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The audience is worldwide.

For two decades now, ACS has provided a forum for a diverse body of scholarship. Contributions from across the full range of humanities and social sciences are sought, including: anthropology, architecture, communications, cultural studies, economics, education, ethnic studies, geography, history, information technology, legal studies, literature, media, musicology, political science, sociology, women's studies, Quebec and other regional studies. Both disciplinary and interdisciplinary analyses are sought and a wide range of methodologies encouraged.

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ACSANZ is an interdisciplinary organisation which recognises and encourages interest in Canadian Studies and aims to promote greater understanding of Canada at all educational levels and in all disciplines. Support in the form of Grants and Awards is available for teaching and research in a number of areas, particularly the social sciences and humanities, and for work of a comparative nature. To stimulate and support interest in Canadian Studies among future academics, ACSANZ also funds Postgraduate Travel Awards. ACSANZ has held eight biennial conferences, the next one being in Canberra in September 2002. Another major activity is production of the scholarly journal *Australian Canadian Studies*.

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Australian Canadian Studies

Vol. 20, No. 1, 2002

- CONTENTS -

Sonia MYCAK 1 Editorial

REPORT

Sonia MYCAK 2 Canada and the Country Women's Association

ESSAYS

David FRIESEN 6 Education in Canada: Just Like Australia Except it's a Dry Cold

Cynthia SUGARS 16 From Risky Stories to Fragile Texts: Taking the Postcolonial Moose Plunge

ARTICLES

Michael JACKLIN 22 Collaboration and Resistance in Indigenous Life Writing

Jason LACHARITE 41 Electronic Commerce and Tax Collection in Australia and Canada: Implications and Challenges

Robyn MORRIS 70 Making Eyes: Colouring the Look in Larissa Lai's *When Fox is a Thousand* and Ridely Scott's *Blade Runner*

Matthew TONTS 96 Cooperatives and Rural Developmnt: A Canadian Case Study

BOOK REVIEWS

Ruth DEAN 126 Miriam J. Stewart, ed. *Chronic Conditions and Caregiving in Canada*.

Brian EDWARDS 130 Of Traces: A Deconstructive Poetics Robert Kroetsch. *The Hornbooks of Rita K*.

Shirleen ROBINSON 134 David T. McNab, ed. *Earth, Water, Air and Fire: Studies in Canadian Ethnohistory*.

David J. ROVINSKY 137 Gordon Robertson. *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant: Mackenzie King to Pierre Trudeau*.

Cynthia SUGARS 141 Greg Ratcliffe and Gerry Turcotte, eds. *Compr(om)ising Post/colonialism(s): Challenging Narratives and Practices*.

Editorial

This editorial will be short and sweet, since I'd prefer the papers speak for themselves. As for the issue as a whole, I can't resist mentioning two things that I'm pleased about. First, our readers and colleagues in Canadian studies have responded to the call for informal essays and discussion papers. This open forum is an opportunity to inform us all of events and developments in your part of the world, so we extend the invitation for others to follow suit. Second, this issue shows significant input from postgraduate students, a heartening sign that the field of Canadian studies is on the move. Not only is it vital for early career researchers to have the opportunity to publish their work, it is encouraging to see promising new scholars entering the field.

And now, an announcement: we welcome back, after several years, a long-time friend of ACS. Malcolm Alexander was editor of our journal, along with Gillian Whitlock, for Volumes 4 to 9. He now joins us on the Editorial Board, bringing his experience in Canadian studies and his expertise in the social sciences. It is important that institutional history not be lost in the changing of the guard, and so I will very much value Malcolm's input, as I already do Beryl Langer's. Of course, Malcolm's presence will also enhance the Board's knowledge base in the social sciences.

Malcolm Alexander obtained his PhD from McGill. He convenes and teaches in the Cultural Sociology major at Griffith University, Queensland, Australia. He researches corporate power structures and corporate elite networks in Australia and has done comparative studies of these topics in Canada, the United States and Europe. He has edited two books, one on Australian-Canadian Studies, and served as editor of major academic journals including ACS. He is currently analysing the 'small world' of Australian company directors, with comparisons to Canada, and working on a major study of business power and competition policy in Australia. He convenes a social capital research group at Griffith University and consults in areas of ethical and social reporting and training.

Sonia Mycak

Sonia Mycak

Canada and the Country Women's Association of Australia

By the end of this year, members of the Country Women's Association of New South Wales (CWA-NSW) will know a great deal more about Canada.

The CWA-NSW, a non-profit charity formed in 1922, is part of the Country Women's Association of Australia, the largest voluntary women's organisation in the land. Members work for the welfare of all women and their families - city and country - through representation at all levels of government, fundraising events, and the teaching of life skills.

Each year the CWA chooses a country other than Australia to focus upon in a year-long programme of study. For 2002 the women elected to study Canada in their annual CWA international study school.

The year began with the "CWA Study School on Canada" held in Armidale on 8th-10th February. Hosted by Earle Page College at the University of New England (UNE) and organised by Kathryn Jacques and Jack Hobbs of the UNE Conference Company, the Study School brought together representatives from the Canadian High Commission, the Australian Canadian Association, and Canadian and Australian academics, to inform - and hopefully - inspire branch leaders of the CWA-NSW.

The "CWA Study School on Canada" began with a flag raising ceremony, during which the Canadian flag and Canadian national anthem were paid due respect. The event was then opened by UNE Vice-Chancellor, Professor Ingrid Moses, after which Canadian Deputy High Commissioner, Mr Gaston Barban, gave an entertaining yet informative "Introduction to Canada." Drinks and dinner over, the following day the real work began. Each participant was given

introductory material about Canada, including general information about geography, history, culture and society. A programme of formal lectures meant that a range of topics was covered over two days. Gaston Barban spoke again with a detailed "Overview of Canada." Professor David Friesen, visiting from the University of Regina, presented a paper entitled "Education in Saskatchewan: just like Australia except it's a dry cold." Given so many of the CWA audience had been or were teachers, this struck a chord. His paper is inclued in this issue. Continuing the prairie focus, Mr Craig Brown of the Canadian High Commission told of his own experiences growing up on a farm, and in particular what he remembered of the women in his family ("Three Generations of Women: Canadian farm life then and now"). Mrs Helene Montreuil Anderson and Mr Eric Anderson of the Australian Canadian Association both gave an insight into the regional diversity of Canada, presenting "Quebec City, a historical look" and "Newfoundland: Britain's oldest colony," respectively. Mr Brian McKay presented a slide show based on his own travels in "Impressions of Canada by a cross-country cyclist." A talk on literature focussing on three rural texts was given by the writer. In between lectures were cultural displays and events, and opportunities for informal discussion with Study School speakers.

The "CWA Study School on Canada" was attended by 213 participants from across New South Wales, who will now disseminate information among local groups and hold "Canada days" at local branches. The Study School was both enlightening and entertaining, an ideal forum to spread the word about Canada. A particular success was the fact that it brought together community, academy and government - groups that all too rarely have an opportunity to interact.

Photograph 1 from left to right

Dr David Ward, Master, Earle Page College, UNE
Mrs Jessie Quigley, State Vice President, Trangie
Mr Gaston Barban, Canadian Deputy High Commissioner
Mrs Ruth Shanks, State President, Dubbo
Mrs Margaret Roberts, State International Officer, Muswellbrook
Mrs Judy Richardson, State Treasurer, Dorrigo
Ms Kathryn Jacques, UNE Conference Company

Photograph 2 from left to right

Mr Gaston Barban, Canadian Deputy High Commissioner, with Professor Ingrid Moses, UNE Vice Chancellor, and Professor John Moses.

David Friesen

Education in Canada: Just Like Australia Except it's a Dry Cold

While on sabbatical leave recently, I was invited to speak to the Country Women's Association of NSW at the University of New England in Armidale. They were to spend the year studying Canada and since I was in the area I consented to talk to them at their international weekend study school attended by more than 200 members. As I was instructed to keep the talk somewhat entertaining, I thought I would at least accomplish that in the title. In Saskatchewan we explain away the cold temperatures which can get down to -40 degrees in winter by saying, "But it's a dry cold." However, the title does suggest that there is a lot in common in education between the two countries. Some of the similarities are: our settlement history and the beginning of schools, delivering education across vast distances, challenges to deliver Aboriginal education, state/provincial responsibility for education, changing rural/urban demographics resulting in rural school closures, the impact of globalisation through instructional communication technologies, and impending teacher shortages. However, there is another thing we hold in common that I knew would touch a cord with the audience: both countries want the best for all of their children and youth.

In this paper I share a recent study from Saskatchewan that attempts to determine a new vision for schools in our province, the same study I shared with the CWA delegates. It addresses problems that were identified in Saskatchewan that, in my mind, are probably also being experienced in Australia.

School^{PLUS}: A Vision for Children and Youth

The Task Force on the Role of the School was created by the Government of Saskatchewan Cabinet in May 1999. Its task was to conduct public dialogue and make recommendations concerning the role of the school in dealing with the impact of profound societal changes on the needs of today's children and youth. The study culminated in March 2001 with the delivery of the Final Report to the Minister of Education. The chairperson of the 12-member Task Force and writer of the Final Report was Dr. Michael Tymchak, the former Dean of the Faculty of Education, University of Regina. Task Force members consisted of 12 individuals representing the traditional educational partnership (teachers, trustees, administrators, universities), but also non-traditional participants such as Aboriginal people, labor, social services, health and justice. The author of this paper was a special consultant and Director of the Saskatchewan Instructional Development and Research Unit (SIDRU) that supported the Task Force study.

During Phase 1 the Task Force conducted an extensive consultation and information-gathering process in over thirty communities throughout the province. The dialogue process involved listening and talking to a wide variety of community organisations, members of the partnership, and the public over a period of a year. Role-alike focus groups, as well as written submissions to the Task Force, constituted the primary avenues for input. The results of this process - what the Task Force heard and preliminary recommendations - were reported in the Interim Report in June 2000. Phase 2 involved soliciting feedback on this Report and its recommendations through various means such as a broad-based symposium of educational stakeholders including education partners, community and Aboriginal organisations, as well as parents, teachers, administrators and students. Comments on the Interim Report were also sent to the Task Force via a website. The feedback enabled the Task Force to engage in deeper reflection on the role of the school, which is contained in the Final Report, *School^{PLUS}: A Vision for Children and Youth*.

The effort to create the Task Force arose in the context of a growing awareness that the role schools play in society - and the role they are expected to play - has altered dramatically. Where has this expanded role come from? The Task Force used an earthquake metaphor to represent the powerful change forces that have fundamentally impacted upon schools. Each of these factors are called "tectonic factors," which not only have their own impact, but also interact with each other in such a way as to create an "earthquake" for schools.

The Task Force identified the following tectonic factors as having a pronounced effect on the "ground" on which schools stand: increasing special needs students integrated into classrooms, major demographic shifts, the rise of the information society and globalisation, increasing child poverty, increasing at-risk student population, rising pupil mobility, profound family changes, cross-cultural issues, human service integration, rural depopulation, curriculum reform based on new understandings of teaching and learning, career concerns of young people, the phenomena of school violence, and increasing concern about student attitudes and behavior. While many of these factors are desirable, such as the integration of special needs students into classrooms, the overall effect has produced profound change for the traditional role of the school. Simply stated, the school is called upon to do more than it ever has before without significant additional resources to accomplish its mission.

The Task Force found that while a description of these factors was important, it was more important to look at what they mean for teachers' experience. The dominant impression relates to teacher identity, losing one - the primary role of providing academic education - and taking on many others. Teacher comments throughout the process suggests that they experience this role confusion in a variety of ways, including a sense of grief or loss at losing their traditional boundaries and a heightened awareness of the tension between addressing student achievement needs versus their social needs.

It became apparent to the Task Force that the tectonic factors are societal factors and speak to the need for the creation of a new society

as opposed to fixing schools. Particularly in the area of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal relations, the Report suggests that a "re-contact" period is crucial; only this time, education, not the fur trade, needs to drive relations. The "contact era" is the period when the two cultures, First Nations and European, first met in Saskatchewan in the 1700s. The context for this contact was the fur trade. Another period of contact transpired later in the 19th century, with the arrival of agricultural settlers, the signing of treaties, and the establishment of Indian reserves. Therefore, the role of the school is crucial for success of Aboriginal people in the "New Economy" characterised by information and technology as opposed to the old economies of fur and buffalo. The Report urges that nothing more and nothing less than the forging of a new society lies before the people of the province so that the needs of children and youth of every race and color are met.

In making its recommendations, the Task Force kept in mind the foundational belief that the primary "good" at which schools should aim is the humanisation of children and young people; helping them become persons more fully within a framework of justice, equity and fairness. This perspective allowed that Task Force to focus more strongly on the needs of children and youth along with the mission or purpose of schools.

Creating a new society calls for vision, will and resources. The Final Report reminds us that we urgently need to begin a journey to recreate the school and human-service environment in the image of our children and youth; that is, an environment shaped to their needs.

The Report recommendations begin with an affirmation of the provincial Community School programme and go on to call for an expansion of the programme to more schools, including high schools where there is a significant "at-risk" student population. Community Schools were established in urban locations in the province where there is a significant "at risk" student population. These schools are given additional resources to provide programmes that address the effects of urban poverty as well as affirm the students' cultural

traditions. They commonly have a nutrition programme, a school/community coordinator, a school council, and teacher associates. Impressed with the success of Community Schools, the Task Force called for the adoption of a Community School philosophy (Tirozzi, 1999) for all schools in the province to encourage stronger links between schools and communities.

The next major set of recommendations of the Report calls for interagency coordination of services to children and youth through the location of the school within the nexus of a wide variety of governmental and community-based, human services. This concept is much like the "full service" concept advocated by Dryfoos (1994). These recommendations build on voluntary attempts to integrate human service delivery in the province by calling on government at the cabinet level to authorise the integration of government human service departments through a new integration authority called the Saskatchewan Education and Human Services Network (SEAHSN).

A third set of recommendations conceptualises the School^{PLUS} environment as a matrix organisation that will draw all of its resources from existing governmental and non governmental agencies, coordinating and integrating those resources to operate School^{PLUS} programmes to meet the needs of children and youth. These recommendations see the "New School" existing within a larger human-services environment with many available programmes integrated and coordinated in a much stronger way than is now possible. The primary focus of the school remains public education but within an environment that strongly links human services to schools and, where possible, basing these in schools. An interagency fund is recommended to create School^{PLUS}. Other recommendations suggest that educational partners explore organisational and legal as well as staffing implications for School^{PLUS}.

The Task Force recognises the implications for role changes of teachers and administrators and suggests that the education partners, especially the Saskatchewan Teachers' Federation (STF) and preservice colleges of education, explore these implications.

Other recommendations call for closer partnerships between schools and students and parents for the purpose of including these voices in the creation of policy and decision making. The Report suggests that schools regularly include students in school assessment processes, not only as a source of feedback, but also for student leadership development.

In terms of programmes in a School^{PLUS} environment, the Task Force recommends pre-kindergarten programmes to optimise health and learning opportunities for 0 to 5 year olds and to provide help for parents and other care-givers. A programme for the retrieval of "hidden youth" - youth not attending school - is suggested, including the development of absenteeism protocols and a tracking system especially between provincial and Band school systems (Aboriginal First Nations schools that are funded by the federal government and not the provincial government).

A host of other recommendations address: court orders and school attendance, public education for troubled youth, information technology, distance education, career education, extracurricular activities, high school reform, school fees, Aboriginal education, student attitudes and behavior, school-community cooperatives, and the physical plant. It also includes recommendations concerning the changing roles of teachers and in-school administrators.

Funding and implementation are addressed by the final recommendations. A committee of stakeholders to oversee the implementation of the Report's recommendations is suggested. This committee is called the School^{PLUS} Children and Youth Monitoring and Action Plan (SCYMAP). Budget estimates are provided for four years of implementation.

In conclusion, the Task Force's investigation into the role of the school led them to reevaluate how the province delivers all human services to children and youth. They were convinced that the issues identified called for decisive, determined intervention. They feared that the failure to grasp the urgency and significance of the moment, the magnitude of the concerns raised and the responses they invite,

could result in serious long-term consequences for the province.

The Task Force concluded that as the role of the school changes, so must the roles of those most responsible for the delivery of public education. The Report's conception of better school-linked and when possible, school-based services, provides a model for schools wherein teachers are relieved of other roles (social worker, court worker, nurse) so they can attend, in a more focused way, to the educative function that has always been the central focus of schools. However, teachers will in the future need to be better prepared to assess the needs of children and youth, and to refer students to appropriate agencies and workers. They will need to be prepared to work in the School[PLUS] environment with its expanded diversity of programme offerings and additional adult workers providing services in the school setting. Teachers will also need knowledge and skills in the area of community development if the Community School philosophy is to be realised.

A role change for in-school administrators will also be required. An expanded human service environment calls for an enhanced management function that provides coordination among the various service providers. The leadership function will have to become increasingly important because of the need in the new environment to develop additional programmes in a more flexible setting to meet the changing needs of children and youth. The Report recommends that these additional administrative functions not simply be added to existing duties, but that the capacity to deliver administrative services be increased.

The final statement in the Report challenged the stakeholders to adopt a "visionary spirit" to bring about the magnitude of change recommended by the Report.

> Our proposal to recreate school and human services in the image of children and youth calls for a visionary spirit that is prepared to make a generous commitment of human and financial resources in the cause of a brighter and better future. We believe that the time for such action is now (Tymchak 2001, 113).

Conclusion

I was reminded of the importance of communities serving education while talking to some of the women at the CWA study school and again later while reading about the history of their organisation (Townsend 1988). The key motivator to their participation in education in the past was service to their country. Strengthening education as well as other services in their communities was seen as vital to their communities. Is this motif of service as alive and well as it seems to have been in the past?

The Task Force Report recognises that the community is not involved in schooling as it was in years gone by. Schooling has become more "professionalised" and of course, society has changed with child and youth rearing having been left to the school to a greater degree than in the past. What will it take to get communities to increase their involvement with schools? In Saskatchewan, it is hoped that the move to more community schools will involve more parents and community members. In Australia, the CWA could play a prominent role in seeing schools change to better meet the growing needs of all children and youth. Perhaps this is an area about which we need to learn from each other.

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Note

The Final Report, *School^{PLUS}: A Vision for Children and Youth*, can be viewed at the Saskatchewan Education website:
http://www.sasked.gov.sk.ca/k/pecs/h/pp/whatsnew.html

Cynthia Sugars

From Risky Stories to Fragile Texts: Taking the Postcolonial Moose Plunge

Report on the "Postcolonialism and Pedagogy" Conference, May 2002

The introduction to the Fall 2000 "Where Is Here Now?" millennial issue of Essays on Canadian Writing contains an introduction by Kevin Flynn, in which he expresses his "angst" about the possible non-existence of a community of Canadian literature scholars and questions the degree to which contemporary academics in the field of Canadian literature care about what they do. "My fear is that solidarity has been turned in for complacency and indifference," Flynn writes, "I hear plenty of lone statements, but very little dialogue" (3).

I have to say that this does not come close to echoing my sense of the current state of the profession. My recent experience as the organiser of the "Postcolonialism and Pedagogy: Canadian Literatures in the Classroom" symposium, held at the University of Ottawa from 3rd-5th May 2002, only reiterated my sense of the sincere commitment that professors and students of Canadian literature and culture bring to their field. The key message that came through at this gathering of teachers and scholars engaging in a reimagining of postcolonialism and Canadian-literature pedagogy was an intense concern for what we do as teachers of literature in Canada. There was a shared sense that this commitment was only intensified by the fact that speakers did not always agree with one another. A spirit of common purpose was forged through critical dialogue rather than easy consensus.

The "Postcolonialism and Pedagogy" symposium began on an appropriately speculative note when Diana Brydon proceeded to interrogate the conference's logo. The image, taken from Charles Pachter's Mooseplunge series, depicts a silhouette of a moose plunging head-first off a cliff. Extrapolating from the moose to Canadian postcolonial theorists more generally, Brydon wanted to inquire what had inspired this postcolonial moose to jump – and why.

This tone of speculation and interrogation was an important facet of the papers throughout the three days of the conference. In brief, the symposium prompted investigations into how postcolonial concerns have influenced, and continue to influence, the teaching of Canadian literatures. However, paramount in the papers and discussion periods was a move away from the nationalist implications of the conference title to the effect globalisation is having on the discourse of postcolonialism. Many papers, such as those by Diana Brydon, Paul Hjartarson and Stephen Slemon, undertook to question the conference title itself. To begin with, the appropriateness of the terms "postcolonialism" and "Canadian" was explored in view of Canada's role in the context of globalisation. Brydon, in her opening paper of the conference, "Cross-Talk, Postcolonial Pedagogy and Transnational Literacy," pursued the tension between the national and the

transnational when discussing a postcolonial pedagogy suitable for a transnational context. The various ways of working through the "cross-talk," she argued, is what distinguishes a postcolonial from a national pedagogy. Donna Pennee's paper, "Literary Citizenship: Culture (Un)Bounded, Culture (Re)Distributed," responded to Brydon by launching an eloquent and ethically motivated defence of the national as an important vector in Canadian pedagogical and literary studies. Because "globalisation has put the nation under erasure," Pennee asserted, there is a need for renewed attention to the role of notions of citizenship as these are propagated (or not) in the Canadian literature classroom, especially in view of the role nationalism can afford in countering the globalisation of everyday life. "Nations are made, not born," stated Pennee, which does not mean that the nation should be dispensed with. Concluding in Bhabhian form, Pennee underscored that "the nation can speak for a we who are not the same," and herein lies its power.

