamiltonreviewofbooks.com/andrew-wilmot-interviews-waubgeshig-rice>
4. “Sharing Stories is the foundation of culture and community.” – <https://bookboxlove.ca/blogs/news/waubgeshig-rice>
5. Eden Mills Writers Festival Podcast hosted on Bookish Radio – <http://edenmillswritersfestival.ca/the-millwright/podcasts/>
6. Author Q & A: Waubegeshig Rice by Anna Bowen – <http://edenmillswritersfestival.ca/the-millwright/author-qas/waubgeshig-rice/>
7. “Waubgeshig Rice balances historical accuracy with dystopian future in new novel” – <https://www.cbc.ca/radio/unreserved/they-don-t-know-what-they-don-t-know-teachers-reach-out-for-tips-on-integrating-indigenous-content-1.4990312/waubgeshig-rice-balances-historical-accuracy-with-dystopian-future-in-new-novel-1.4992026>
8. “Get Lit E96 with Waubgeshig Rice” (podcast) - <http://www.jamietennant.ca/index.php/2018/09/20/e96-with-waubgeshig-rice/>
9. “Can’t Lit – E066 – Waubgeshig Rice” (podcast) – <http://cantlit.libsyn.com/066-cant-lit-waubgeshig-rice?tdest_id=201220>
10. “‘Climate grief’: The growing emotional toll of climate change” – <https://www.nbcnews.com/health/mental-health/climate-grief-growing-emotional-toll-climate-change-n946751?fbclid=IwAR3FvJ9tu-i6_p2I8qxC-gT80hrHuey-qH7MjhIBDsWnWMcsD-aWYosBc5E>