Following this inspirational opening session was the first of the conference's three keynote speakers, Smaro Kamboureli. Her talk, "Pedagogy, Public Memory and the State: Canadian Literature in the Global Market," opened with a discussion of the now notorious CBC Radio "Canada Reads" contest, which provoked much discussion in the audience following the session. Kamboureli used this event to undertake an extended discussion of the cult of the celebrity in Canadian literary circles, thereby harking back to Brydon's and Pennee's engagements with globalisation and the impact this is having on postcolonial discourse.

The next two days of the conference covered a range of approaches to the conference topic, from theoretical formulations of a postcolonial pedagogy, such as that offered by Beverley Haun Moss and Brenda Carr Vellino, to more text-centred papers that focussed on issues involved in the teaching of particular texts. Sessions ranged from teaching Native literatures, to issues of racism in the classroom, to historical accounts of Canadian public education, to critiques of the institutionalisation of Canadian literary studies, to teaching

Canadian literature abroad. Gary Boire explored the ways the institution is itself complicit in its "sentencing" of students and faculty, while Terry Goldie discussed the problematic links between postcolonialism and subalternity. Papers with a pedagogical, 'applied' approach were numerous. Janice Fiamengo provided a detailed and humourous discussion of the trials involved in teaching Sara Jeannette Duncan's The Imperialist postcolonially; Lisa Salem-Wiseman explored approaches to teaching the poems of Duncan Campbell Scott; Renée Hulan considered the historical contexts of Alias Grace; Susan Gingell spoke about ways of teaching orature in the literature classroom; Danielle Schaub provided a fascinating account of her experiences teaching Beatrice Culleton's In Search of April Raintree in Israel; Aruna Srivastava interrogated the ways an anti-racist, postcolonial pedagogy failed to provide adequate ways of addressing institutional responses in the aftermath of September 11th ; Linda Radford explored the ways public school teachers are taught to read "risky stories"; Jennifer Henderson focussed on the normalising pedagogies implicit in Ernest Thompson Seton's and L.M. Montgomery's works; and Misao Dean conducted a slide presentation (including a much talked-about picture of her canoe paddle!) in an account of the ways concrete artifacts can be used in a postcolonial pedagogy.

Of particular interest to Australian Canadian Studies readers was the session on teaching Canadian literature abroad. In addition to Danielle Schaub's presentation on teaching April Raintree in a politically fraught context in Israel, a separate session grouped papers by Eva Darias-Beautell (La Laguna, Spain), Natalia Vesselova (Tver State, Russia), Gerry Turcotte (Wollongong), and Kathleen Wilker (Mexico). While Vesselova and Darias-Beautell looked at the problems they encounter when teaching Canadian literature in a non-Canadian context, Turcotte explored some of the ways Canadian literature gets "distorted" or "compromised" in Australia, a topic which overlaps theoretically with his recently edited collection of critical articles, Compr(om)ising Postcolonialisms.

In addition to the many parallel sessions, the group gathered together to hear the second and third plenary speakers on Saturday and Sunday. On Saturday afternoon, Arun Mukherjee provided a personal account of her own experiences and struggles in the literature classroom – struggles when teaching "fragile texts" to a mixed group of students. Her talk provoked a heart-felt response from the audience, which continued into the conference reception at the National Arts Centre that evening. On Sunday, Heather Murray explored the practicalities of undertaking microhistorical work in Canadian literary scholarship – a talk which led various members of the group to ask, "Is what I do microhistory?"

The closing session of the conference wrapped things up with a fine paper/pictorial presentation by Roy Miki, which called for people to consider the wider implications of an engaged postcolonialism. Looking back to Kamboureli's address, Miki noted that the consumer has become the celebrity in the new era of privatisation. One image in particular, "When Monkeys Go Bad," which portrayed a group of monkeys that are reterritorialising a highway in Hong Kong, provided an unsettling glimpse of the limits of a perhaps too-complacent postcolonial theory as it has been conducted thus far. Miki's paper was followed by fine summings up of the weekend's events by Diana Brydon and Stephen Slemon, with Brydon concluding that, by the conference's end, "the flying moose had turned into a monkey gone bad."

The enthusiasm and mutual respect demonstrated by the conference participants was invigorating. What made this gathering as successful as it was, as Jack Healy commented to me following the event, was the fact that the audience in each session was as actively involved as the presenters – surely an encouraging pedagogical example. The response to the conference has been phenomenal. I've been flooded with emails from participants and attendees expressing their positive response to the symposium (including endless praise of the food!), and I thank everyone who took the time to write to me with their comments. One participant wrote the following:

> Thank you so much for a superb conference! It was inspiring and a positive experience in every way: beautifully organized, intellectually stimulating, practical in its focus and theoretically sophisticated too, well attended, deliciously catered – and every paper I heard was excellent! I only wish that I could have heard everything, because the conference grapevine told me that every paper that I missed, while attending other sessions, was also terrific.

As the organiser of the conference, I can only express my own regrets at not having been able to attend every session. Luckily I have the privilege of reading through the submissions for the conference proceedings. A lengthy volume of selected proceedings is to be published with the University of Ottawa Press next year. . . Stay tuned!

Michael Jacklin

Collaboration and Resistance in Indigenous Life Writing

Collaboration is marked by indeterminacy. It is, by nature, intermediary, interposing, intervening. In Australia, collaboration between Aboriginal and invader/settler subjects in the unfolding of colonial engagement is a topic that has received limited scholarly attention. Some studies have dealt with native police and Black trackers;[1] others have examined local negotiations of power and discourse;[2] but the only broad survey of collaboration is Henry Reynolds's *With the White People* (1990). In this work Reynolds traces the varied modes of collaboration existing between the Aborigines and the European colonists of Australia from first contact and early settlement through to the First World War. Reynolds's study of Aboriginal collaboration is intended to complement his earlier book, *The Other Side of the Frontier* (1981), which had focused primarily on Aboriginal resistance. He begins *With the White People* by acknowledging that his earlier work on resistance covered "only part of the story" (1). In Reynolds's words, "for every tribesman and woman who defied the whites there were others who worked for the interlopers assisting in the process of colonisation" (1). Reynolds charts Aboriginal assistance to European explorers, the work of the Black troopers, Aboriginal contribution to pioneering and the pastoral industries, and the complexities of frontier sexual relations. Reynolds says that scholarly attention to Aboriginal and settler Australian collaboration challenges settler histories that claim Australian nation building as an exclusively European achievement. Equally, however, he says that collaboration is a theme for which few Aboriginal activists hold any enthusiasm, collaboration being associated with either surrender to white control, or participation in frontier violence. Reynolds ends this work emphasising that "the two themes of resistance and assistance, of confrontation and collaboration, are

threaded through the history of Aboriginal response to the Europeans over the last two hundred years" (233).

Reynolds's remarks, I believe, are also relevant to the study of Aboriginal life writing produced through collaboration, that is, texts which reach publication through the joint efforts of narrators and editors.[3] In this article[4] I will look at how both resistance and assistance operate in a number of Aboriginal texts and I will argue that neither confrontation nor collaboration need be privileged or valorised, that both are, as Reynolds says "threaded." To do this I will draw upon two texts from north-west New South Wales: *The Two Worlds of Jimmie Barker* (1988 [1977]), and *Goodbye Riverbank* (2000). I will then turn to a Canadian First Nations text titled *I'll Sing 'Til the Day I Die* (1995), which offers several points of comparison with the Australian texts. Finally, I will offer a brief comment on how these works may contribute to the processes of reconciliation between first peoples and settler societies in both nations.

Textual collaboration, unlike its historical counterpart, has been the object of considerable scrutiny in Australia. Much of the critical literature focuses on the extent to which these mediated texts may retain their oppositional potential in the face of a range of constraining factors resulting from the editorial and marketing decisions which ultimately frame the Indigenous narrative and influence the reception of the text. Aboriginal writers such as Ruby Langford Ginibi or Jackie Huggins are particularly critical of factors in textual production which may result in Aboriginal opposition being muted or compromised.[5] Mudrooroo has written disdainfully of many collaborations, terming the narratives "captured discourse" (Johnson 27), and "flawed texts" (Narogin 153).[6] Non-Aboriginal critics also express concern regarding the way framing devices such as front cover designs, prefaces and introductions, afterwords, and back cover blurbs all function to establish a sense of familiarity for non-Aboriginal readers and thereby undermine the political and oppositional stance of the Indigenous narrator and subject of the text.[7]

It cannot be denied that such discursive mechanisms operate

powerfully, or that such processes of containment come into play. It is disconcerting, however, that in structuring critical attention so that the Indigenous narrator is read predominantly as resistant or oppositional while the processes of publication or marketing are read as forces of containment, a dichotomy is set up which may underplay the complexity of the subjectivity of the narrator or the intersubjectivity of the process of narrative exchange which underlies the textual production. In many if not most collaborative texts, the threads of resistance and assistance are braided, just as Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal histories are entangled.[8]

The Two Worlds of Jimmie Barker displays this entwining of opposition and accommodation, beginning with the encounter between Jimmie Barker and his transcriber and editor, Janet Mathews. In the 1960s, Mathews was a researcher for the Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies recording Aboriginal song and language throughout NSW. On a field trip to the north-west of the state, she was advised to contact Jimmie Barker who she was told was a "key figure" in the area (ix). Mathews describes her arrival in Brewarrina, emphasising the difficulties of fieldwork - the extreme age and frailty of many of the Aboriginal informants, their shyness, their fear of her tape-recorder (ix-x). Barker recalls: "a policeman told me that a white woman was visiting the town collecting Aboriginal languages and music on a tape recorder. I told him that I was not interested and that I knew no Muruwari" (173). However, Mathews approaches Barker on her second day and he allows her to record him, but she is not very satisfied with their meeting as he too seems shy and, Mathews says, "slow in answering questions" (x). She is about to leave when something happens which truly initiates their collaboration. Barker goes into his hut and brings out his own tape-recorder, explaining that he had bought the machine some time before so that he could record an English-Muruwari dictionary but he needed some assistance with the cost of tapes.

It is useful to place this moment in the context of the collection

of oral histories. The proliferation of life histories published in the 1960s and 1970s was largely due to the availability of such small, portable tape-recorders which were typically part of the linguist's or anthropologist's kitting out.[9] They were a tool of the trade with which data could be extracted and preserved. They were also an instrument of power and some intimidation, often producing a shyness and resistance from narrators. It is significant, then, that Barker had purchased his own tape-recorder and intended quite independently of any non-Aboriginal researcher to use technology to foster linguistic maintenance.[10] It is a moment in which the boundary between informant and researcher blurs. In the ensuing four years Barker recorded over 150 tapes, 110 of these produced on his own with great care and, as he reports, considerable pleasure (175). These were then posted to Mathews. She rearranged this material creating a smooth chronological sequence and integrating cultural description with personal narrative. She also translated the narrative into Standard English, a decision she claims respected Barker's own request (Mathews 4). While it is true that Barker had no control in this process, it is also clear that he was utilising Mathews to achieve his own goals of linguistic and cultural survival as much as she was gaining material from him. What emerged from their collaboration was a product that neither of them had anticipated but which evolved from their overlapping aspirations.[11]

However, the subjectivity textualised in this project makes for disturbing reading today for two reasons also linked to issues of resistance and accommodation. As Barker's recordings expanded from vocabulary to description of cultural practice and to associated memories of childhood and adolescence, his narrative shifted from life amidst his Aboriginal family and community to life on Brewarrina Mission, a government run Aboriginal mission to which Barker's mother was forced to move so that her two sons could attend school. Barker's education consisted of relentless indoctrination regarding the worthlessness of Aborigines and the contempt felt for them by white Australians. Aboriginal language was suppressed on the mission and many cultural practices prohibited. Surveillance was constant, food

rations limited, and punishment arbitrarily meted out by a succession of brutal managers.[12] Barker's narrative works oppositionally in its analysis of his own submission to the corrosive and coercive techniques of colonial oppression. He details his own internalisation of the racist discourse to which he is subjected on the mission and which he also found confirmed outside the mission when he left to serve his apprenticeship. Yet his narrative is particularly disturbing because, although he recognises and denounces the process of internalised oppression, he remains unable to overcome its insidious effects. He absorbs the essentialist and assimilationist discourse which surrounds him and in several places in his narrative Barker comments on problems such as alcoholism, gambling, and lack of stable employment in terms of inherent traits (134, 146, 184). Historian Penny Taylor, commenting on these passages, refers to them as "the ultimate irony and sadness of his life history" and notes that "these sections confuse and anger young Aboriginal students" (7).

The text is also disturbing because of Barker's acknowledgement of his own participation in the processes of subjugation. He claims, for example, responsibility for the end of the local practice of Muruwari customs relating to death. When Barker's mother died he refused to carry out the usual practice of smoking the house and destroying her belongings. Instead he kept her photographs, china and linen and gave away her clothes, telling others they could use them or burn them as they saw fit. Barker reported strong disapproval from the other Aboriginal residents, but he says he noticed that "from this time onwards the relatives kept the possessions of a person who died" (130). He also recounts occasions when he dissuaded Aboriginal residents from retaliating against a particularly brutal manager. Barker says: "Any aggression from us could mean twelve months or twelve years in gaol; we must endure these unpleasant events. I prevented rebellion many times, for I knew that the Aborigines would be the sufferers" (159). While Barker's actions were aimed at averting more pain than that already endured, his words are not oppositional. It is particularly disturbing when on the following page he admits that his own acquiescence meant that he received less ill-treatment than

other inmates of the mission. "I suffered less than the others from ill-treatment by the managers," he says. "My attitude was that they were in charge, and if they told me I was wrong or had incurred their disapproval I did not argue" (160). Such admissions surely leave Barker open to criticisms of collaborationism; yet choices were never straightforward, nor consequences predictable. When a manager orders Barker to belt a handcuffed man who had been caught beating his wife, Barker refused, but then says: "Brain gave Dick a horrible bashing and injured him severely, so perhaps I should have done it myself" (158). Barker's reflections draw the reader into the moral grey zone of mission experience.[13] They resonate with anthropologist Gillian Cowlishaw's remarks of race relations on the colonial frontier when she says: "[t]o understand the past means understanding its moral complexities and ambiguities. While there may indeed have been heroes and villains then, the vast majority of the population were neither, and this is so today" (2000, 21). Barker and Mathew's text remains important for its testimony of the conflicted responses to government policy and mechanisms which were aimed at the subjugation of Indigenous people and the destruction of linguistic and cultural heritage.

Goodbye Riverbank, a more recently published text, provides insight into the ongoing complexities of negotiating between resistance and accommodation in this same region of New South Wales today. Unlike the single subject life history offered in Barker and Mathew's text, *Goodbye Riverbank* is a community oral history project involving the efforts of forty Aboriginal narrators and writers and their non-Aboriginal editor, Cilka Zagar. The book is arranged thematically and chronologically into chapters including first contact, life and work on the stations, child separation, protest and reconciliation. This arrangement means that the narratives are often fragmentary, sometimes no more than a paragraph, rarely more than a page or two. Some contributors appear only once, others return often throughout the book. With no information provided regarding the selecting and

arranging process, this editorial decision to fragment and fracture the individual contributions may certainly warrant criticism. At the very least readers may wonder whether the narrators were given opportunity to comment on the arrangement.

It is important, however, to look at the genesis of this text and at the intersubjectivity which has occasioned this work. In 1968, the same year that Janet Mathews first sought out Jimmie Barker in Brewarrina, Cilka Zagar began teaching Aboriginal children in the nearby communities of Walgett and Lightning Ridge. Zagar, who had migrated from Slovenia, was to live and teach in the communities for over twenty years before engaging in the production of life writing. In 1990 she published her first book, *Growing Up Walgett*, which presented narratives from twenty of her students whom she had encouraged through classroom work to write about their lives (xiii). *Goodbye Riverbank* also emerges through an educational framework. The narratives that comprise this text were collected from elders and their extended families in order to provide material on local 'transitional history' which could be used in classrooms. Without such texts, Zagar says, "teachers in a small community are often afraid to teach this painful and sensitive part of Australian history" (3). Jimmie Barker's son, Roy Barker, is one of the contributing elders who also recognised this need for local Aboriginal perspectives to be incorporated into classroom material. He and others were interviewed and their narratives transcribed in booklet form for classroom use. Zagar says that people then encouraged her to have the narratives published "so that they can be saved and passed down for the next generation" (3). The initiation and development of the project, then, seems to be one of genuine reciprocity based on long standing trust and ongoing lived relationships amongst all participants.

Like Barker's unsettling narrative, those in *Goodbye Riverbank* also describe an entangling of assistance and resistance. Some of the elders speak about working with the settler Australians in ways that corroborate Reynolds's study of collaboration. Several older women look back upon experiences as housemaids and domestics with

genuine affection for the non-Aboriginal families for whom they worked (52). Men talk about working as station hands and boundary riders, as shearers and sawmill labourers, with pride in the skills mastered and in the satisfaction gained from employment.

But other narrators view relations with non-Aboriginal Australians less positively. Some recall forced removals of families to Aboriginal missions. One narrator recounts his and his sister's escape from Brewarrina Mission and their long trek home (49), reminding readers of Evelyn Crawford's escape narrative in her book *Over My Tracks* (1993). More recent views include a mother's account of an abusive police search and, significantly, a grandfather's criticisms of non-Aboriginal teachers who fail to understand the needs of Aboriginal school children (67, 108).

The most distressing comments in the book, however, come from elders who fear for the social fabric of the Aboriginal community. Many of the narrators speak of the toll that alcoholism has taken on families (5, 36, 53, 68), and of the problems of unemployment, welfare dependency and crime (136). Almost without exception, the elders relate these problems to the loss of moral authority experienced by their community. Ivy Green, in the book's introduction, says that "(t)he trouble today is that people don't know right from wrong anymore, nobody is teaching right from wrong" (4-5). These words echo throughout the narratives. Older members look back to the respect held for Aboriginal beliefs (16), and to the moral instruction passed on in traditional narrative (17, 57, 82). According to these speakers, both the loss of language and cultural practice and the disempowerment of elders have led to a rending of social cohesion. Some narrators denounce the systemic nature of oppression and colonial control and relate their impact on at least four generations in their community. Others insist that race relations be understood on strictly personal terms and downplay the negative effects of state intervention in their lives.[14] For most of these narrators of the Barwon-Namoi community, resistance and accommodation intermingle as they look from the conflicted past into an unknown

future.

I'll Sing 'Til the Day I Die, a text from one of Canada's First Nations, is, like *Goodbye Riverbank*, a community collaboration. In this publication, narratives from fifteen elders of Tyendinaga Mohawk Territory on the Bay of Quinte in south-eastern Ontario have been collected to provide a text which, as one of the participants says: "comes from the people and tells of our daily lives" (11). Like the Australian book, this text also illustrates a braiding of resistance and accommodation but there are significant differences which must be recognised.

First, the editor and collector of these narratives, Beth Brant, identifies as a lesbian Mohawk writer with family connections to the same community and indeed to some of the elders she interviews. In this respect then, unlike the Australian publications, this text is not produced "with the White people." The local librarian who actually initiated the project says: "This book is truly a collaboration of the people of Tyendinaga, from the idea, to the proposal, to the telling and collecting of stories" (11).

That the editor is herself Aboriginal is important but this does not completely rule out occasional moments of resistance on the part of the elders. Certainly there is both familiarity and filial relationship evident in many remarks. At other moments, however, a process of self-censorship is apparent, especially when recalling racism. To give one example, an elder recalling work with non-Natives says: "Some of the people were nice. Others, well…" and her comment fades into the silence of ellipsis (44). My point is one that Kevin Gilbert makes in his book, *Living Black* (1), that in spite of the rapport between Aboriginal editors and narrators, self-censorship may continue to operate. Brant, whose own writing is often seen as confrontational by non-Aboriginal readers, acknowledges and respects these elders' silences.[15]

Another difference has to do with structure and editing decisions.

Jimmie Barker's narrative was heavily edited in terms of translation from Aboriginal syntax to Standard English and in terms of the arrangement of personal narrative and cultural description into an apparently seamless text. *Goodbye Riverbank* preserves the syntax and phrasing of the narrators but fractures many individual contributions and arranges the fragments thematically. By contrast, *I'll Sing 'Til the Day I Die* comes closer to maintaining and reflecting the original oral performance with each narrator's contribution presented in an individual chapter. Markers of the recording process are also occasionally retained. Narrator Ike Hill, for example, says: "That machine you're using, it records everything I say? Well, that's the way to do it. I like that machine. So much change around here"(30).

On the other hand, these Mohawk narrators share with the narratives of *Goodbye Riverbank* a certain ambivalence resulting from the intersection of resistance and accommodation across their community. As with the narrators in Walgett, many of the Tyendinaga elders emphasise the value of hard work and often this meant work in the non-Indigenous community. The Mohawk narrators speak openly, however, of conflicted motivations and responses. One elder recalls the advice of his uncle who told him: "Just remember, they won't accept you until you prove that you're better than they are" (58). In *Goodbye Riverbank*, reflections on work expressed pride in achievement. Tyendinaga elders also speak of "the good feeling of work" (107), but more than this they make explicit their refusal to conform to racist stereotypes. The same elder explains: "white society labels Indians as lazy drunkards, and we can't let them make us believe that's true" (106). Employment alongside of non-Aboriginal Canadians is thus articulated as both accommodation and resistance in which both fitting in and standing out play a role. One woman whose husband was a non-Native worker in a cheese factory says: "When I'd have the president of the cheese factory to dinner once in a while, his wife would say to other people, 'You could eat off any one of her floors'… I worked hard so nobody could say bad things about Indians. But why would anyone want to eat off floors?!" (51). The woman's humour and her underscoring of the ambiguity of signifiers

mark the intersection of both compliance with and resistance to non-Native expectations.

Native language in both its loss and its survival is for almost all of the Tyendinaga narrators the most important site of braiding between opposition and accommodation. A few of the elders have retained the Mohawk spoken in their early childhood but most lost their language through school experiences where the use of Mohawk resulted in physical punishment. Some speak of their parents deciding to use English in an attempt to spare their children from abuse. These narrators express regret but also understanding that families faced little choice but to comply with the government policies of Indigenous language suppression. Brant says that her Grandmother had a similar attitude to language, and that "although she remained adamantly and vehemently Mohawk, she also felt that it was okay to assimilate 'a little' for safety's sake" (1994, 116).

Today in Tyendinaga, policies have reversed and language revitalisation is taking place. One elder relates her experiences of singing in Mohawk, including the singing of Christian hymns and "O Canada" translated into Mohawk for the Queen's visit in 1984 (24). This, perhaps more than any of the other examples or incidents offered in these texts, demonstrates this braiding of resistance and accommodation that marks collaborative Indigenous life writing with traces of both the pain of dispossession and the pride of cultural survival. Anthems and hymns are signifiers of faith and allegiance to dominant ideological structures while the maintenance of language remains an assertion of cultural sovereignty. Such entangling is often ambiguous, at times conflicted. As the woman concludes, "here on Reserve, some of the people don't think we should sing. Some people are ashamed of their Nationality, of Mohawk. And some people think we shouldn't be singing the Christian songs. But," she says, "I like to sing and I'll sing till the day I die" (25).

Collaborative texts such as these are significant to reconciliation processes occurring in both Australia and Canada. In Australia's

reconciliation debate, the point has been raised time and again that we need to recognise the shared past of colonisation in all its complexity.[16] Historian Inga Clendinnen, in the 1999 Boyer Lectures, stressed the need for "good history made out of true stories," and she also emphasised that true stories, by nature, would be complex, at times ambiguous. We need these true stories, she says: "to make up the history of a nation rather than one simple and therefore necessarily false one" (9). The narrators and editors of the texts examined here offer such 'true stories' to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal readerships. Memories of tradition and language taken away, of accommodation and contribution to settler economies, of internalisation of and opposition to racist and oppressive discourse, and of cultural affirmation and linguistic revival all move readers toward the sort of imagining that Clendinnen says "expands our moral comprehension" (7). This imagining involves thinking through the hard choices, or the lack of choices, faced by individuals striving to maintain their dignity and their family's integrity through the turmoil of colonial encounter. *The Two Worlds of Jimmie Barker* supports and augments the narratives of other Aboriginal authors who write and speak of mission experiences and who together ask that non-Aboriginal Australians acknowledge these experiences as part of both our pasts, our shared history of colonisation. The narrators of *Goodbye Riverbank* bring home the fact that this colonial encounter is not confined to the past but is an ongoing site of rupture and conflict in which Aboriginal men and women continue to face tough decisions as they negotiate the entangled paths of resistance and assistance. The elders of *I'll Sing 'Til the Day I Die* remind readers, as does Reynolds, "that the same themes run through the history of practically all those people who have been faced with the problem of dealing with European imperialism over the past four hundred years" (1990, 233-234).

As readers, it is important to recognise and acknowledge the generosity of spirit which informs much collaborative Indigenous life writing. Beth Brant stresses the courage needed for this work. She says: "Writing is an act of courage for most. For us, it is an act that

requires opening up our wounded communities, our families, to eyes and ears that do not love us" (1994, 53). But, she also says: "Our words are…given with generosity and hope" (73). The narratives of these texts are offered in a similar spirit to both the editors and the communities, to both Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal readers. The reading of such narratives, however, entails an implicit reciprocity,[17] in which editors and readers must look to the intersections of resistance and accommodation in their decisions and consider their own participation in the ongoing colonial encounters which shape our nations.[18] Life writing provokes such reflection because "(t)o speak of one's past is always an invitation to others to think and possibly speak of their own. Any autobiographical act has the potential of setting into motion a symposium of autobiographical responses" (Rosen 17).

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Notes

[1] Rowse provides a useful survey of works focusing on the native police forces and the issue of collaboration (16-20). Of these, Fels goes furthest in analysing the agency of Aboriginal participation. A recent collaborative life writing project whose narrator was a Black tracker is that of Bohemia and McGregor.

[2] See, for example, Cowlishaw (1999).

[3] I use the term life writing rather than autobiography or autobiographical narrative in order to open discussion and consideration of a range of collaborative texts including community oral histories as well as single subject life histories. Varieties of textual collaboration are far too extensive to be canvassed here. Briefly, however, Boyce Davies provides a categorisation of collaboration focusing on presentation styles. Egan and Helm offer the concept of "serial collaboration" applied to successive interventions and transformations within a collaborative process. Van Toorn's phrase, "three-way collaborations" describes life stories "produced by two members of an Aboriginal family and a non-Aboriginal editor" (2001, 17).

[4] This paper was first presented at "Resistance and Reconciliation: Writing in the Commonwealth," the 12th Triennial Conference of the Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies, held in Canberra, July 2001. I wish to thank Wenche Ommundsen and Frances Devlin-Glass for comments on draft versions. Jennifer Kelly, from a distance, and Eleonore Wildburger, at the conference, gave helpful criticisms.

[5] See Watson; Huggins; and Huggins and Tarrago.

[6] I recognise that Mudrooroo's claim to identify as Aboriginal has been unsettled for some time; his work, nevertheless, continues to pose important questions.

[7] See, for example, Brewster; Nettlebeck; van Toorn (1998); and Egan.

[8] For use of the 'entangled' metaphor in the Australian context, see Bird Rose; Cuthroys; and Ang. For the problematisation of the resistance/complicity binary, see essays in Smith.

[9] See comments in Lewis (xii); also Rosen (13).

[10] Thomas also remarks on this pivotal moment and emphasises Barker's control throughout the recording process (2000b). Moreover, Thomas has listened to the complete recordings and reports Barker narrating that he obtained a wax cylinder dictaphone in the 1920s and recorded the old people on Brewarrina mission, an indication of both his long standing interest in technology and his concern for linguistic and cultural maintenance (2000a). These cylinders were lost or broken before Barker met Mathews. Interestingly, this section of Barker's narrative does not

appear in the book.

[11] Other examples of the narrator controlling the recording process include Lamilami; Harney and Wositzky; Napanangka et al; and McKellar.

[12] Barker also concedes that there were times of happiness (150, 193), but by far the greater emphasis is on the oppressive conditions. See Attwood et al. for comparison of Barker's narrative to other examples of Aboriginal accommodation to mission life (13-19) .

[13] "The Grey Zone" is a term from holocaust survivor, Primo Levi.

[14] One woman who was removed from her family after her mother's death says: "I never regretted being put in a home because God only knows what would happen to me if they didn't take me….White people have always been nice to me and I am grateful to them for saving my life" (Zagar 2000, 33). Compare Read, who notes that some victims of separation identify positively with their childhood institutionalisation (67). He also discusses the difficulty some face later in life in recovering Aboriginal identity.

[15] See Kelly for an analysis of student responses to Brant's work.

[16] See Council for Aboriginal Reconciliation.

[17] See Moreton-Robinson for reciprocity and relationality in Indigenous cultural domains. Compare Pelletier and Poole for an account of reciprocity in a First Nations community (169-170).

[18] This is surely one of the intentions of Aboriginal writers who urge non-Aboriginal readers to look to their own heritage and to their experiences of or involvements in oppression. Maria Campbell says: "if both of us acknowledge that our grandfathers and grandmothers came through great struggles, then we can talk to one another" (in Lutz, 60). Lee Maracle closes her book, *Bobbie Lee, Indian Rebel*, with the admonition: "In my life, look for your complicit silence, look for the inequity between yourself and others. Search out the meaning of colonial robbery and figure out how you are to undo it all" (241).

Jason Lacharite

Electronic Commerce and Tax Collection in Australia and Canada: Implications and Challenges

The universal implementation of electronic commerce has substantial implications for all income and sales tax dependent governments. To date, Australia and Canada have been unable to develop sufficient policy guidelines to address the challenges of cyber-commerce. But clearly they are not alone. One of the central issues for the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) at the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) is whether e-commerce has given the corporate sector the ability to lessen their tax burden. This also applies to individual consumers with regards to digital products - and in some instances physical items - bought over the Internet.

The commercial potential of the cyber-economy is difficult to estimate. To be sure, it has already become a major vehicle for buying and selling goods and services and will likely grow in importance in the coming decades.[1] As David Moschella has pointed out, "[f]orget about chat rooms, virtual communities, long distance learning, electronic pen pals and other 'New Age' idylls…the business of the Internet is business. Electronic commerce, extranets, supply chain management and global collaboration now sit atop the Internet agenda" (89).

In terms of taxation, e-commerce is important for four main reasons: first, new electronic markets threaten the very existence of conventional sales and distribution channels; second, the formation of independent business subsidiaries in low tax jurisdictions has made it possible to out-source secondary operations and collect full profits; third, the concept of permanent establishment has yet to be reformulated to account for electronic/digital enterprises; and

fourth, "the processing and use of information is rapidly replacing and modifying physical products as the most important source of profit" (Davidson and Rees-Moog 183). Indeed, Internet shopping, cyber-gambling, digital image distribution and various other Web-related services have had a profound impact on consumer spending patterns and the global consumer market.

Our daily experiences with the Internet do not reveal anything specific about e-commerce, nor do they provide any insight into how it may challenge the welfare state. What we do know is that it has stimulated our sense of curiosity and also provided some of us with the opportunity to shop 'tax-free' from our homes. What we do not know is that it has also revolutionised industrial management structures and trading networks with the widespread implementation of 'value-added communities' or VACs. This new strategy of compressing or transforming antiquated intermediary arrangements has ultimately contributed to symptomatic job displacement - less income tax - and fewer sales based revenues for high tax nations.[2]

There are, perhaps, even fewer of us who fully understand that the complex nature of Internet commerce has created a situation in which high tax nations feel virtually powerless in the wake of such an empowering revolution in corporate and consumer affairs. Granted, this may change if the European Union's (EU) 'bit tax' system is successful, but it is important to bear in mind that electronic transactions have thus far outmanoeuvred origin and destination based tax initiatives. This is largely because software and other intangible services transcend the idea of geographic locality, that is, they have negligible resource content, which means that they can be relocated and provided from any place. "Therefore, in the fullness of time, they will be far less susceptible to being taxed, either by unions or politicians" (Davidson and Rees-Moog 145).

The position taken in this article is that extensive growth in cyber-commerce will continue to have a marginal impact on the tax collection and regulatory powers of government in Australia and Canada. Similarly, it will be suggested that e-commerce is a

contributing variable to further welfare decline and sustained public intervention. To what extent remains to be seen, nevertheless it is clear that there are identifiable links between e-commerce and disintermediation and e-commerce and various forms of corporate tax evasion and tax avoidance. Contrary to the creed of cyber-anarchism however, the following analysis will not sensationalise the effects of e-commerce on the welfare state because it simply cannot be quantified. Instead, this article will attempt to demonstrate what specific challenges different types of e-commerce pose for Australia's and Canada's taxing authorities, social redistribution agendas and regulatory ambitions and initiatives. But before we can address the socio-political implications of e-commerce on welfare sustainability, it is important to understand what all the e-business hype is about. In other words, how big is e-commerce, how big is it expected to get and from a taxing and regulatory standpoint, why is it so problematic?

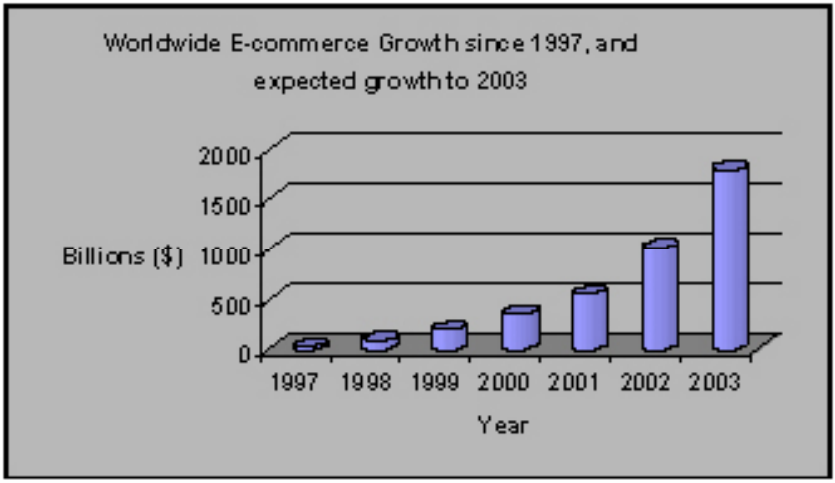
Trends and Developments in E-commerce: A Global Perspective

The two main variants of e-commerce, business-to-consumer (B2C) and business-to-business (B2B) are accelerating at a rapid pace. In 1997, for example, total sales (global) were estimated at only $26 billion US (OECD 27). Today, B2C transactions alone are set to surpass $30 billion in North America (Pastore), with annual worldwide e-business revenues expected to reach well over $1 trillion in 2002.[3] At this rate, *eMarketer* has predicted that combined B2C and B2B e-commerce sales will be worth $3.2 trillion by 2004. However, it should be pointed out that e-business projections appear to be based on a number of different methodological assumptions and as a result there is very little consistency in the comparative data. For example, some estimates have put B2C and B2B revenues as high as $9 trillion by 2004.

Despite some of the obvious flaws in using inconclusive statistical data, it is reassuring to know that several industry forecasts have

repeatedly underestimated the quarterly growth potential of cyber-commerce activities. Thus their predictive value is still meaningful, if only in an illustrative context. In addition, there is very little disagreement among the industry's top analysts that e-commerce has fundamentally altered the dynamics of doing business in a global economy (Report of the Canadian E-business Opportunities Roundtable 11). More often than not, market studies on e-commerce fail to account for the appeal and quick adaptability of digital applications. But more to the point, e-commerce-measuring techniques simply have not yet been standardised. Figure 1 shows worldwide e-commerce growth since 1997 - projections to 2003 have been included to add more substance to the data.

Figure 1



Sources: 1) OCD E-commerce Report, www.oecd.org ; 2) Report of the Canadian E-business Opportunities Roundtable, www.retailcouncil.org/research/technology.asp 3) Combined figures from www.emarketer.com.

In a loose sense, e-commerce can be defined as 'any commercial activity that takes place over the Internet.' For example, buying and selling goods and services electronically, advertising, EDI (Electronic Data Interchange) or EFTs (Electronic Funds Transfers), credit and debit cards transactions and the like. More specifically, B2C e-commerce refers to businesses selling tangible and intangible items directly to consumers via digital metamarkets,[4] while B2B enterprises use the Internet to integrate value added communities "which can extend from the supplier of raw materials to the final consumer" (OECD 1999, 34). Business-to-business electronic commerce by far dominates the total value of e-commerce activity and has accounted for roughly 70-85 percent of gross purchases since 1997. As such, B2B e-commerce will pose the greatest taxing and regulatory challenge to e-business friendly regimes - the implications B2C and B2B will be discussed separately in more detail in the next two sections.

What is particularly striking, however, is that several multinational firms have transformed their companies from a conventional business model - concerned more with the factors of production - to a de-capitalised e-business enterprise.[5] That is to say, many *digitally enhanced* companies have adopted a strategy of outsourcing non-core physical capital activities across several different supply and demand chains and have outsourced support functions as well (Means and Schneider 5-6). Similarly, traditional bricks and mortar type businesses (SMEs or small to medium size enterprises) also appear to be using the Internet to market and distribute their products and to eliminate high physical capital requirements.[6]

These new transformative developments have undeniably improved the economic status of several OECD countries. Even so, there has been considerable debate over how to control Internet business. The central issue for many high tax nations is to what extent will e-commerce influence the operation of their sales and income tax systems and overall regulatory powers? Are their concerns justified?

As mentioned in the introduction, Internet commerce has created at least four interrelated challenges for taxing authorities. First, e-

business "reduces the need for intermediaries in the sale and delivery of goods and services" (OECD 2000a, 6). Computer software, for example, can now be sold and delivered to consumers through web sites, airline companies can advertise and deliver ticket information directly to passengers over secure fibre optic lines (OECD 2000a, 6) and almost every aspect of personal banking can now be conducted over the Internet without the aid of banking staff. In the first instance, if the transaction is done outside the consumer's taxing jurisdiction, then it cannot be identified as a taxable event. The more critical observation to be made here though, is that in every case a physical intermediary is being eliminated from the economic process. Hence, the effects of e-commerce implementation can be seen as binary in that it has led to the computerisation of certain service sector positions, while at the same time depriving governments of personal income tax opportunities.

Second, e-commerce has allowed companies to create a series of digital metamarkets - in preferential tax areas - where they can outsource many of their secondary functions - also known as *location optimization*. In particular, digital enterprises have benefited from providing goods and services from low tax jurisdictions, but the interconnectedness of corporate management structures has also given multinationals a noticeable tax advantage. B2B transactions between specialised subsidiaries for instance, have become increasingly difficult to tax because their legal status is obscure and they lack a degree of physicality - even though they are connected through a cooperative work system, in other words, a series of Intranets. In essence, the problem for taxing authorities is trying to evaluate the contribution of a non-resident organisation to the overall corporate operation, and establishing an evidentiary connection (OECD 2000a, 30). Not surprisingly, these types of decentralised relationships have allowed many companies to claim legitimately that the subsidiary corporation in the tax haven country is earning profits without paying tax (Hardesty 6). Certainly, this is an oversimplified summary of the residency rules issue. Nevertheless, it brings to light an important question: "How can a government collect tax on profits resulting from

transactions which it can't see or measure, carried out by a company which doesn't exist physically on its soil" (E-com Information Site 1-3)?

Third, there has been a great deal of confusion over whether a web-server constitutes *permanent establishment* and to what extent an e-business can be taxed without any kind of physical presence. Under the OECD's Model Tax Convention, a "foreign seller must have permanent establishment (PE) in a country before it is subject to tax on its business profits in that country" (Hardesty 2). This is clearly problematic for a number of reasons and yet it has been a difficult issue to resolve. Carol Dunahoo and Rosemarie Portner, for example, claim that no PE can exist within a jurisdiction unless employees or other dependent personnel are working with the server in the same location (Hardesty 2-4). The OECD has also raised the issue of differential tax treatment for permanent establishments and subsidiaries: that is, how are they to be treated if they are undertaking similar economic activities?

Finally, perhaps the most widely publicised issue has been the potential impact of digital products on the collection of consumption and income taxes. Retail enterprises dealing in intangibles like music, videos, images, financial services, database management, gambling, software and technical support and e-money - to name a few - are not currently subject to the same taxation laws as conventional shop-owners; that is, tax neutrality does not exist. The main concern is that if the bulk of the transactions occur offshore, then it will be impossible for the receiver nation to collect its fair share of taxable revenue. Indeed, as Vito Tanzi has argued, even when ownership of a web site is established, tax administrators have found it hard to identify cyber-transactions because of factors such as data encryption, fragmented transmissions and rerouting mechanisms (16). Add this to the millions of transmissions that occur daily and it becomes clear that comprehensive detection amounts to nothing more than an act of desperation.

Far from being close to any kind of solution on how to mitigate the

taxing effects of e-commerce, the OECD - in cooperation with several national governments - is in the midst of trying to devise plans to account for things like permanent establishment and the massive importation of electronic products and services. Yet, despite the need for a coordinated international response to these challenges, each nation will have a different experience with e-business. Accordingly, the remainder of this study will compare the social and regulatory impact of B2C and B2B e-commerce on Australia and Canada. Only by doing this can we contextualise the implications of e-commerce on each government's approach to social welfare. It should be noted however, that the next two sections, while being supported by a range of empirical data, are based on a series of strong deductive inferences. Any report that relies too heavily on normative assertions is bound to be subject to many criticisms. Nonetheless, e-commerce trends and developments as they apply to Australia and Canada are suggestive of further tax collection problems. As a result, the cause and effect relationships that will be highlighted can still be viewed as being positively related.

Business to Consumer E-commerce in Australia and Canada: Developments and Challenges for Taxing Authorities

The online retail industry in Australia and Canada has been growing steadily since 1997. Not only have Canberra and Ottawa thrown their full support behind further B2C implementation, both nations have benefited from very high Internet penetration rates and a progressive telecommunications environment. Moreover, Australia and Canada appear to have a wide range of consumers eager to adopt new technologies. This is actually quite remarkable when one considers that both countries have been categorically referred to as 'middle' or 'moderate' economic powers. Yet, the statistical evidence indicates that while Australia and Canada are taking the B2C transition in stride, they are set to become global leaders in e-

commerce development. Canada, for example, has been described as the second most connected country in the world, while at the same time being ranked first with regards to *time spent online per user per month* (itWorld Canada 2001). Australia's technical and social advancements have also been impressive. By the end of 2000, almost half of all Australian households had a personal computer, with more than 20 percent of them being connected to the Internet (Global Online Retailing 99-110).

These figures will likely increase over the next few years, but at the moment more comprehensive B2C adoption has not spread to the general public because of security and privacy concerns. Indeed, despite more interest in the idea of Internet shopping, the percentage of total dollars spent online is still relatively low - 8 percent in Australia and 6 percent in Canada (Global Online Retailing 99-120). As such, B2C sales were only valued at $5 billion and $7.3 billion respectively in 2000.[7] However, a special report on global online retailing by Ernst and Young (EY) has estimated that the percentage of projected online sales will account for over 20 percent of the total dollars spent by 2002 - 23 percent for Australia and 24 percent for Canada (Global Online Retailing 99-120). Without overstating the empirical case for B2C expansion, it is clear that digital consumerism will continue to be meaningful in both countries. It is also equally apparent, that given the timeframe for this development, neither government will have the proper taxing mechanisms in place to deal with this increase in B2C activity.

However, one of the main problems with increasing online sales is not that they can not be taxed, because domestic e-tailers will still be required to submit annual activity statements. In addition, B2C business activity is not currently subject to the same tax neutrality standards as conventional transactions, that is, non-jurisdictional B2C is protected by a World Trade Organization (WTO) exclusion agreement.[8] Rather, it is that Australia's and Canada's relatively small e-tailing sectors will have to compete against a much more advanced and digitally oriented global market. The EY report for instance noted

that 70 percent of Canada's online purchases were from non-resident sources (Global Online Retailing 111). If the EY's data is correct, this means that $5.11 billion dollars of B2C sales went untaxed in 2000 - the equivalent of $357.7 million in lost tax revenue (calculated from Canada's national 7 percent Goods and Services Tax, although the figure would actually be higher if provincial levies were included in the calculation). In fact, the vast digitisation of several retail services calls into question the utility of consumption taxes and tariff fees on transformable items. Apart from downloadable music and software - which are perhaps over-referenced in relation to online shopping - pornography, videos and images of any sort, booking services, publications, betting and gambling, professional services and training courses can all be delivered to customers in high tax areas without incurring any local import tax, or sales taxes if they apply. This has special significance in Canada's case since it relies heavily on consumption taxes (a national GST and provincial sales taxes) to subsidise social spending initiatives. Australia may also face a serious reduction in its consumption base once its new tax system matures - Australia recently implemented a national 10 percent GST as part of the government's new tax reform initiative.

However, to argue that this is merely an intangible issue would be misleading. There has also been some discussion over how to tax non-jurisdictional postal items bought over the Internet. As a practical matter, it is difficult to see how any customs agency could possibly monitor every single package that originates from an outside source. Certainly, Canada's experience with B2C purchasing patterns suggests that the broad importation of physical products could create administrative costs greater than any proposed tax take. Similarly, Australia's geographic isolation and limited market alternatives could promote more non-jurisdictional purchases in the coming years - as it has already with Internet gambling. Figure 2 illustrates increasing B2C sales in Australia from 1997 to 2000.

Figure 2

Online Retail Sales in Australia, 1997-2000

Year	Millions ($)
1997	55
1998	250
1999	920
2000	5,000

Source: www.consult.com.au.

The other issue is how the rapid transition to more cost-effective e-businesses has affected the job market. Unfortunately, the social impact of B2C on domestic employment opportunities cannot be quantified. Therefore, it would be impossible to predict how it might affect taxation, but even without the benefit of a more thorough empirical analysis, no one can reasonably reject the claim that B2C activity is increasing in both countries. In addition, there is no evidence to contradict the argument that B2C will not continue to have a modest impact on tax collection in Australia and Canada. Regardless, it is not important to get caught up in the notion of statistical legitimacy, because it does not provide us with a sufficient understanding of how B2C e-commerce influences tax collection.

To some, the link between B2C e-commerce, tax collection and the welfare state may be self evident, but it would perhaps be worthwhile to further simplify the relationship/s. For the reasons outlined above, B2C activity - of the non-resident variety - makes it difficult for taxing agencies to collect their fair share of tax. The EY report predicts that B2C trading will double over the next year and a half in Australia and Canada. So, how much longer will it be before Canberra and Ottawa extend their neutrality principles to avert further electronic tax avoidance and if they do not, what risks are involved in lengthening the WTO's moratorium on e-commerce? In

Australia's case, it is hard to ascertain how B2C will affect sales tax collection - largely because of recent tax reforms. However, if one considers Australia's isolation and limited consumer alternatives as factors to purchasing behaviour, one would expect higher overseas purchases over the next few years.[9] Canada's case is slightly different because of its geography. The United States has been described as a buyer's market, which gives Canadians an opportunity to benefit from more consumer options. And this is precisely what has happened. The majority of online shoppers in Canada prefer to buy from non-resident sources. Once again, it is critical to ask how these two cases apply to the net tax loss hypothesis and a decline in federal social protection policies. Hypothetically speaking, if the Canadian government did indeed miss out on $358 million dollars in tax revenue that would mean it would have $358 million less to support the welfare state. The residual impact of this would be fewer transfer dollars to the provinces, which could translate into fewer hospital beds, school closures, shoddy environmental initiatives and the like. Australia would of course experience the same sort of decline in government services. Hence, the logic suggests that any loss of tax revenue will have a corrosive impact on the state of social services. This is not to say that the end result will be decisive - it may hardly be noticed at all in the short-term - because the extent of B2C to 'tax source reduction' is not a concrete occurrence and it would probably be impossible to measure anyway. The argument is simply that B2C will continue to have an impact on the tax collection powers of the Australian Tax Office and Revenue Canada. This in turn will ultimately have secondary consequences for the sustainability of provincial/state and federal social services.[10]

The following section clarifies the significance of e-business in more detail and provides a simple example of how e-commerce can be used to avoid paying tax. A discussion on the contributory impact of B2B to employment vulnerability will also be included. Not surprisingly, the main concern for tax collectors, particularly in Australia and Canada, is that widespread B2B will have major implications for corporate tax policy. With corporate tax revenues already in decline,

simplified B2B processes will only accelerate the move towards greater location optimisation. From a political perspective, this will make B2B a more contentious issue - especially for many transitional welfare states - simply because it has the potential to completely change the relationship between private enterprise and the notion of social responsibility. Consequently, it will be discussed in much greater detail than B2C e-commerce.

Business-to-Business E-commerce: Permanent Establishment and the New Corporate Business Design

The media has focused far too much attention on the implications of B2C e-commerce on the taxing powers of governments. Yet, as we have seen it is likely to have only a nominal impact on overall taxation. Business-to-business e-commerce on the other hand, has almost created a sense of political ineptitude amongst regulatory and taxing authorities. Why?

One of the key attractions of B2B is the significant impact it has had on "costs associated with inventories, sales execution, procurement and distribution, and with intangibles like banking" (OECD 2000b 24). "In general, it is less expensive to maintain a cyber-storefront than a physical one because it is always open, has a global market, and has fewer variable costs" (OECD 2000b 13). The superior advantage of B2B e-commerce however, is that there are no location requirements for online trading. This is an absolutely critical point, because it means that territorial sovereignty is no longer a viable basis for exerting control over an economy in a world of digital markets.

To be sure, there can be little doubt that B2B advancements have had a positive impact on corporate and SME profitability, but what have been some of the social implications of more *electronic* restructuring and offshore trading? Perhaps one of the most troubling aspects of cyber-commerce is that it has contributed to substantial

job displacement in certain areas. In the United States, for example, the Internet is spurring disintermediation in the financial services sector by cutting out the need for stockbrokers and insurance agents (Reerink). In addition, digital trading and electronic ticketing has had a similar impact on several retail occupations, for example, travel agents (Wade). Yet, the bulk of 'disintermediation' seems to be taking place in the corporate sector. Likewise, this is where much of the tax avoidance has occurred as well.

First, let us discuss the tax avoidance issue as it applies to business taxes. In Australia and Canada, corporate taxes are "levied on the profits of an incorporated business. Some countries tax companies based on place of incorporation (legal establishment), but more usually tax applies to permanent establishment" (Banks 1-3). Australia and Canada also have anti-avoidance *controlled foreign company* (CFC) laws that discourage non-declaration of profits from subsidiary companies in low tax jurisdictions. In fact, both countries generally have quite extensive anti-avoidance tax schemes, so what then is the problem?

E-commerce has essentially changed the conceptual basis for determining permanent establishment and who has 'competent authority' over non-jurisdictional e-trading.[11] For instance, the Internet has had a significant impact on the determination of a corporation's residency status, for example, product advertising, design and delivery can now be initiated from anywhere making it difficult to verify a central management structure. Therefore, a customer could inspect and buy a high volume of goods and services from a company's Internet site (located anywhere), using money from an offshore account, digital cash[12] or an electronic credit card (no local trace of the transaction is created). Product delivery could then be outsourced to a third party. But since in many instances permanent establishment does not include facilities used solely for the storage, display or delivery of goods, the non-resident company could still have a physical presence without being subject to any type of reporting requirements - something that is typically characteristic of many

bilateral tax treaty arrangements (Revenue Canada 56-57). Hence, even if a transaction were identified - which would be highly unlikely - 'permanent establishment' would not be clear - in fact it might not really exist at all. Indeed, at which point could the primary taxing jurisdiction claim legal authority over the buyer and seller? What further complicates matters is if the web site and server are leased from an extraterritorial service provider - ownership now becomes unclear. Finally, as will be discussed shortly, to what extent can preparatory and auxiliary operations be connected to total income (OECD 2000a, 24-25)?

Consider Cisco Systems and Intel Corporation's B2B arrangements for a moment. Both of these companies are clearly United States corporations and yet they seem to do most of their taxable business outside of the United States in lower taxing jurisdictions. According to Keyur Patel and Mary Pat McCarthy, Cisco's objective right from the beginning was to "accelerate the adoption of Internet business solutions through alliances and the creation of what they call Internet 'ecosystems' in markets with great potential" (68). Through networked applications, Cisco "connects chip manufacturers, logistics companies, employees, system integrators and customers into a single enterprise system" (Tapscott, Ticoll and Lowy 100). Intel Corp. has established a slightly different e-business system that includes order and transaction processing and technical support, even if its distributional characteristics are largely the same. These types of dynamic B2B arrangements form the very essence of the permanent establishment dilemma. Cisco's and Intel's *digital ecosystems* or *metamarkets* - Intel operates in more than 46 countries and Cisco only owns two of the thirty-eight plants that assemble its products - are in fact so complex that it would be difficult to determine who is involved in which supply chain structure, thus making it difficult to attribute value to the final product. More critically though, individualised B2B transactions - between buyers and sellers - would almost certainly be protected by private Secure Socket Layer (SSL) servers and data encryption. But what of the job displacement issue? With all the contracting and subcontracting that appears to be going

on, one would be tempted to think that there would be plenty of jobs circulating around the industry.

To fully understand how B2B has influenced employment instability, we first need to understand how it has transformed the traditional corporate enterprise. It was mentioned earlier that many companies had already started to reinvent their management and distributional procedures by establishing electronic VACs. In essence, companies like Cisco Systems, GM, IBM and Intel Corp. have created a series of temporary/multiple value chains to deal with customised product requests. Known as *shop production management*, these new value chains are formulated on the basis of customer participation, consumer demand and customisation. According to Don Tapscott, David Ticoll, and Alex Lowy, shop production value arrangements (digital metamarkets) eliminate the need for extensive internal supply chains, command and control management structures and fixed (mass) production facilities (Tapscott, Ticoll and Lowy 93-98). Corporate decentralisation therefore, via B2B networks, also reduces human capital requirements by only maintaining flexible connections to specialised sub-contractors. Hence, the relationship between B2B e-commerce and greater job instability while being difficult to quantify certainly does exist.

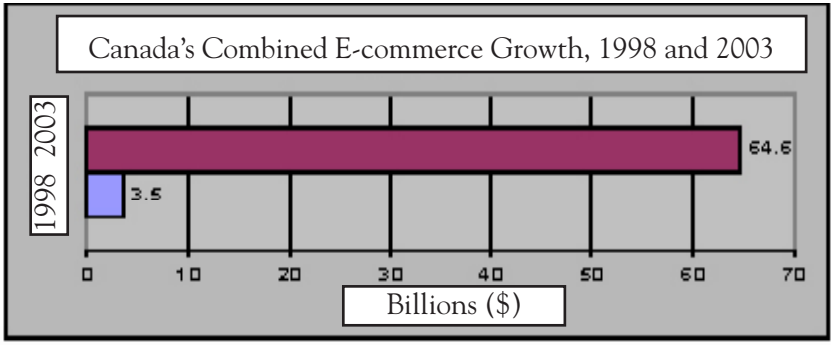
However, some counter-claims have been made that even with these new business developments B2B's impact on sectoral employability has been superficial. An OECD report commissioned in 1999, for example, argues that widespread job displacement will not occur even though it acknowledges that *intermediary functions* will likely change - it does not say how or in what context. Similarly, an Australian report by the National Office for Information Economy has even gone so far as to say that the net impact of e-commerce will create more *good* - a word implicit in any government's definition of employment - jobs (National Office for Information Technology 2000). At best, these are misleading claims based on a narrow understanding of sectoral unemployment and how it relates to current corporate and SME restructuring. Specialists in the areas of cyber-commerce and B2B

networking make no secret of the fact that these structural changes are permanent. And the notion or false belief that the hi-tech sector will reverse the fortunes of thousands of displaced workers is nothing more than wishful thinking. As Naomi Klein has pointed out, "[p]art-timers, temps and contractors are rampant in Silicon Valley - a recent labor study of the region estimated that between 27 and 40 percent of the Valley's employees were contingency workers and the use of temps there was increasing at twice the rate of the rest of the country" (249). Among other things, Klein's observations suggest that the B2B transition has been swift and perhaps had a more negative impact on employment than anyone could have anticipated. They also suggest that taxation revenues may be largely contingent on absolute economic stability. How all of this relates to Australia and Canada though, cannot be easily established.

Theoretically speaking, as business decapitalisation increases, tax revenues should decrease (as the human element decreases) or at the very least become less stable; it is an inverse relationship. Yet, there is not enough substantive evidence at this stage to measure the collective impact of e-business on sectoral job displacement and tax avoidance. But it is crucial to again emphasise that this is not the goal of this article. In many ways, B2B e-commerce almost defies measurement because it is partially evolving into a highly secretive activity. Moreover, the above observations are necessarily speculative because business e-commerce still has not reached its full potential in either country - web site migration to low tax areas has only just started to increase. In any event, it is not particularly relevant because B2B is not a country specific phenomenon. Clearly, both Australia and Canada have already experienced the same sort of universal consolidation in distributive networks like telecom companies, banks and power companies, which has been partly driven by the implementation of B2B applications or what Tapscott et al. call business webs (146). In addition, Australia's and Canada's communications/digital infrastructures are improving - cable connections, digital subscriber lines (DSL) and asymmetrical digital subscriber lines (ADSL) - which will facilitate more economic

diversification, more B2B adoption and potentially more job instability. Figure 3 compares B2B e-commerce growth (projected) in Canada from 1998 and 2003.

Figure 3



Source: International Data Corps. www.idc.com (March. 2000)

Probably the best way to measure the qualitative impact of e-commerce on taxation is to highlight how each government has responded to it via public policy and action proposals. For instance, there are already signs that the e-business revolution is having a somewhat wavering impact on policy formulation in Australia and Canada. The ATO's and Revenue Canada's (in cooperation with Finance Canada) strategies for e-commerce regulations cover many of the issues that have been discussed in this article. But what is perhaps most interesting is the general sense of capitulation that exists in relation to their proposals for Internet commerce control. The next section looks at some of the jurisdictional and administrative challenges identified by the ATO and Revenue Canada, but concludes that neither tax agency has made significant progress on how to resolve e-commerce related tax issues and neither of them have sufficiently addressed the displacement dilemma.

Regulating E-commerce in Australia and Canada: Action Plans and Proposals

Similar to their policies on cryptography and wireless communications, Canberra and Ottawa have taken a rather cautious approach to e-commerce regulation and taxation. This can be evidenced by the fact that both governments continue to support the WTO's moratorium on e-commerce taxation. Nevertheless, the ATO and Revenue Canada have still developed a temporary framework (a set of policy strategies) to deal with specific elements of cyber-commerce.

In reviewing and scrutinising the ATO's and Revenue Canada's responses to e-commerce, we first need to identify the most important issues and then offer some insight into how effective their proposals may or may not be. To their credit, both agencies have provided a great deal of information regarding their action plans for e-commerce control. However, it is safe to say that despite their positive *public safeguarding* intentions, neither tax administration seems to offer a realistic set of solutions to the problems inherent in non-physical commerce - which would explain why Canberra and Ottawa fully support the WTO's and OECD's e-commerce agenda: they really do not know what to do.

In the first instance, under the Commonwealth's jurisdictional strategy plan (determining permanent establishment for taxation purposes), the ATO claims that it will be able to implement a comprehensive global monitoring and tracing scheme that will include an "inquiry into the tax effects of intranets, [sic] and the internal networks of large corporations" (Australian Tax Office 14). How the ATO plans to do this is practically beyond comprehension. It is doubtful that any foreign corporation will voluntarily submit private information on the status of its global and regional operations (intranets are internal networks), and how they may affect Australian tax revenues.[13] Furthermore, this ambitious plan does not seem to take into consideration the vastness of the Internet, nor is it

consistent with the ATO's position on jurisdictional identifiers. As of January 2000, for example, there were more than 72 million host computers connected to the Internet in 247 countries. Moreover, a study by BrightPlanet (an Internet content company) in August 2000 suggested that the World Wide Web could be 400-550 times bigger than previously estimated - which would severely restrain inclusive web-site detection (Tehan 3-5). But that is only part of the problem. According to the ATO's own data, commercial web sites will become increasingly difficult to identify because of ongoing developments in Internet Protocol (IP) numbering standards. Not only has the ATO noted accurate ISP record keeping to be a problem - in relation to reallocated IP numbers - it has also suggested that newer versions (more adaptable software) of the IPvX standard would increase IP number mobility and weaken jurisdictional alignments of IP numbers (Australian Tax Office 23-24).

In Canada's case, although Revenue Canada has not yet specified how it will implement a cooperative monitoring scheme, it has indicated that any plan involving Internet tax compliance will have to include cooperation from other taxing authorities. In fact, both the Australian Tax Office and Revenue Canada agree that in most areas international cooperation and information sharing will be absolutely critical to effective Internet tax regulation. Yet their plans lack any substance because they fail to highlight how a collective surveillance strategy might work. With regards to compliance issues, however, Revenue Canada's Advisory Committee has suggested, First, "establishing a system that identifies Canadians doing business over the Internet" (Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Electronic Commerce 51), and second "developing *Webcrawler* software to trace non-filers to complement existing programs" (Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Electronic Commerce 51). To put it bluntly, these recommendations are absurd and completely unrealistic. Not only does no such system exist, it is as yet unclear how *Webcrawler* software might work and whether it would be totally reliable. Needless to say that Revenue Canada has only responded by saying that it intends to carry on discussions with other tax

administrations and international organisations on the implications of Internet commerce on tax revenues. In other words, it is aware that non-compliance will continue to be a problem, but does not know how to deal with it.[14]

As far as the Australian Tax Office's and Revenue Canada's administrative strategies are concerned, they have only really gone so far as to say that they will continue to work closely with their treaty partners to ensure that electronic commerce does not negatively affect *tax compliance* and *tax collection*. For example, on the issue of cryptographic management the Australian Tax Office has stated that international cooperation may be required to maintain a reliable and effective retrieval mechanism for digitally encrypted transactions - for audit purposes (Australian Tax Office 27). Similarly, Revenue Canada has stated that while it is satisfied with the government's laws on encryption, it too will continue to work closely with its treaty partners to develop more spontaneous information exchange agreements (Response to the Report of the Minister's Advisory Committee on Electronic Commerce 1998). The central problem with these notions though, is that Australia's and Canada's domestic encryption laws do not extend beyond their territorial jurisdictions. That is, standard commercial key lengths are much more powerful than what is considered lawful in either Australia or Canada.[15] Furthermore, digital records can be altered quite easily without trace. In many respects, these sorts of loose policy plans make perfect sense given the highly complex nature of Internet taxation, but in other ways they also reflect the Australian Tax Office's and Revenue Canada's inability to resolve the taxation-cum-digital avoidance dilemma implicit in further e-commerce development. In fact, both governments' languid approaches to e-commerce regulation are characteristic of the prevailing uncertainty that exists in relation to e-business taxation. Hence, it perhaps should not come as a revelation that neither agency has made a full commitment to any sort of resolution planning.

With this in mind, it is hard to envisage either the Australian Tax Office or Revenue Canada devising a workable plan for Internet

taxation in the near future. It is also hard to see the OECD coming to any kind of collective agreement on how to resolve the 'competent authority' issue, especially since the OECD, UN, WTO and the like, can not even agree on how to implement a global free trade regime. But let us just assume for a moment that spontaneous information exchange agreements - that is, multilateral agreements - are the solution to effective Internet tax regulation. Would they work? As was indicated earlier, both the Australian Tax Office and Revenue Canada have formulated their strategies around the notion of mutual cooperation, but they have done so without taking into consideration greater web-migration (relocating e-commerce web sites to low tax jurisdictions) and how a cooperative e-tax strategy might operate. With regards to web-migration, bilateral or even multilateral cooperation would be meaningless if the country in question was not a treaty partner - today's tax avoiders typically do not establish commercial operations in other high tax nations. With the exception of a few minor disclosure agreements between the United States and some Caribbean countries, there are virtually no substantial treaty arrangements between any tax haven and Australia and Canada - something that Ottawa and Canberra seem to be aware of. And this is extremely problematic for the Australian Tax Office and Revenue Canada since effective enforcement of income tax laws requires access to, and the analysis of, records of financial institutions. Web site mobility and migration - of the commercial variety - to preferential tax jurisdictions then, ensures that full disclosure would probably never happen.

The other issue is whether bilateral or multilateral information sharing agreements would be practical and/or workable. How could one possibly calculate who would get which taxes in relation to which transactions? What would be the administrative costs of establishing such a collective tax regime? Which of the 247 nations involved in e-business might participate in this arrangement and who would fulfil the organisational requirements? Just as a reference, there are over 7,500 taxing jurisdictions in the United States alone (Hardesty 3). How could one determine competent authority given the dynamics

of hundreds of different tax systems? When everything is taken into account, we can infer with a relative degree of certainty that the idea of an international/collective tax strategy for e-commerce is generally beyond the capability of any international organisation.

While the idea of bilateral information exchanges does have some substance, again, neither agency has illuminated the processes and bureaucratism that would be involved in carrying out information exchanges, nor have they identified what standard these hypothetical arrangements might follow. These criticisms may be overly harsh, but it is important to bear in mind that while Canberra and Ottawa struggle to reformulate their tax policies to account for e-commerce, digital communications and processes are advancing at an unprecedented rate. To be sure, according to the United Kingdom branch of the Institute of Directors, the OECD's framework for e-commerce taxation is not being developed fast enough to keep pace with the speed of its adoption in industry (Maxwell). Hence, could we be witnessing the beginning of an 'absolute' *laissez faire* trading system for electronic commerce?

Conclusion

This article has attempted to highlight some of the challenges involved in taxing and regulating B2C and B2B e-commerce. It has also tried to substantiate the linkages, that is provide a theoretical framework between e-business, tax avoidance, job disintermediation and welfare decline. It is perhaps too early at this stage to argue decisively how positive this relationship is or how significant it will be. Nonetheless, there is enough evidence to argue that a strong normative, and in some senses empirical, association exists between e-commerce, fewer taxes and declining social services.

Regrettably though, at this stage in e-commerce development, no one could possibly say to what extent e-commerce will influence tax collection and regulation in Australia and Canada. Current e-commerce growth and industry forecasts suggest that e-business

trading will continue to increase, which will amount to greater tax avoidance and tax evasion opportunities - it could also contribute to more disintermediation and corporate restructuring. Furthermore, Canberra and Ottawa have yet to develop sufficient legislative guidelines to account for the myriad of issues associated with non-jurisdictional e-trading. Therefore, it is clear that e-commerce will continue to have a contributory impact on Australia's and Canada's regulatory authorities and taxation agendas. However, it is also clear that more research needs to be done in this area and that time will be the only barrier to further academic progress on these relational issues.

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Notes

[1] See Don Tapscott's *Digital Capital*, Grady Means and David Schneider's *Meta-Capitalism*, or the OECD's 1999 position paper on the economic and social implications of e-commerce.

[2] This will be discussed in a theoretical context later.

[3] This figure was calculated using data provided by eMarketer's current B2B and B2C reports at www.emarkerter.com.

[4] The term "metamarkets" appears in Grady Means and David Schneider's book titled *Meta-Capitalism: The E-business Revolution and the Design of 21st Century Companies and Markets*. It essentially refers to the development of a global market access system.

[5] See Patel and McCarthy.

[6] The Australian Internet music distributor Chaos Music (www.chaosmusic.com.au) is an excellent example of the type of decapitalisation that has already taken place among local retailers in Australia. In fact, the Internet abounds with examples of small businesses shifting to online marketing and distribution.

[7] These figures were taken from www.consult.com.au and www.statscan.com.

[8] Members of the WTO, including Australia and Canada, agreed in 1998 to refrain from applying Customs duties on electronic products and services delivered over the Internet. This is one of the most contradictory elements of Australia's and Canada's taxation principles. On the one hand they claim to want tax neutrality, but on the other hand they have thrown their support behind a moratorium on e-commerce taxation.

[9] Australian consumers are in fact already starting to do more online shopping from non-resident sources. In 2000 for example, close to 46 percent of purchases made online were from non-Australian web-sites. See the EY retail report for more information.

[10] This already appears to be happening in Canada. Although it would be almost impossible to determine how much of it can be attributed B2C e-commerce.

[11] For taxation purposes, legal establishments would be considered territorial possessions. This is merely a theoretical characterisation, but one that clearly identifies the nature of government authority.

[12] Digital cash or credits are already in widespread use. As Stephen Kobrin has explained, "[e]-cash is secure and easily authenticated. It is also anonymous. Public key encryption technology and digital signatures allow the receiving computer to know the e-cash is authenticated without revealing the identity of the payer. E-cash can be exchanged any number of times without leaving an audit trail behind." See Kobrin's chapter, "You Can't Declare Cyberspace National Territory," in Don Tapscott et al, Blueprint to the Digital Economy: Creating Wealth in the Era of E-

business (360). Also refer to Orin Grabbe's article on digital cash titled "Concepts in Digital Cash" at www.zolatimes.com for more information.

[13] Most businesses have even rejected the proposal to install measurement software on their sites. See Rita Tehan's Congressional Research Brief on E-commerce statistics at www.cnie.org.

[14] As a reference, Revenue Canada's 'foreign reporting form (T106)' does not ask for specific information with respect to e-commerce activities.

[15] Meganet Corporation (www.meganet.com), LockBox2 (www.turbopower.com/products/lockbox) and Top Secret Crypto (www.topsecretcrypto.com) all provide extremely power cryptographic services.

Robyn Morris

Making Eyes: Colouring the Look in Larissa Lai's *When Fox is a Thousand* and Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner*

> A friend of mine asked me
> if I always thought of myself
> as a coloured person.
> Is white a colour and do you
> think of yourself as white? I asked.
> Or do you just think of yourself as normal?
> (Hiromi Goto, *The Body Politic*)
>
> I've seen things you people wouldn't believe.
> (Roy Batty, *Blade Runner*)

In Ridley Scott's *Blade Runner* (Director's Cut 1992) vision is positioned as a bipartisan process, one which oscillates between discursive empowerment and disempowerment. *Blade Runner* is Orwellian in its preoccupation with strategies of surveillance, and an imperialistic policing of the gaze dominates both the narrative and visual frame. In *Blade Runner* what you see is not what you get, and manipulation of the cognitive process by those (humans) in a position of power determines otherness. In a notable scene from the film, the Replicant Roy Batty meets with Chew, his eye-maker, and tells him, "If only you could see what I've seen with your eyes." "Your eyes," as Batty infers, could be the prosthetic devices designed and constructed by Chew; devices that deny Batty ownership of his gaze. However, Batty's comment also implies possession, and the question of 'whose eyes' have the power to see, hovers, much like the unblinking eye in the film's opening sequence. It is precisely this predominance of the visual within *Blade Runner*, and the incorporation of the 'meeting'

between Batty and Chew into Larissa Lai's first novel, *When Fox is a Thousand* (hereafter *Fox*), that links two seemingly disparate texts.

While *Blade Runner* constructs difference through the organising principles of surveillance, Lai's description of *Fox*'s central character, Artemis Wong, watching and contemplating pivotal scenes from *Blade Runner*, signals that her text is vision(w)ary in its renegotiation of normative notions of dichotomous relationships based on domination and subordination. Lai's novel is premised on a sustained interrogation of the way in which race, gender and sexuality are marked by, and through, scopic regimes of power. Through an intricate interweaving of three distinct and historically 'othered' narrative voices, Lai redefines both vision and storytelling as multidimensional processes. The act of 'looking' and the act of 'telling' function to conceal, just as they reveal, truths about the world(s) in which the various characters of *Fox* live. Lai's incisive incorporation of several principal scenes from *Blade Runner* is integral to her interrogation of a hegemonic white gaze that seeks to simultaneously possess, and dispossess, a specifically Chinese-Canadian self.

In reading *Fox* through *Blade Runner* I will explore[1] the notion of a tripartisan 'look,' suggesting that *Fox* is at once a glance back, a glance through and a glance at the debate on racialisation that questions the presumption of a world that colours the look in every hue but white.[2] Characterised by generic hybridity, *Fox* intertwines marginalised voices that oscillate between the mythological Fox, the historical ninth-century Chinese Poetess Yu Hsuan-Chi and an unnamed narrator who lives in contemporary Vancouver. This plurality of voices allows Lai, who is also Vancouver-based, to re/view normative and acculturated polarities that have historically separated East and West, object and subject, human and non-human, white and non-white. The Fox, who will achieve immortality when she turns one thousand, is a dominating and pervasive narrative voice, and her mythological story is appropriated by Lai from Pu Songling's sixteenth century recording of supernatural tales, originally published as *Strange Tales of Liaozhai* (Lai 1999, 151). The Fox assumes the

role of the novel's tour guide. She leads the reader through rural and feudal China where the Poetess is executed for the supposed murder of her maid/lover and across the ocean to contemporary student life in Canada. Though at times nostalgic, the Fox's return journey has a pedagogical basis and she draws on her lengthy and comprehensive experiences in order to teach the present the importance of repairing the rapidly fraying link with its own past. The Fox's motives, however, are not altogether altruistic, for the Fox is a trickster, and she enjoys, above all else, observing the effects of her orchestrated mischief in the human world. The Fox's representational strength is twofold in that it allows Lai to assume a feminist stance while simultaneously questioning the politics of sexual and racial stereotyping.

With the power to animate the bodies of dead women, the Fox assumes a human form in order to enact her hauntings, repeatedly returning to, and using, the body of the ninth-century Poetess. It is in this form that the Fox chooses to haunt Artemis, a Chinese-born university student who lives with her adopted Caucasian parents in Vancouver. Artemis links the three separate strands of the narrative and it is the Fox who offers her a passageway through memory that will eventually lead to a reconnection with a cultural past that Artemis has spent most of her childhood denying. The Fox also contrives a meeting between Artemis and another student, Diane Wong, and this propels Artemis towards a tempestuous relationship with Diane but one which allows Artemis to fully acknowledge her lesbianism. This melding of ancient spirits and ancient bodies with contemporary student life emphasises not only the historical continuity of the female story but also the importance of the past in the formation of a bicultural identity in a specifically mono-Canadian present.

Roy Miki argues that "Asian Canadian and other minority writers, speaking out of the finitude of their subjectivities, have to be vigilant not simply to mime the given narrative, genre and filmic forms through which dominant values are aestheticized" (117). Referring to Joy Kogawa's much lauded *Obasan*, Miki observes that formal literary

disruptions, such as the blurring of genres, have become key strategies of resistance to white hegemony (117). Lai's direct engagement with issues of race, sexuality and gender allows her novel to write out of, and against, the poetical politics of representation that is, perhaps, the legacy of *Obasan*. Given the quality of Lai's prose, her superb storytelling devices and the fact the novel was shortlisted for the Chapters/Books in Canada First Novel Award, critical response to *Fox* has been negligible. The novel looks beyond what Miki defines as the "coercive gaze of homogenizing discourses" (123), for its politics indicate Lai's understanding that the storytelling circle is never closed; the listener is also the interpreter. The lack of critical response to her novel is another indication that Lai has put the politics of representation before Virginia Woolf's adage to "choose your patron wisely" (65). Lai's cast of hybrid characters, a Fox who transforms herself into human form, an ancient poetess with a predilection for androgyny, and an array of young students who could be white or Chinese-Canadian, heterosexual or homosexual, defy labelling while also adding to the complexity of the novel's structure. *Fox*'s generic hybridity, when coupled with the inherent hybridity of each of the central characters, suggests that Lai is writing from a space outside of the canon in which *Obasan* has now been accepted and incarcerated.

Fox's narrative voice is at once ancient and contemporary; it is, most significantly, Chinese-Canadian, female and lesbian. The liberal interpretation of traditional Chinese fox stories and the migratory narrative voice enables Lai to separate both herself and her story from Euro/phallocentric discourse. In an interview with Ashok Mathur, Lai states that her fiction writing is focused on the attempt to:

> ...create a sort of historical launch pad for hybrid flowers like myself. I have been trying to foster the germination of a culture of women, identified women of Chinese descent living in the West…it is my way of trying to escape the reactiveness of identity politics by claiming a mythic, fictive sort of originality, my way of saying, but people like me…have been here all along, and we are

> more than the sum of the identities that this statistics crazy society wants to pin on me (2).

Lai's comment indicates the twofold political structure of her novel by firstly questioning established notions of the way in which history is constructed and received in the West. This statement moves beyond any indication of an authorial desire to rewrite the Historical story. It signals instead an interrogation of the containment and silencing of women, whose stories who have been shaped by a hybrid rather than monocultural ancestry, within a singularised master narrative. But the historical story, as Trinh Minh-ha asserts, "never stops beginning or ending. It appears headless and bottomless for it is built on differences…A gift built on multiplicity" (1989, 2). Difference is paramount in the (re)telling and Lai's generic interweaving allows for a multiplicity of subject positionings from which to speak and see. Lai propels Artemis towards a collision course with her past in order to question not only the negation of the female story in history but also the representation of Canadian women of Asian ancestry as silent, passive or framed by a privileged white, Western and heterosexual male gaze.

And yet, as Minh-ha notes, "no matter how plural and diverse the voices featured, one always has to point back to the apparatus and the site from which the voices are brought out and constructed" (1992, 169). Artemis watches and meditates upon what has become, in the two decades since its original release, a Hollywood cult film. The film is linked to a conveyor belt of essays, reviews and internet discussions that hover precariously between criticism and fandom.[3] Lai's intertextual engagement with the film *Blade Runner* articulates an awareness of the power of the paternal viewing apparatus to colour the look white and perpetuate gendered and racialised dichotomies. In this sense Lai defines the gaze as an external imposition, constructed and perpetuated by a cultural system predicated on white supremacy, in which, referring to the dialectic that began this paper, white is hierarchically positioned as the only 'non' colour. In "The New Cultural Politics of Difference," Cornel West describes the historical

desire by the perceived 'other' or 'non-white' to seek approval of "white normative gazes" (32). West's concept of a plurality of gazes is useful in identifying a potential site of resistance to a cultural process that positions the look as singular and colours it as white. While it is important to trace the history of the colonising power of the white gaze, the notion of a monolithic, white, heterosexual male gaze warrants repudiation. As Donna Haraway observes, "the topography of subjectivity is multidimensional; [and] so therefore is vision" (193).

The generic intertextuality of *Fox* enables Lai to question and alter the discourse from which the myth of a monochromatic look is originated and perpetuated. In this, I suggest, Lai heeds the challenge issued by West that in order to articulate a new cultural politics of difference, writers, acting as cultural critics,[4] must "think about representational practices in terms of history, culture and society" (20). As a product of the Hollywood filmic apparatus, *Blade Runner* privileges a specific way of seeing, and vision functions within the film as both a dominant motif and a motif of domination. Vision, as Scott Bukatman writes, "both makes and unmakes the self in the film, creating a dynamic between a centred and autonomous subjectivity (eye/I) and the self as a manufactured, commodified object (Eye Works)" (7). Indeed, the apocalyptic panorama of a burning cityscape that is reflected from the hovering and disembodied eye in the second frame of the film foregrounds not only the notion of surveillance but also an associative and hierarchical power structure. As a "technology of power" (Foucault 156), surveillance has long been utilised by the coloniser to maintain inequitable power relations between 'the free' white and the coloured/colonised other.

In "The Eye of Power" Foucault equates vision with power using, as an example, Bentham's model of the Panopticon, an architectural model in which institutionalised subjects can be observed within their cells from a single and centrally placed observation tower (148). Based on a reversal of the dungeon theory in which darkness is central to controlling the individual, panoptic vision derives its knowledge of the individual through a manipulation of light and

surveillance from above. Control and power are maintained when the subject of its surveillance internalises the look and begins to police and categorise their own behaviour. Placed in a position of "to-be-looked-at-ness," to appropriate Laura Mulvey's terminology, the institutionalised individual eventually internalises this constant exposure and becomes, in Foucault's words, "…his own overseer, each individual thus exercising this surveillance over, and against himself" (155). Operating against any claim to an emergent evolution, the culturally and historically entrenched triad of knowledge, power and light operates to deny any development of autonomous subjectivity, particularly a subjectivity that seeks to claim difference outside of a white, western and masculinised norm.

Lai's strategic and revisionary appropriation of *Blade Runner* works to disaggregate the visual and textual representations of race, gender and sexuality that have historically acted to construct and affix labels according to externalised perceptions of difference. More than a hint of authorial irony suffuses a scene from *Fox* in which Artemis describes to her friend Diane their perceived bodily differences: "You're tall, I'm short. You have freckles. I don't. Your face is long, mine is kind of round" (63). The name Diane is, in Roman mythology, identified with that of Artemis who, in Greek mythology, is the virgin huntress. But on the written page these women, it seems, are not at all alike. And yet, to the person behind the counter of a fast-food outlet there is no recognition of difference. Calling to Artemis he says, "Your sister's fries are ready," and though Artemis replies, "She's not my sister," she is nevertheless told by the assistant that "She looks like you" (65). Naming the other is an insidious process in which the label is affixed through verbal and non-verbal means. Artemis has no choice but to live with her racialised body. There is an implied power in the equating of sameness with otherness and Lai is vitriolic in her critique of an assumption of power that allows whiteness the majesty of, to paraphrase Barthes, looking without seeing.

The dominant white and western linguistic economy that anchors labels to the various characters in *Fox* maintains otherness not only

through the act of looking but also through a sustained and insidious process of mispronunciation and manipulation of language. Artemis recalls her teachers complaining of "not having much practice with foreign names" (10). In equating foreignness with otherness, a shop assistant questions Diane's use of a credit card, not because the card registers as stolen (which it is), but because the name on the card is Anglicised and she is told that "Anderson is an unusual name for an Asian woman" (37). The term "Asian woman" implies that Diane is a national rather than historical subject, that she is Asian, not Canadian, and, to this shop assistant at least, Asian and Canadian are mutually exclusive terms. While Artemis describes her name as a "keepsake" (10) in the sense that this name and a trunk full of Chinese jackets and quilts is her only inheritance from her birth mother, the process of naming difference has an historical resonance tinged with fear and oppression. Lai uses specific scenes from *Blade Runner* to critique the naming process in which otherness is designated as a disempowered and foreign or alien category. In *Fox*, Artemis is identified with the renegade Replicants as the hunted other. To be Replicant, a woman, a fox, an Asian-Canadian or a lesbian is to be other. To be other is to be non-human. To be human is to be white, western, male and heterosexual. As the Chinese father of a gay son in *Fox* laments: "It's hard enough being Chinese. Why does he want to make it worse? Especially in something he has a choice over" (45).

Lai problematises this very notion of choice, for if naming implies choice, then the corollary of choice is power. 'Others', she signals, have no 'choice' in their naming. Erasing boundaries that would demarcate or mark out a centre is essential to Lai's politics of representation, and the call for the recognition of a transient and permeable sexualised and racialised hybridity pervades the narrative. Though Artemis is defined as Eastern and as Other by her racialised body, her upbringing is predominantly Westernised Canadian. In Part Three of the novel, significantly titled, "Degrees of Recognition," Artemis attends a party hosted by her photographer friend Eden. She is introduced to a blond woman who inquires whether Artemis

can "speak English?" (153). But Artemis, who had just inhaled the joint the woman had offered, has lungs full of smoke and is unable to answer. After looking at, and marking Artemis' body as different, the woman assumes she is addressing a non-English speaking subject and she turns to her friend commenting, "I don't think she understood me" (153). Artemis is classified as non-western and therefore as a non-English speaking 'other' by her racialised body. Lai identifies the conspiratorial role of the white woman's gaze in perpetuating this social construction of otherness. And yet Artemis is not immune to being 'othered' even within her own home. With a father who is an Asian Studies Professor and a mother who is Curator for the Vancouver Museum of Ancient Cultures, Artemis has become the personification of her adopted parent's occupations. Their combined desire to study the orient and fetishise the past is embodied in the objectification of their 'exotic' daughter and it is Diane who asks Artemis: "Do you catch them looking at you funny?" (31).

In order to deflect the 'funny look,' Artemis desires to assimilate into whiteness predominantly through a denial of her cultural past. By cloaking herself in the trappings of whiteness, Artemis renders her cultural self invisible and, in doing so, seeks to protect herself from what is a potentially dispossessing white gaze. As a child, Artemis describes how "thankful she had been for the whitewashed walls and rose-pink carpets. The Suzuki-method violin lessons and the wardrobe of pretty clothes" that her father insisted she should have (21). Later, when her mother began to take her to Chinese grocery stores, always when her father was away on business, Artemis would look quietly, but with distaste, at what she believes is foreign or "creepy" (21) food. The father's denial of her cultural past and her mother's fetishisation of it results in a schizophrenic subject positioning for Artemis. She exists, like the Replicants in *Blade Runner*, in the difficult place of the 'other.' It is a place that Homi Bhabha describes as "the ambivalent world of the not quite/not white" (92).

It is ironic then that the renegade Replicants in *Blade Runner*, who physically resemble their human designers, are described as

"skin jobs." Difference, in their world, is determined by exteriority. *Blade Runner*'s Prologue foregrounds a definition of difference that can be read as a diagnostic of the film's racialised perspective. The Prologue constructs totalising divisions by defining Replicants as "virtually identical to a human," yet classifying them according to a hierarchy of (human) needs. Clearly positioned as servile and as slaves, Replicants are either interplanetary cannon-fodder or, as we are later told at police headquarters, they are manufactured, unpaid military prostitutes. Ownership and control is explicitly linked to a strict policing and maintenance of the boundary between human and non-human. Any violation of this space is ratified by law and suspected Replicants on earth are labelled as "trespassing." Declared "illegal," their detection carries the penalty of death. The inclusion in the Prologue of the term "illegal," with all its historical and racist baggage, is itself a significant marker of the identity politics of the film. There is a historically entrenched and racist connection between 'illegal' and 'alien' in a Western/American post-World War II culture. It is a connection reactivated by fear of a "Yellow Peril" takeover of America following a resurgence in the Japanese economy in the early 1980s (Bukatman 74). In what is a very American film, the logos of Budweiser, Pan Am and Coca Cola flash continually in the attempt to interpellate us into a dream based on the pretext that in American/universal commodification one finds one's true identity. The American reality is, however, a fear of the raced other. The all-American hero, Harrison Ford, who plays Rick Deckard, is not only doing his filmic job in expiring Replicants, but is also ideologically serving his country by effacing difference and therefore eliminating any perceived threat from the 'illegal alien' other.

One of several embodiments of perceived alien otherness within *Blade Runner* is the recurring shot of a billboard Geisha. In *Fox* Artemis is described as reacting with clenched fists when confronted with this image (15). Perceived by the West as the personification of Eastern exoticism, the Geisha is significant to the novel's interrogation of the racialisation of the other's body. In her essay "Political Animals and the Body of History," Lai comments on the looming spectres

of Pocahontas, Suzy Wong and Madame Butterfly (153), and these ghosts of servility loom large in the perpetuation of the myth of Western dominance over the East within *Blade Runner*. The figure of Madame Butterfly serves not only as the rationalisation of American attitudes toward Japan: in all her various guises she also represents the necessary sacrifice of all people of colour to assure Western domination (Marchetti 79). This immediately sets up a hierarchical dualism between East and West whereby the East is signified as passive and female, exotic and other, but always in need of guidance and control. It is hardly a coincidence that gei is 'art' in Japanese and that Artemis, sometimes called Art, should react so adversely when confronted with the image of the Geisha. Artemis can see herself reflected in this celluloid and stereotypical representation. That Lai is conscious of this Westernised inscription of exoticism onto historical players is evident not only through her parodies, but through her subtle and associative critique of the dangerous historical resonances such stereotyping has for women of Asian descent living in the West. When Diane mentions to a man she meets in a bar that her mother was an opera singer, he immediately comments that "She must have made a charming Madame Butterfly" (35). There is nothing 'charming', however, about a subject position that is codified as subordinate because of gender or race.

That the renegade Replicants, Roy, Leon, Zhora and Pris, are also aware of a similar inscription of otherness is evident when they attempt to flee the white gaze of surveillance by mixing with the teeming masses at street level. The difference between seeing and being seen is based on inequitable power relations and the city streets have become the domain of the homeless 'other.' Though the genetic engineer J. F. Sebastian tells us that there is "plenty" of room "for everyone" in the derelict buildings that dwarf the streets, space has literally become a premium in the world of 2019; it is the new and necessary frontier. The old space, Earth, has served its purpose and the coloniser is moving on, leaving what appears to be an overcrowded penal colony inhabited by the 'other.' 'Others,' it seems, are not J. F. Sebastian's "everyone," and street visibility becomes a mark of

difference, a difference that clearly designates 'others' as objects of surveillance. The cultural reproduction of whiteness, however, is premised on racial purity and one of the central fears of the coloniser in *Blade Runner* is based on the difficulty of distinguishing external differences between humans and Replicants. While Artemis is visibly marked as 'other' by her dominant white culture, the Replicants' bodies are indistinguishable from that of their white maker. The renegade Replicants are all skin white, and it is precisely to critique the designation of difference through skin colour that Lai introduces them, and Rick Deckard, into her text. The Replicants have been made, not in the image of the punks, Asians, Jews, and Hari Krishnas who wander at street level, but in the image of their white maker. The racialised polemics of the film, though carefully coded, have a heritage in divisiveness, and the wandering street hordes of Los Angeles 2019 are indeed Fanon's 'wretched of the earth.' In a hierarchical system of classification they are not, like Deckard, 'ordinary' white.

Judith Kerman goes so far as to suggest that Ridley Scott purposely created a class and ethnic hierarchy within his small group of Replicants (22). Kerman argues that *Blade Runner*'s genetic designers "chose ethnic types which suit their (and our) prejudices about who make the best garbage men" (22). In this hierarchy, Leon Kowalski, with his indecisiveness, bulging eyes and weak chin, is, according to Kerman, intentionally cast by Scott to be physically subordinate to the genius, Aryan whiteness and altogether prettiness of Roy Batty (23). While Kerman is more concerned with the moral implications of making machines look and act like humans, Kaja Silverman's more discerning analysis of the film clearly identifies the Replicant/human dichotomy as a politically motivated and racially based construction (115). Silverman notes that within *Blade Runner* the categories of Replicants, whiteness and race are "ideological fabrications" (111), fictive constructs that not only set up a definition of otherness but work to maintain difference through a denial of subjectivity (130). Silverman convincingly reads *Blade Runner* as a film which problematises the notion of the 'natural.' Arguing that humanness is a fictive construct Silverman suggests that the Replicant's ability to

be 'more human than human' (to quote their maker Tyrell) reorders any notion of difference set up in the film's Prologue (110). Most significantly, it is Roy Batty, despite his "hyperbolic whiteness" (115), who is cast in a role historically occupied in Hollywood film by black African American actors. It is Batty's show of whiteness which prompts us to reconsider his servile positioning as slave so clearly defined in the Prologue. Slavery, as Silverman observes, remains an acculturated category that "still manages, in an attenuated way, to rhyme with negritude" (115).

Blade Runner is an accessible product of the Hollywood filmic apparatus and its popular appeal perhaps masks its racialised polemics. While Silverman argues that the film "*interrogates* what passes above all else for 'race' within our contemporary cultural scene, with its history of slavery and revolt" (115, emphasis added), I would suggest that the film works instead to further *entrench* the division between 'master' and 'slave,' whiteness and other. Enforcing and perpetuating racial subjugation based on definitions of otherness can be read, as bell hooks, commenting on black slavery in America writes, "an effective strategy of white supremacist terror" (1997, 30). Arguing that the control of the black gaze by whites was integral to the dehumanising process of slavery, hooks states that "black slaves, and later manumitted servants, could be brutally punished for looking, for appearing to observe the whites they were serving, as only a subject can observe, or see" (1997, 30). In this sense the slave, as object, is without vision, not through any natural rendering of blindness but through the perpetuation of a racist code of conduct designed to maintain a colourised/racialised hierarchy. If black engages in the act of looking then punishment from white is swift and fierce. The inciting and perpetuation of this terror functions to allay the fear of white becoming visible, and though white is the historical subject, white power is conversely mythologised as the hovering, (again, like the eye in *Blade Runner*), yet invisible, spectre of terror.

Lai critiques the inherent paradox of an ideology that positions colour as subordinate yet also as something to be feared by white. While at

a shooting range with her friend Ming, Artemis notes that her target "had a human shape, a white outline tracing the ancient form, the shape of terror and vulnerability" (188). The "ancient form," a shape made vulnerable and subordinate through the inciting of terror, is also the shape of black encircled by white. It is the coloured other. As hooks observes: "without the capacity to inspire terror, whiteness no longer signifies the right to dominate. It truly becomes a benevolent absence" (40). The "ancient form," in this sense, is able to recover a measure of its ancient subjectivity and look beyond the threatening circle of whiteness. It is a process which, in the words of John Berger, requires us "To look: / at everything which overflows the outline, the contour, the category, / the name of what it is" (219).

Identifying, maintaining and surveying the division between the naturally white and non-white, alien, 'other' is central to the racialised polemics that underwrite the colonial project. "Power," as Minh-ha comments, "has always arrogated the right to mark its others, while going about unmarked itself" (1996, 8). And yet, as Minh-ha asserts, there is a shift occurring in the politics of representation, particularly the politics of difference. Suggesting that the 'other' no longer stands outside, or is peripheral to the centre: "The named 'other' is never to be found merely over there and outside oneself, for it is always over here, between Us, within Our discourse, that the 'other becomes a nameable reality" (1). The other already functions within the centre, and so the designation of difference, through race, sexuality or gender, is a reproduction of what Minh-ha writes as "the confine-and-conquer pattern of domination dear to the classic imperial quest" (7).

One way that Minh-ha suggests to escape 'othering' is through a refusal to be named or to be labelled (6). It is a process that the various characters in *Fox* find difficult to enact. While this signals an authorial awareness of the difficulty in resisting the naming process, it also identifies the need to reposition this practice as a site of interrogation. When Artemis is modelling Oriental regalia for her photographer friend Eden she is told, once she is fully outfitted,

"You almost look like the real thing" (78). But the novel functions to dismantle these far from benign conceptions of 'the real thing.' To be the 'real thing' in *Blade Runner* is to be human; to be the real thing in *Fox* is an epitaph decreed by 'the white thing' and embodied by Eden whose very name connotes a prelapsarian whiteness, lightness and goodness. Lai's politicised satire has a blade-like edge. In drawing into her text a film which is preoccupied with defining difference between human and non-human, authentic and inauthentic, organic and synthetic, Lai suggests that there is indeed no 'real thing' outside of the consumer mass marketing and manufacturing process. The novel reconceptualises dominant assumptions of an authentic and singularised selfhood in its interrogation of the commodification and cultural fabrication of identity. If Coca Cola is positioned as the only 'real thing' in *Blade Runner*, then what, we should ask ourselves, is human? Within the film, whiteness, and its associative concepts of humanness and naturalness, becomes a dangerous referent for the validation of cultural homogeneity.

Rick Deckard, the Blade Runner played by Harrison Ford, is central to Lai's rewriting and questioning of the cultural construction of identity. Richard Dyer suggests that one of the dominant fears operating in *Blade Runner* is the "death of whiteness" (217) and that Deckard's representational strength is his ruggedly western non-oriental looks and his reluctant heroism which make him "ordinary" white rather than super-hero or Aryan white (215). With the release of the Director's Cut in 1992, the question as to whether Deckard is a human or a Replicant is said to have generated more dialogue on the internet than whether god actually exists (Bukatman 80). If Deckard is not 'the real thing,' if his Replicant status is confirmed, then the 'death of whiteness' is a real possibility. When 'tainted' by the 'not quite/ not white' label, Deckard's 'pure' white potency is severely diminished. Lai urges us to look behind Deckard's 'ordinary' white exterior and examine his pathological make-up. This is central to her politics of glancing back and through a dominant white culture, a culture that defines difference predominantly through exteriority. Artemis watches and reacts against two scenes which show Deckard exerting strength

and power against women. The first is when he slams the Replicant Rachel up against a wall, "snarling," as Lai describes it, and forcing her to say "kiss me" (15). The second is when he shoots another Replicant, Zhora, in the back as she attempts to flee both his gun and his gaze.

In the process of hunting Zhora, Deckard almost gets himself killed in her dressing room because he has become the 'peeping tom' he purports he is looking for. Zhora, originally designed as a military combat model, finds work as an exotic dancer, exposing herself to the eyes of the spectator in order to camouflage the otherness of her Replicant status. It is interesting that Deckard gains entry to Zhora's change-room on the pretext of looking for holes in the wall; drilled, he tells Zhora, "to watch a lady undress." While pleasure may be gained from looking, power is maintained from remaining unseen. Deckard tells Zhora that "You'd be surprised what a guy would go through to get a glimpse of a beautiful body." Needless to say, Zhora is not surprised and uses his voyeurism to physically fell and momentarily out-run him. The final scene from the film that Artemis watches before falling asleep is the shooting of Zhora by Deckard. The inclusion of Zhora's death in *Fox* is more than a passing comment on the representation of women as objects of voyeuristic pleasure. The positioning of women within the film sets up a hierarchical dualism between male and female, exotic and other, but, as Deckard's lead in the 'romantic' dialogue between himself and the Replicant Rachel suggests, always in need of guidance and control. While Deckard may ultimately help Rachel to escape Zhora's fate, she remains fixed as an 'other' under the gaze of a pervasive policing apparatus. As we read Artemis watching this filmic sequence in the novel, it becomes increasingly apparent that she, like Rachel and like Zhora, is also culturally positioned as one of the hunted.

Towards the close of the novel, Artemis dreams that her eyes have been plucked from their sockets by birds of prey rendering her world momentarily black. In this same dream her vision is returned with the aid of prosthetic eyes "so perfect she almost believed she

had her own eyes back" (183). Like Roy Batty's vision, Artemis's newly manufactured eyes, despite their technological perfection, are designed to mirror their maker's vision. Lai clearly aligns Artemis with the renegade Replicants in order to emphasise not only the very constructedness of vision but also the notion that it is the (human) eye that first designates what is normative vision. Donna Haraway likewise distinguishes between natural and technological vision suggesting that:

> the eyes made available in modern technological sciences shatter any idea of passive vision; these prosthetic devices show us that all eyes, including our own organic ones, are active perceptual systems, building in translations and specific ways of seeing; that is, ways of life (190).

Haraway's division between prosthetic and organic, active and passive, emphasises the very constructedness of the act of looking. The hovering eye of *Blade Runner* represents a 'specific way of seeing,' that is, the gaze of the white, western, male coloniser, personified within the film by Eldon Tyrell. Tyrell's visionary biomechanics, his creation of Replicants who are "more human than human," elevates him to the position of creator par excellence, more god-like than God. And, like God, Tyrell is, as Batty tells us, "…a hard man to see." Batty's cognitive puns, not to mention Tyrell's thick bifocal glasses, again indicate that there is more than one way of observing the world.

Explicitly questioning the use of vision as a controlling device of identity, Batty makes a confrontational return to his maker Tyrell and literally disempowers him by gouging out his eyes. This violent blinding is described in *Fox* (16), and after watching this scene, Artemis buries her head in Eden's shoulder. Her vision is literally blocked by the paternal whiteness that Eden represents. Batty's curiosity about his origins, his preoccupation with vision and his return to, and violent murder of his maker, can perhaps be contextualised through Freud's reading of E.T.A Hoffman's "The Sandman" in "The Uncanny." In "The Uncanny" Freud equates the fear of losing one's eyes with the fear of (symbolic) castration. Vision,

both within Freud's abridged reading and Hoffman's original version, is a dominant motif. Through an embedded narrative, Hoffman's story problematises the inherent truth value of optic devices, both prosthetic and organic. The inability of Hoffman's 'hero' Nathanael, to distinguish between animate and inanimate, human and non-human has many similar parallels to Scott's *Blade Runner*. Nathanael, like Deckard, can never be totally sure that what he is looking at is 'the real thing.' It is hardly coincidental to this reading that both Nathanael, and the Blade Runner Rick Deckard, should fall in love with beautiful, life-like dolls. And yet, the Replicant whom Olympia (Nathanael's 'doll') most resembles is Pris, played within the film by Daryl Hannah. In an analysis of *Blade Runner*, Giuliana Bruno notes that there is a sustained fascination with notions of doubling throughout filmic history, and that Hoffman's tale is a significant fictional contribution to any interrogation of simulacra (68). Olympia, Bruno observes, "is such a perfect 'skin job' that she is mistaken for a real girl" (68).

In Hoffman's version Olympia is described by Nathanael as having eyes that "seemed fixed…without vision…as if she were sleeping with her eyes open" (104). Her social demeanour is defined as "strangely stiff and soulless" (117) and Nathanael's friend Siegmund laments, "if her eyes were not so completely devoid of life-the power of vision, she might be considered beautiful…she seems…to be *playing the part of a human being*" (117 emphasis added). In a significant scene from *Blade Runner*, Pris hides from Deckard amongst the life-like dolls that the genetic engineer, J. F. Sebastian has created. With her eyes wide open, Pris too 'plays' at being human, at looking, without appearing to see. Aided by a flashlight, Deckard searches her eyes for signs of life (perhaps a blink or a narrowing of the pupil), but detecting no such signs, he continues his search and Pris is granted a momentary extension of 'life.' Humanness is, in *Blade Runner*, *Fox* and "The Sandman," part of an elaborate masquerade that is constantly being redefined by the notion of 'making eyes.' If humanness is the pinnacle, then eyesight, as Roy Batty's return, first to Chew and then Tyrell indicates, is its *modus operandi*.

While Artemis watches Roy Batty's murder of Tyrell, there is no mirroring of this symbolic release of self within her own life. Unlike Batty, Artemis appears trapped by the fixity of the paternal frame of whiteness and is unable to look back; her head remains buried in Eden's shoulder. In the early stages of the novel, Artemis is snared by Eden's gaze and she notes that "his eyes caught hers like a surveillance light. She struggled visibly to break free of the gaze" (79). Like the Replicants, Artemis grows increasingly wary of this spectre of surveillance, particularly "the feeling that she was being watched but never seeing by whom or from where" (103). At the close of the novel the Fox, finally revealing herself in human form to Artemis, and significantly echoing the words of the wolf in "Little Red Riding Hood," states, "What big eyes you have" (207). In her study on myths and fairytales Marina Warner writes that the moral purpose of these tales is to define boundaries (xvi). Lai's purpose is to expose these perimeters. Reality blurs with the world of fairytale and the supernatural and the Fox's transformation, or border crossing, is the embodiment of Lai's critique of acculturated boundaries. The Fox indicates to Artemis, who at this stage has fully acknowledged her lesbianism, her very capacity to glance back and challenge the historical denial of an autonomous Chinese-Canadian/lesbian subjectivity. Questioning the fixity of the frame involves not only the recognition of the cultural blanching process comparable to the act of looking, but also the associative human act of interpretation in what is a highly technological and theorised process.

Fox is, in part, a novel about vision, but vision is not, as Lai suggests, singular, fixed, heterosexual or white. The relationship between white and other, human and Replicant, subject and object hinges on and is also perpetuated by an imbalance of power. That *Blade Runner* should reappear in a novel premised on questioning the very constructedness of such a system of classification signals a lengthy interrogation of vision as a tool of domination. The act of reappropriating an enunciative position that has historically precluded the voice and the gaze of the other is essential to Lai's strategic resistance to hegemonic notions of a paternal white gaze. *Fox* questions a gaze that seeks

to map the terrain as human and as white, a gaze that distorts and (mis)translates the coloured reality of the marginalised subject's life. In altering the discourse from which the myth of the look is originated and perpetuated, *Fox* offers an empowered look that is both polymorphic and correlative. It is the lack of such visionary space in *Blade Runner* that ensured its inclusion in Lai's politicised fox tale.

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Notes

[1] This paper was originally presented at the Association of Commonwealth Literature and Language Studies Conference in Canberra, July 2001. Thanks to Gerry Turcotte for help and comments during its various stages.

[2] I am here drawing on Richard Dyer's delineation of the three senses of white. According to Dyer, white is understood as a category of colour or hue, as a category of skin colour and, as a carrier of symbolic connotations (1997, 45-46).

[3] The critical reception to *Blade Runner* was particularly intense in the first decade after its 1982 release. The initial response to the film was largely in the form of reviews. Michael Dempsey labelled *Blade Runner* a "crippled but nonetheless magnificent edifice of a film" (39) critiquing the excessiveness of Harrison Ford's voice-over narration while Robin Wood observes that the film's contrived "meeting of Raymond Chandler and William Blake is not entirely unproblematic" (183). Dempsey's review is illustrative of a general understanding that categorised the film as a meditation on definitions of humanity. J.P. Telotte argues, though without any reference to Freud, that the film is preoccupied with notions of 'doubling.' The Replicant's ability to be 'more human than human' is defined by Telotte as a key design fault and one which requires strict policing and control. David Desser, referring to Telotte's article, argues that the film's allusion to *Paradise Lost* and *Frankenstein*, and the Replicant's mimetic doubling of humans, allows *Blade Runner* to participate in the process of (humanity's) self recovery (178). To do this, the double must be banished in order for humanity to reassert its transcendental superiority. The film's Gothic underpinnings, as observed by Robin Wood, problematises the fear of the unknown other and is suggestive of the measures humanity must put in place in order to control this uncannily, alien other. While all of these early reviews discuss the division between humanity (men) and machines not one extends the analysis to a discussion of the othering process in the context of race, gender or sexuality. Giuliana Bruno's more insightful analysis of the film considers the relationship between history and identity, postmodernism and the dystopian Los Angeles of 2019 (62). As Bruno observes, both relationships are in an acute stage of decay. Bruno's focus is the postmodern city and the city envisioned in *Blade Runner* is

one in which the Orient dominates; " the Los Angeles of *Blade Runner* is China(in)town" (66). The Replicants exist outside of the social (dis)order that characterises this city and difference is perceived as a "dangerous malfunction" (70). The implications of such a definition of difference perpetuates hierarchical binaries in which anything outside of white normalcy requires control or elimination. It is Bruno's essay which most significantly gestures towards a critique of the process of othering, (and one which is taken up by Silverman, Dyer, Bukatman and Kerman in more contemporary examinations of the film). More significantly, it is this same process that Lai seeks to interrogate in *When Fox is a Thousand*.

[4] Lai helped organise the "Writing Thru Race" Conference, July 1994, and is part of the Women of Colour Collective in Vancouver. Politically committed to exploring the mechanics of anti-racism in her writing Lai states that she is particularly interested "in questions of strategy-how people of colour and First Nations people empower ourselves and one another given the colonial and neo-colonial contexts we are all forced to live with" (Mathur).

Matthew Tonts

Cooperatives and Rural Development: A Canadian Case Study

Introduction

Cooperatives often play a critical role in promoting economic and social development in rural areas. Throughout the developed and developing world these organisations have been established to, *inter alia*, market primary commodities (Pritchard 64), generate employment (Mathews 13-14), and provide services and infrastructure (Wylie 2). One of the most common reasons for the formation of cooperatives is to address the failures by both the free market and the state in providing economic and social services. An important feature of cooperatives is that they are owned by the same people that they are established to serve.

In some parts of rural Canada cooperatives have become a central component of community life. Indeed, this was the vision of the so-called Antigonish movement in the Maritime provinces of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island. This movement emerged in the first half of the twentieth century as a response to the difficult economic and social conditions facing many fishing and other rural communities in Nova Scotia. Under the leadership of two Catholic priests, Dr Jimmy Tompkins and Dr Moses Coady, both of whom were at various times based in the town of Antigonish in Nova Scotia, the movement promoted a combination of adult education and cooperation as means of improving the living conditions of residents of these depressed regions. For Coady this combination would enable them to become "masters of their own destiny" (5).

While the Antigonish movement was at its peak between about

1930 and the early 1950s, there are a handful of regions where the movement's ideals are still deeply engrained in everyday life. This paper examines one such region, Evangeline, on Prince Edward Island, and explores the role of cooperatives in promoting economic and social development. The paper begins by providing a brief overview of the concept of cooperation and the nature and ideals of the Antigonish movement. It then examines the role of the movement in the Evangeline region and concludes by examining some of the contemporary challenges facing cooperation in the area. The paper is based on seventeen interviews conducted during July 2001 with residents of the Evangeline region, including local leaders, the managers of cooperatives and other local residents. The paper also draws on material published in the annual reports, newsletters and other publications of the cooperatives.

Cooperatives and Rural Development

The origin of the modern cooperative movement is frequently traced to 1844 when 28 weavers in the English town of Rochdale came together with capital of £1 each to open a small retail store. The purpose of establishing this enterprise was to bypass the excessive prices charged by private merchants for food, fuel and clothing (Craig 31-32). While various forms of mutual aid organisation had existed prior to this, one of the unique aspects of the Rochdale cooperative was that the members, known as the Rochdale Equitable Pioneers, established a set of rules that still guide the operation of cooperative societies all over the world. These rules have been condensed into six principles: voluntary and open membership; democratic control (one vote per member, regardless of the amount of capital invested); limited return on capital to the cooperative; surplus earnings belong to members; member education; and cooperation among cooperatives (Craig 32). As Craig and Saxena suggest:

> Cooperation is the free and voluntary association of people to create an organisation which they

> democratically control, providing themselves with goods, services and/or a livelihood rather than profiting from others, with an equitable contribution of capital and acceptance of a fair share of risks and benefits generated by the joint activity. To sustain their endeavour they must develop individuals and build a solidarity relationship with other cooperators and like minded people (67).

In the case of Rochdale, the purpose of the Pioneers was to create a self supporting home colony based on cooperation amongst individuals. In addition to the store, the Pioneers experimented with cooperative ventures in manufacturing, farming, education and housing (Lambert 292). The underlying rationale was that cooperation in economic, political and social endeavours can improve the well-being of individuals.

The success of the Pioneers' ventures saw the Rochdale model of cooperation spread throughout Europe, North America, Australia, New Zealand and, later, the developing world. Perhaps not surprisingly, the cooperative movement has been particularly successful in rural regions. Part of the reason for this success appears to be linked to the particular economic, social and spatial challenges that face many rural regions, such as a perceived lack of power on the part of primary producers, an absence of services and infrastructure, a lack of employment opportunities and isolation (Briscoe, McCarthy and Ward 7-13). According to Gallant, the close social bonds, networks and sense of community solidarity that often characterise rural regions also provide a strong basis for successful cooperation (245-253).

While rural areas are home to a number of different types of cooperation, one of the most common forms is the marketing cooperative. These organisations are usually formed as part of an attempt by petty commodity producers (for example, farmers and fishers) to improve market power by selling their commodities on a collective basis. Examples of this type of cooperation include various

wheat marketing pools (Pritchard 64-75), dairy cooperatives (Todd 1) and fishing unions (MacInnes 12). Another important form of cooperation is the consumer/service cooperative. These cooperatives generally involve the residents of a community and/or region pooling their financial resources to provide a particular service, such as a credit union, supermarket or health care centre. Such cooperatives tend to be formed in situations where a particular service is not provided locally, or where existing services are regarded as too expensive. Under the Rochdale model, the cooperative provision of services has the potential to be relatively cost-effective, in line with the principle of limited return on capital to the cooperative. In addition, members retain democratic control over the cooperative through the 'one member one vote' rule. While these cooperatives are also common in cities, in rural regions they often play a critical role in providing people with access to basic services and infrastructure that would otherwise not be available (Fairbairn 26).

One of the other important benefits of cooperatives is that they have the potential to generate significant local employment. In this respect a particularly important form of cooperation is the worker cooperative. This usually involves employees owning the shares in a cooperative enterprise. Perhaps the most celebrated worker cooperatives are those in the town of Mondragon in the Basque region of Spain. The first worker cooperative in Mongragon was established in 1956, largely as a result of leadership provided by the local Catholic Church, and consisted of a handful of workers producing oil-fired heaters and cookers. By the late 1990s, Mondragon had become the focal point of over 100 cooperatives that employ more than 20,000 worker-owners in a range of industries, including the manufacture of white goods and automotive components, building construction, and civil engineering. Other cooperatives in the region provide education, housing, social welfare, consumer goods and banking services. In the case of Mondragon, cooperatives have helped to transform a seriously disadvantaged and marginalised rural area into one of Spain's most productive economic regions. In 1999, combined sales from the Mondragon cooperatives approached $US6 billion (Mathews 180).

While cooperatives have the potential to make an important contribution to rural economic and social development, it is also important to recognise their limitations. One of the most significant barriers to the formation of rural cooperatives is the absence of a 'culture of cooperation.' The formation and survival of cooperatives in rural (and urban) areas depends on the presence of local leadership, a degree of community cohesion and the willingness (and ability) of residents to invest in such ventures (Quarter 8-20). In addition, without appropriate institutional support, either from government or non-government organisations, cooperatives can face considerable difficulties surviving in the longer term. In the case of Mondragon, the support of the Catholic Church is widely acknowledged as a critical factor in ensuring the success of cooperatives (see Mathews 185-197). In other countries, such as Canada, Australia and Ireland, favourable government legislation has been important for the long term survival of cooperatives.

One of the other major challenges facing cooperatives is economic competitiveness. While a degree of altruism is often associated with cooperatives, the underlying rationale for their formation is usually economic (Moran, Blunden and Bradley 162). Thus, cooperatives must not only fulfil a social role, but also need to succeed as a business if they are to survive. However, many cooperatives struggle to compete with much larger and more powerful corporations. In part this is because the democratic structure of cooperatives often leads to a degree of conservatism in decision-making, a reluctance to raise finance capital and a lack of innovation (Fulton 5-10). In response to this, there has been a tendency for larger cooperatives to demutualise and reconstitute themselves as corporations (Cronin 4). However, it is important to stress that many cooperatives do successfully compete with much larger multinational corporations in a range of economic sectors and regions. Furthermore, cooperatives often have an important competitive advantage in that they do not seek profits in the same way as corporations. It has also been suggested that cooperatives are sometimes able to exploit negative sentiments towards larger corporations (Wylie 12), although this depends on

them being able to distinguish themselves from their corporate competitors.

One country in which cooperatives have been particularly successful is Canada. Throughout the country cooperatives have been established to meet the economic and social needs of residents, particularly in rural areas. Historically, cooperatives in Canada developed on a regional basis. This has tended to occur not only because it is a bilingual country, but because of the diversity of regional economies in Canada (Melnyk 20). For example, in the grain growing regions of Western Canada, marketing cooperatives were formed in the early 1900s to counter the exploitative practices of private grain traders and improve financial returns to farmers (MacPherson 6). In the case of Quebec, the establishment of credit unions, or *caisses populaires*, was an expression of francophone nationalism, promoted by the Catholic Church as a symbol of Quebecois loyalty and piety (Melnyk 20-21). In the Atlantic provinces, the formation of fishermen's unions was a direct response to the dire economic and social conditions facing individual fishermen. In other parts of the country, communities have banded together into various forms of cooperative according to their specific social and economic needs. One of the most successful rural cooperative movements of the twentieth century centred on the town of Antigonish in Nova Scotia.

The Antigonish Movement

The Antigonish movement was led by two Catholic priests, Dr Jimmy Tompkins and Dr Moses Coady. As the Vice President of St. Francis Xavier University (located in the town of Antigonish, Nova Scotia) between 1902 and 1922, Tompkins argued for greater university involvement in solving the social and economic problems of the province, urging his institution to become more actively involved in extension activities in the regions, rather than simply educating the young. For Tompkins:

> University extension implies an organised effort to give

> to the people not in college some of the advantages enjoyed by the one half of one per cent who are able to attend college. It reaches out to the farmer, the workman and the average citizen and says to each 'If you cannot go to your college, your college will come to you (quoted in Mathews 139).

In part, Tompkins was influenced by Pope Leo XIII's 1891 encyclical *De Rerum Novarum* (known in English as "On the Condition of Labour"). This encyclical defended the rights of workers from the "callousness of employers and the greed of unrestrained capitalism" (George 2). However, it also warned against excessive bureaucratisation and encroachments of the state into everyday life. In effect, the encyclical was arguing for a "middle way" between the excesses of unfettered capitalism and state controlled socialism (MacAulay 113). The encyclical also advocated the formation of trade unions and cooperative ventures. While some priests, including Tompkins, saw this as a mandate for action, the Catholic hierarchy in Nova Scotia tended to remain relatively conservative. Indeed, the views of Tompkins on university extension and adult education were seen as so radical that, in 1922, he was asked to leave his post at the university for the village of Canso on Cape Breton in Nova Scotia. Boyle paints a rather bleak picture of Canso in the 1920s, describing it as "a fishing port of limited access, cold, foggy and in an advanced state of economic decline" (108).

While it has been suggested that Tompkins initially regarded his shift to Canso as a setback (Mathews 142), it provided him with an opportunity to put into action some of his ideas about community revitalisation. Of particular interest to Tompkins were cooperatives, particularly those modelled on the Rochdale principles. Indeed, he argued that only through economic cooperation and adult education could the people of Canso revive the local economy. Tompkins was also an important contributor to the 1928 Royal Commission on the Maritime Provinces and the Magdalen Islands. This report illustrated the difficult economic conditions facing the Maritimes and

recommended the formation of cooperatives as a means of improving the economic well-being of local fishermen and their families.

By 1928, the Board of Governors at St. Francis Xavier University had finally become convinced of the need for greater university involvement in the economic and social development of rural Nova Scotia. It hired Dr Moses Coady, Tompkins's cousin, as Director of the newly established Extension Department (Mathews 145). One of Coady's first assignments was to organise fishermen in the Maritimes into cooperatives. In the summer of 1930, he was able to bring together more than 200 delegates from fishing communities to a meeting in Halifax, where they founded the United Maritime Fishermen, a fish marketing cooperative. With assistance from Coady and Extension Department staff, the cooperative also provided its members with education in managing a small business, in fish conservation, refrigeration and transportation, and in maritime technology. The success of this cooperative became the basis for the Antigonish movement.

The key to the Antigonish movement was not just the formation of cooperatives as a response to economic and social problems, but also the promotion of adult education. According to Laidlaw, the Antigonish approach encouraged people "to discover and develop their own capacities for creation" (108). The movement had developed a fairly standard procedure for mobilising community action (Mathews 161). The first step was to hold a public meeting that would "explode the intellectual dynamite that would break up apathy and prejudice, shock the people out of their complacency and fire them with the enthusiasm to rebuild society" (Delaney 23). These meetings were used to point out how people had forfeited their control of the retail, financial and other sectors of the economy, and how through a process of education and cooperation they could successfully revitalise their local economies and improve their personal well-being. One of the features of these meetings was the emphasis placed on the success of the Rochdale cooperative model (Laidlaw 110).

Public meetings were followed by the organisation of study clubs of between five and ten members to identify economic and social problems and develop means of solving these. These groups were also used as a basis for education on leadership, business skills, and models for cooperative development. The study clubs were supported by both field officers and a range of media from the St. Francis Xavier University Extension Department. Coady regarded this process of adult education as central to solving the problems facing regions, and in a 1949 speech argued that:

> …we have to become convinced that education does not end with high school, but that it is a continuous mobilisation of people for adult learning. Only if the people of this country can keep on all the time during active life acquiring new ideas, new integrated ideas, are they able to evaluate the 'isms' of the day, meet problems that come up from time to time, rise above the hurdles that come their way (quoted in Laidlaw 172).

In addition to their educational role, the study groups formed the basis for community action and, more specifically, the development of cooperative ventures. Many of the study groups led, initially, to the formation of credit unions, often followed by a cooperative store. Indeed, these forms of cooperative were regarded as particularly important. In Tompkins' words:

> Take credit unions. They make for the federation of man, and are great aids for Christianity. They, with cooperative stores, prevent the work of loan sharks, eye-gougers, graft, undue profits, and give us honesty in quality and quantity of goods (quoted in Lotz and Welton 107).

Other forms of cooperative were also encouraged, with the scope for cooperation seen as being limited only by the imagination of local communities. Indeed, Coady suggested that communities might consider establishing marketing cooperatives, worker cooperatives, and cooperatives providing housing, health care, libraries and recreation facilities (16). An important dimension of the Antigonish

movement was that cooperation was not just an economic imperative, but also a socio-cultural one. Indeed, the vision of Tompkins and Coady was not dissimilar from the Rochdale Pioneers, who argued for broad based community cooperation and education. As Coady put it:

> We start with the simple things that are vital to human living and move on up the scale to more cultural and refining activities that make the whole life complete. This is not a trite statement. Through credit unions, cooperative stores, lobster factories and sawmills, we are laying the foundations for an appreciation of Shakespeare and grand opera (68).

This represents what Craig has described as "comprehensive cooperation" (107), which goes beyond a particular cooperative organisation to incorporate a broader vision of community life. An important element of this is not simply promoting economic development, but preserving and even enhancing a community's socio-cultural environment.

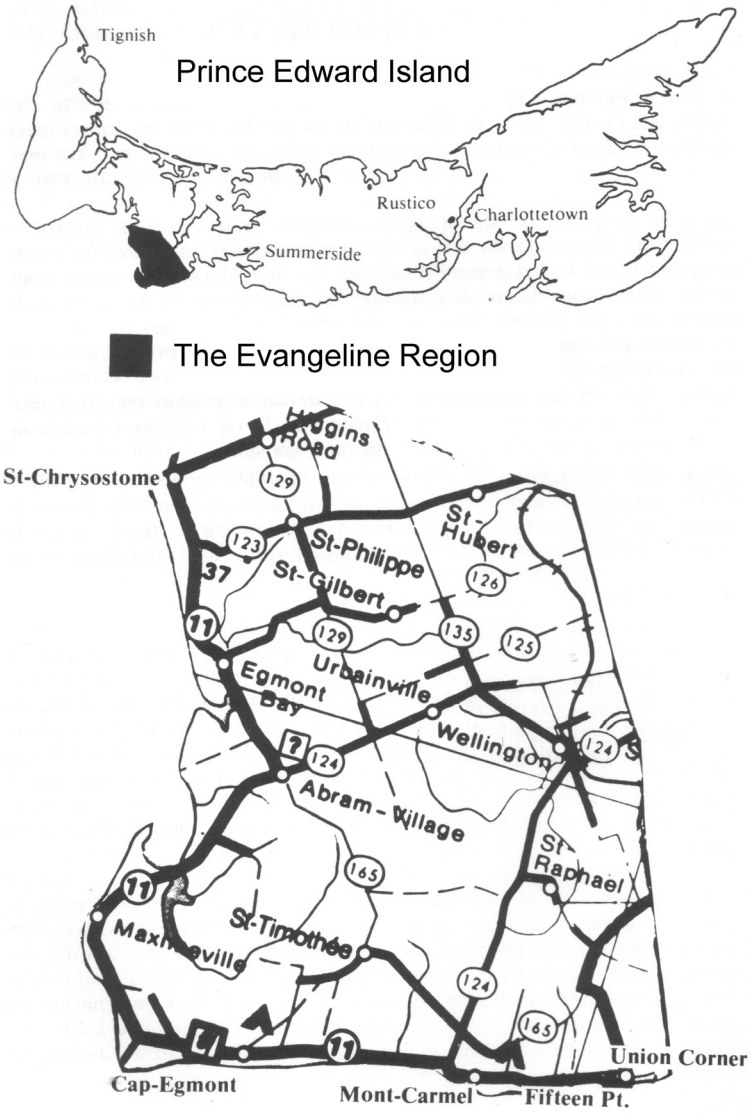
By 1938/39, the Antigonish movement had contributed to the formation of more than 2,265 study clubs in Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island, with a total membership of 19,600 (MacIntyre 19). The movement had also established 342 credit unions and 162 other forms of cooperative (Mathews 163). The Antigonish approach was particularly influential on Prince Edward Island. In the early 1930s, the Carnegie Corporation provided funding for a Professor of Economics and Sociology to be based on the Island and be shared between Prince of Wales and St. Dunstan's Colleges (MacDonald 176). The creation of the Carnegie Chair brought to the Island J.T. Croteau, an economist with an interest in the revitalisation of rural regions. In 1934, Croteau travelled to St. Francis Xavier University to learn more about the ideas of Coady and Tompkins. With support from Coady, St Francis Xavier University Extension Department's field officers, and with funding from the Federal government, Croteau began to promote the Antigonish model of development on Prince Edward Island. By the end of 1937, the

Island had 338 study groups with 4,300 members (MacDonald 177). A number of these study groups had established cooperative ventures, including credit unions, cooperative stores, and fishing cooperatives. Although Croteau departed the Island in 1946, he left behind a number of rich pools of cooperativism. Of these, it is perhaps the Evangeline region of Prince Edward Island that most epitomises both the Rochdale and Antigonish vision of a life lived almost entirely on cooperative principles.

Early Cooperative Development in the Evangeline Region

Evangeline is a region of around 25 square kilometres, located on the south-west coast of Prince Edward Island (PEI) (see Figure 1). Over the past century, the population of the region has fluctuated between about 2,500 and 3,500, with the staple industries consisting of fishing, farming and forestry. The main settlements include Wellington, Abram Village, Mont Carmel, Egmont Bay and Urbanville. One of the key characteristics of the region is the Acadian heritage of the majority of its residents. This French speaking minority make up around four per cent of the total PEI population, though in Evangeline more than 75 per cent of residents claim Acadian ancestry. As historian Edward MacDonald (15) points out, the Acadians have traditionally been one of the most marginalised groups on PEI. He claims that they "were from the wrong racial stock, spoke the wrong language (French), and followed the wrong religion (Catholicism). Accordingly, they were generally tolerated, occasionally oppressed, but seldom respected" (MacDonald 15). In response, PEI's Acadians tended to remain in relatively isolated and tightly knit communities (Gallant 13-16).

The unique economic challenges facing this marginalised group contributed to a form of cooperativism described by Lauvriére as "spontaneous communism" (182), with community work bees (or frolics) often organised to help people harvest crops, process their


Tignish
Prince Edward Island
Rustico
Charlottetown
Summerside
The Evangeline Region
St-Chrysostome
Hugins Road
129
St-Philippe
123
37
St-Gilbert
St-Hubert
126
11
129
135
125
Urbainville
Egmont Bay
7
124
Wellington
124
Abram-Village
St-Raphael
165
11
St-Timothée
Maxime ville
124
165
11
Union Corner
Cap-Egmont
Mont-Carmel
Fifteen Pt.

lumber, spin wool and construct houses (Gallant 19-23). There were also a number of organisations formed in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries that resembled modern cooperatives. A collectively owned cheese factory, for example, was established in Abram Village in 1896, while a farmers' institute was established in Egmont Bay in 1901 to provide information on agricultural methods and technology. In 1916, the Egmont Bay Farmers' Institute established a cooperative store, although this venture failed and the store closed in 1926. According to Wilkinson and Quarter, there were a number of reasons for the failure of this cooperative, including: a lack of cooperative legislation on the Island; insufficient capital and poor management; a lack of cooperative education; and the excessive use of credit by members (23). While none of these early cooperative ventures adopted the Rochdale principles, it is clear that there was a strong culture of cooperation in the region (Gallant 17). Thus, it is probably not surprising that the ideas of Jimmy Tompkins and Moses Coady found considerable support amongst the people of Evangeline.

In 1931, Coady visited the Evangeline region and assisted in the organisation of the region's first fish marketing cooperative, Mont Carmel Fisheries Ltd. While this was organised along broad cooperative lines, the absence of effective cooperative legislation on the Island meant that in reality it was a joint stock company. Despite the immediate success of this particular venture, there was little in the way of further cooperative development in the region until the late 1930s. According to Wilkinson and Quarter, the memory of the failed cooperative store in Egmont Bay acted as something of a disincentive to the formation of new ventures, particularly consumer cooperatives (23). However, the passing of the *Credit Union Societies Act*, 1936 and the *Cooperative Associations Act*, 1938, based on the Rochdale principles, provided the basis for a new wave of cooperation on the Island. Around the same time, J. T. Croteau from Prince of Wales and St. Dunstan's Colleges was actively promoting the Antigonish model of economic and social development. A number of visits to the region by Croteau led to the formation of several study groups between 1935 and 1937. Using educational and other support materials from

the Extension Department in Antigonish, these groups met weekly at a neighbourhood level and once a month at the parish level. The subjects studied by these groups included the Rochdale principles, credit unions and cooperative stores (Wilkinson and Quarter 25-26).

Following a visit from J. T. Croteau in 1937, study groups in the villages of Wellington, Mont Carmel and Egmont Bay established credit unions. In 1939, these had a combined total of 419 members, rising to more than 1,200 members in 1970 (see Table 1). In 1970, the three cooperatives amalgamated to form the Evangeline Credit Union. The initial success of these credit unions gave rise to a number of other cooperative ventures between 1937 and the late 1960s (see Table 2). One of the first of these was the formation of a cooperative store, with the aim of lowering the cost of groceries and other household items. However, the presence of a number of private retailers in the region, and the dependence of many residents on the credit provided by these enterprises, acted as a disincentive to the formation of a cooperative store. This barrier was largely overcome thanks to the leadership of Cyrus Gallant, a local private merchant who had become an enthusiastic supporter of cooperativism. Gallant was prominent in the establishment of the region's credit unions and offered to rent his Wellington store to a new consumer cooperative. In late 1937, the cooperative was established and hired Gallant as the manager of the store. While the cooperative expanded into the nearby communities of Mont Carmel, Abram Village and Egmont Bay over the next few years, it experienced a range of economic difficulties, mostly associated with a lack of working capital and the reliance of many members on credit. Following some intervention in the management of the cooperative by J. T. Croteau, all but the Wellington branch were closed. In response to the closure of their store, the people in the village of Mont Carmel opened their own consumer store in 1949.

Table 1

Membership of Credit Unions in Evangeline, 1939-1970

	1939	1950	1960	1970
Egmont Bay	190	561	564	632
Mont Carmel	133	337	390	371
Wellington	96	236	190	222
TOTAL	419	1134	1144	1225

(Source: Gallant 141-162)

Table 2

Name of Credit Union or Cooperative	Year Opened	Year Closed
Mont Carmel Fishers' Union	1931	1954
Mont Carmel Credit Union	1937	1970*
Egmont Bay Credit Union	1937	1970*
Wellington Credit Union	1937	1970*
Wellington Cooperative Store	1937	
Egmont Bay Fisherman's Union	1938	1954#
Mont Carmel Cooperative Store	1949	
Acadian Cooperative Fisherman's Assoc.	1954	
Farmers' Cooperative	1955	1978
Acadian Housing	1962	1964
The Acadian Pioneer Village	1966	2000
Artisans Cooperative	1967	

(#Reconstituted as the Acadian Cooperative Fisherman's Association in 1954; *Reconstituted as the Evangeline Credit Union in 1970)

Other cooperative ventures were also launched by the region's fishers and farmers between the late 1930s and the late 1960s. In 1938, the Mont Carmel Fishers' Union was reconstituted as a cooperative under the Rochdale model, while fishers from Egmont Bay formed their own cooperative in the same year. This latter venture established a seafood processing and canning plant and, in 1939, started marketing their produce directly into the American market. In 1954, the two fish cooperatives in Evangeline combined to form the Acadian Cooperative Fisherman's Association. The success of this venture led to the development of a new cannery in Abram Village in 1971. The new processing venture has, however, been plagued by financial problems, largely as a result of considerable levels of debt. In addition, falling fish stocks have contributed to the cannery working well below full capacity. Nevertheless, it remains an important source of export income and employment, with more than 50 people working in the plant in 2001.

In 1955, the region's farmers established a cooperative to market potatoes and other agricultural commodities grown in the area. In addition, the cooperative operated a feed mill and purchased a pool of farm machinery that members could use. However, falling farm numbers in the region saw the cooperative dissolved in 1978 (Gallant 209). Three more cooperatives were established in the 1960s. The first was Acadian Housing in 1963, which emerged from a housing study group that had been formed the previous year to investigate methods for solving the housing needs of some residents (Wilkinson and Quarter 29-30). The cooperative raised some loan capital through the federal government's Central Mortgage and Housing Corporation and constructed six houses, with much of the labour provided by members. The houses were completed in 1964 at a cost of a little over $6,000 each. Following completion of the project, the cooperative was dissolved. The second cooperative, formed during the 1960s, was the Acadian Pioneer Village. This cooperative was aimed largely at generating employment by capturing part of the growing tourism market on Prince Edward Island. The cooperative constructed a museum of Acadian life, a restaurant and a motel. In a similar vein,

the Abram Village Artisan's Cooperative was formed in 1967 to market handicrafts made by local residents to tourists.

This first wave of study groups and cooperatives appears to have built on a pre-existing 'culture of cooperation' in Evangeline. By pooling economic resources, residents were able to embark on ventures that would otherwise not have been possible. Not only did these initial ventures help to improve the economic well-being of residents, they also improved the level of services and infrastructure available in the region. While the Antigonish movement provided some of the momentum leading to the formation of these cooperatives, the region's unique socio-cultural characteristics also played an important role. As a geographically concentrated minority on Prince Edward Island, the Evangeline Acadians are widely recognised for their strong sense of community solidarity (MacDonald 15). The willingness of residents to risk their own capital in a range of local community activities also suggests a high level of trust and strong social bonds between residents. It is also important to note the role of the Church in supporting both the study groups and the formation of cooperatives. While the Antigonish movement claimed to be non-partisan and non-sectarian, it is clear that religion was an important element in its success. Tompkins and Coady were Catholic priests, and both were heavily influenced by Pope Leo XIII's encyclical *De Rerum Novarum*. Given that around 98 per cent of the Evangeline population are Roman Catholic, it is probably not surprising to find that this encyclical, together with the ideas of Tompkins and Coady, found a sympathetic audience amongst the people of the region. Indeed, local Catholic priests played a particularly important leadership role in promoting both adult education and cooperatives in Evangeline (Gallant 131-139).

Despite the enthusiasm for cooperation and adult education in Evangeline, no new cooperatives were established between 1967 and 1977. A number of factors appear to have influenced this. First, by the 1970s improving economic conditions on Prince Edward Island (Beaudin 31-64), and in the Evangeline region in particular, had

lessened the urgent need for cooperation. Second, J. T. Croteau, the highly charismatic and influential supporter of cooperatives, had left the Island. Finally, the deaths of Jimmy Tompkins in 1953 and Moses Coady in 1959 robbed the Antigonish movement of much of its momentum, even though the ideals of cooperation and adult education were still widely accepted in the Maritime Provinces.

The Second Wave of Cooperation in Evangeline

The late 1970s witnessed a resurgence in the formation of cooperatives in the Evangeline region. As with the earlier generation of cooperatives, neighbourhood study groups played an important role in identifying ways of addressing the region's economic and social needs. The Catholic Church, through the activities of local priests, also continued to play an important role in promoting cooperative development. The second wave of cooperative development in Evangeline attempted to address two main issues: first, the service and infrastructure needs of the region; second, the need to generate employment for local residents.

The cooperative movement in Evangeline was rejuvenated with the successful formation of the Health Centre Cooperative in 1977. In 1975, a study group consisting of eight local residents was formed to investigate ways of improving basic health care facilities in the region, which had no doctor, dentist or even community nurse. It was decided that the establishment of a cooperative to purchase and maintain a suitable premises for a doctor and dentist might enable the region to attract practitioners to work in these areas. The formation of the cooperative in 1977 provided funds for the purchase of an old school house in the village of Wellington. This building was converted into a medical centre that now houses a dentist, general practitioner and community health practitioner. An important dimension in the formation of this cooperative was the leadership of the small group of local residents who formed the health care study group. By thoroughly investigating the nature of the problem, and how the community

might respond to it, they were able to formulate a broader vision that local residents were willing to invest in.

Unlike the health care cooperative, the next two ventures were less successful. Following the formation of a study group in 1977, a cooperative was established in 1978 to breed rabbits for meat and furs. While the venture was highly productive and organised, difficult market conditions saw this cooperative close in 1982. According to one of the former members of this cooperative, the main problem was a failure to conduct thorough market research at the study group stage. Indeed, this informant indicated that the study group tended to focus mainly on the breeding and husbandry aspects of the business. Similar problems also faced a forestry cooperative that was formed in 1978 to grow timber and woodchips. While local residents were willing to support this cooperative, it had difficulties securing markets in other parts of Prince Edward Island. One of the main problems is that it was unable to compete with much larger and more experienced timber producers both on the Island and in neighbouring New Brunswick.

These failures did not deter the formation of further community ventures. In 1985, a study group was established to examine the possibility of providing cable television services to the region. While a number of commercial operators were interested in providing similar services to the region, there was a concern that most of the channels would be in English and pose a threat to Acadian culture and the French language. Following eleven months of research, the study group moved to establish a Cable Television cooperative in 1986. By establishing their own service, the residents were able to control the content of the television and ensured that at least three were French language channels. In many respects, the cable television venture helps to illustrate one of the important socio-cultural dimensions of cooperation in Evangeline - community solidarity in the face of external 'threats.'

Table 3

The Second Wave of Evangeline Cooperatives, 1977-2001

Name of Cooperative	Year Opened	Year Closed
Evangeline Health Centre Cooperative	1977	
United Rabbit Cooperative	1978	1982
Forestry Cooperative	1978	1982
Community Communications Coop.	1986	
Les P'Tits Acadiens (Children's Clothing Cooperative)	1986	1991
Evangeline Funeral Cooperative	1986	
Student's Cooperative	1986	
The Prince Edward Island Potato Chip Cooperative	1987	1993
Gabriel Housing Cooperative	1988	
Le Chez-Nous (Aged Care Cooperative)	1992	
Sound and Light Cooperative	1999	
Golf Cooperative	1999	
Le Village	2000	

Until the mid 1980s, the most successful cooperatives in Evangeline had tended to be those that provided a service (for example, the consumer stores, the credit unions and the health cooperative), rather those that were aimed specifically at generating employment (for example, the rabbit and forestry cooperatives). Nevertheless, the 1980s saw a number of cooperatives established that were aimed

solely at promoting economic development in the region. Very few of these met with success and, indeed, most were spectacular failures. The establishment of *Les P'Tits Acadiens* in 1986 is a case in point (Wilkinson and Quarter 67). Following the formation of a study group to investigate the possibilities for generating employment for local women, a decision was made to establish a worker cooperative producing children's clothing. Using shareholder funds (C$6,000 per share) and loans from the Provincial government and the Evangeline Credit Union, the cooperative purchased equipment, materials and funded a training course in clothing design and manufacture (Wilkinson and Quarter 69). However, the cooperative faced ongoing difficulties competing with larger clothing manufacturers and, in particular, securing orders from clothing retailers in the Maritime provinces. After a little over four years of production the cooperative was wound up. Following the sale of the equipment and the payment of all outstanding bills, members received C$1,200 each, a loss of $4,800 on their original investment. A study of the failure of *Les P'Tits Acadiens* by Wilkinson and Quarter indicates that, in addition to the inexperience of the cooperative members in the textiles industry, a lack of adequate training, and overextension of debt, and a failure to conduct thorough market research led to the failure of the cooperative (75-76).

Similar problems confronted another major cooperative venture by residents in the mid 1980s. In 1985, a group of prominent local residents concerned about the economic future of the region conducted a study tour of food processing firms in the United States to assess the potential for similar ventures in the Evangeline area. Importantly, the group was led by Leonce Bernard, an elected member of the provincial government, who had secured funding from the provincial Department of Industry to fund the tour (Wilkinson and Quarter 56). On their return, they outlined their findings at the inaugural meeting of the Baie Acadienne Venture Capital Group, which had been established by the Evangeline Credit Union to fund high-risk community development initiatives. At this meeting a study group was formed that began to examine options for establishing a

worker owned food processing venture in the region. Given the large potato crop on Prince Edward Island, it was decided that a potato chip factory offered some potential. The study group worked closely with the Evangeline Credit Union, who coordinated the feasibility study and examined options for funding the venture. The study group held a public meeting in July 1986 to present the findings of the feasibility study to interested investors. The meeting also informed the 450 people who attended that each worker member would need to purchase C$5,400 in shares to finance the venture, though this money could be borrowed from the Evangeline Credit Union and paid back on a weekly basis (Wilkinson and Quarter 58). 110 people agreed to invest in the new cooperative, with the remaining capital provided by the Credit Union and the Venture Capital Group. Undoubtedly, the leadership of Leonce Bernard played a critical role in ensuring that the project had widespread public support.

Following interviews conducted by the study group, a total of 14 worker-members formed the new cooperative, including three members of the study group. The total cost of the project was just under C$800,000. The factory was constructed and the workers trained in late 1986, and the first packet of Olde Barrel potato chips was produced in March 1987. While the cooperative had ambitious plans to capture as much as ten per cent of the Atlantic chip market within three years, it faced a number of financial and marketing problems (Wilkinson and Quarter 62-63). Difficulties in dealing with wholesalers, problems with securing high quality potatoes, and the impact of the recession of the early 1990s, and intense competition from rival firms resulted in the cooperative going into receivership in 1992 (Wilkinson and Quarter 65). Despite an attempt to restructure the cooperative it remained unviable and was sold in 1993.

Another cooperative that has experienced recent financial problems is the Acadian Pioneer Village, which operated a museum, motel and restaurant from 1966. While this cooperative had been an important contributor to the local economy for more than 30 years, it went into receivership in 1999. The economic problems emerged

largely as a result of a major refurbishment and expansion program in the late 1990s. A combination of an over-extension of debt, the relatively short tourism season on the Island, and a failure to increase customer numbers appear to have been the main causes of the failure of the cooperative. With a part-time work force of 85, the demise of this enterprise had the potential to contribute to serious economic hardship in the region. In 2000, however, it was rescued by a group of other cooperatives and community organisations. Under the new arrangements, the Evangeline Credit Union, a new Golf Cooperative (which plans to build a golf course around the village), the Sound and Light Cooperative (which conducts fireworks, laser shows and the like in the region), the Evangeline Economic Development Association and the Evangeline Tourist Board all own a share in the Village. In line with the Rochdale model, this consortium complies with the principle of 'one member one vote.' The model also reflects the Rochdale notion of 'cooperation amongst cooperatives.' While the organisation is still very new, in July 2001 it was operating profitably and employed 55 staff.

In contrast to the difficulties facing cooperatives designed to generate employment, Evangeline's 'service' cooperatives have been particularly successful. Perhaps the most successful has been the Evangeline Credit Union, located in the village of Wellington, and established in 1970 following the amalgamation of credit unions in Mont Carmel, Cape Egmont and Wellington. In 2000, it had total assets of C$41 million, more than 6,000 member accounts and employed 23 staff (ECU 7). The Credit Union also plays an important social role within the region. Not only does it help finance and support other cooperatives and community ventures, but it regularly makes significant donations to other community groups. For example, in 2000 the credit union donated C$25,500 to a range of community activities and organisations (ECU 7).

In 1996, the cooperative expanded beyond its Wellington branch, opening a new office in the nearby village of Tyne Valley. Following the closure of the town's only bank, a number of residents from

Tyne Valley approached the Evangeline Credit Union requesting that a branch be established in the village. While Tyne Valley is predominately Anglophone and not located in the Evangeline region, the Credit Union members voted in favour of expanding and opening a new branch in the village. By 2000, Tyne Valley residents held deposits of more than C$14 million after only four years of operation.

The Wellington Cooperative Store has experienced similar success. Formed in 1937, it now has a total membership of more than 2,400 and employs 18 staff. In 2000 alone, more than 180 new members joined the cooperative. The ongoing success of the cooperative was also reflected in the opening of a new shopping mall in 1990 at a total cost of over C$900,000. This houses not only the cooperative, but also a number of shops that are leased out to other businesses, such as an insurance firm and a pharmacy. In 2001, the cooperative held assets of over $950,000, and was the first cooperative in the Atlantic provinces to offer shopping over the internet.

Another service cooperative that has been particularly successful is the *Le Chez-Nous* Aged Home. This cooperative was established in response to growing concerns about the absence of geriatric care facilities in the region. The study group for this project was formed in 1989 by two local women who had been forced to send elderly relatives to aged care homes outside the region. Not only did this result in a sense of isolation for the families, but it tended to divorce the elderly residents from their culture, since all of the aged care facilities on the Island at that time were predominantly Anglophone. The study group investigated the construction, staffing and, importantly, funding issues associated with establishing an aged care facility. After securing corporate donations, government funding and pledges from individuals, the study group moved to establish a cooperative. A local resident also donated an area of land for the project alongside the health centre in Wellington, and the home was constructed in 1992/93. It currently has 181 members and provides accommodation for 35 elderly residents and employs six staff. It also has a volunteer labour force of around 30.

All of the other successful cooperatives established in the region during the 1980s and 1990s provided a local service and were not specifically aimed at economic development. These include: the Evangeline Funeral Cooperative, which was established largely in response to the high cost of funerals in the region; Gabriel Housing, which constructs low cost housing for residents; a students' cooperative, comprising of student members and which operates a canteen at the local high school.

Challenges for Cooperation in Evangeline

The 1990s and early 2000s have presented considerable challenges to the cooperative movement in Evangeline. The failure of some of the larger and more ambitious cooperative ventures, such as the Prince Edward Island Potato Chip Cooperative, *Les P'Tits Acadiens*, and the Acadian Pioneer Village illustrate the difficulties facing cooperatives that rely on the external economy. However, it is important to recognise that this is not a situation that is confined to Evangeline. In many rural regions, ambitious community projects designed to generate employment or stimulate economic revitalisation fail. In part, this is due to unrealistic expectations, a lack of market research, inadequate training for staff and management, geographical isolation, a lack of capital and an excessive reliance on loan capital. All of these problems have been present in those cooperatives that have failed in Evangeline.

By contrast, those cooperatives that aim to provide local services and infrastructure and that rely predominantly on local support for their survival tend to be very successful. Examples include the Evangeline Credit Union, *Les Chez-Nous* Aged Home, the Cable Television Cooperative and the Evangeline Health Centre Cooperative. These cooperatives appear not to be as vulnerable to external economic conditions as those cooperatives that were established to promote economic development. In addition to meeting an existing demand for services and/or infrastructure, the strong sense of community

solidarity within the region undoubtedly contributed to support for, and the success of, these ventures.

The failure of the 'economic development' cooperatives during the 1980s and 1990s has led to a reluctance on the part of some residents to invest in large scale 'speculative' ventures. In addition, it was pointed out the Rochdale principle of 'one member one vote' regardless of the amount of capital invested in the cooperative is increasingly being seen as a barrier to larger scale ventures. According to the manager of the Evangeline Credit Union, the financial risks associated with high cost community ventures has meant that any corporate partners (such as financial institutions) involved in a particular project have become cautious about the 'one member one vote rule.' Increasingly, these partners are demanding a degree of representation in the management of organisations that is consistent with the size of their investment. The obvious danger of this approach is that community control of cooperative ventures may be weakened or even lost.

One of the outcomes of these problems in both Evangeline and other parts of Canada has been the formation of the mega-cooperatives, such as that which now owns the Acadian Pioneer Village. This strategy involves a group of cooperatives and community groups establishing a consortium to undertake a costly high risk venture. While this does not provide individual shareholders in cooperatives with a direct say in the management of the mega-cooperative, they do retain a degree of indirect control through the democratic ownership of the primary cooperative. One of the advantages of these mega-cooperatives is that they can invest levels of capital that might not otherwise be generated from individual members. While there is some support for these large consortia, there are also a number of important concerns being raised by residents in Evangeline. The first is that they tend to resemble large bureaucratic organisations, rather than conform to the Rochdale/Antigonish model of community ownership and autonomy. The second concern is that they do not promote some of the key social ideals of Rochdale and Antigonish movements,

such as adult education and training. Indeed, an interview with a Catholic priest in Evangeline suggested that the failure to continue in the Antigonish tradition of conducting detailed study groups that were supported by institutions such as St. Francis Xavier University might have led to the failure of some the more speculative cooperative ventures. While study groups were still held before the cooperatives were established, they were often held with very little institutional support. According to a member of the study group that led to the formation of *Les P'Tits Acadiens*, the loss of this support led to many study groups being conducted in something of an intellectual vacuum, with many of the resources required for successfully researched solutions to problems simply not readily available.

The slowdown in the formation of cooperatives, while in part being linked to an absence of institutional support, also appears to be linked to local leadership. The manager of the Wellington Cooperative Store suggested that many of the cooperatives established in the 1980s and 1990s were championed by a relatively small group of local leaders. These residents are still involved in a range of cooperative and other community activities, and it may be the case that the formation of new cooperatives will require the emergence of new leaders. Certainly there are limits to the amount of time and energy that the established leadership can devote to public activities.

A number of residents even raised doubts about the future for cooperation in Evangeline. The manager of the Credit Union, for example, suggested that the 'culture of cooperation' in Evangeline was linked to an adversity that no longer exists. Improvements in the economic conditions and levels of service provision in the region (due in large part to the formation of cooperatives) have reduced the need for new community development projects. Perhaps more importantly though, improvements in transport and communications has meant that the Evangeline region, and Prince Edward Island more generally, are no longer isolated and marginalised (see Begley 5-12). New roads connect the Evangeline region with the larger regional settlement of Summerside and the provincial capital Charlottetown. In addition,

the opening of a bridge connecting Prince Edward Island with the Canadian mainland has provided Island residents with a range of new employment and social opportunities. All of these factors have the potential to undermine the community solidarity and close social bonds that provided an important basis for cooperation in Evangeline.

Conclusion

Despite the challenges facing cooperation in Evangeline, it remains an important component of the local culture and economy. In part this is due to a longstanding culture of cooperation and mutual aid in the region, although there is little doubt that the Antigonish movement provided much of the momentum and institutional support that enabled cooperatives to flourish throughout the latter half of the twentieth century. While the Antigonish movement played an important role in helping communities in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia and New Brunswick adjust to changing, and often difficult, economic and social conditions, it is in Evangeline that the ideas of Tompkins and Coady have left the strongest legacy. Not only do Evangeline's cooperatives fill important gaps in local service provision, but they play a critical role in generating employment and contributing to a prosperous local economy. This is not to say that cooperatives in Evangeline do not have limitations. The failure of a number of worker cooperatives in the region reinforce how sensitive local economies and business ventures are to regional, national and global economic conditions. As other research has pointed out (see, for example, Murray and Dunn 8-19), it can be extremely difficult for local communities to establish economic ventures that successfully compete in wider economies.

In contrast to this, cooperatives that meet a local service need tend to have been particularly successful in Evangeline. In many respects, this is linked to the strong social bonds, networks and levels of trust amongst the residents of the region. While these conditions may not be replicated in all other rural environments, it may be the case that

service cooperatives have the potential to play an important role in delivering services in rural regions, and may offer a viable alternative in those regions where governments and private enterprise are withdrawing key services. Certainly in the case of Evangeline, these cooperatives have played a vital role in providing basic services where both governments and the private sector failed to deliver outcomes that satisfied the needs and ambitions of residents.

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Ruth Dean

Miriam J. Stewart, ed. *Chronic Conditions and Caregiving in Canada: Social Support Strategies*.

University of Toronto Press, 2000.

Chronic illness is becoming an ever greater public health issue. In Canada, the majority of persons with chronic illness are cared for in the home by family members. One factor that is known to moderate the impact of stress on health status, health behavior, and use of health services is social support. This book reports the work of a multidisciplinary Canadian Social Support Research Program. It offers a comprehensive, thoughtful and coherent examination of the significance of social support for persons living with chronic illness and their caregivers.

The introductory chapter introduces a framework for understanding the reciprocal relationship between social support and coping strategies, and the stress of illness and 'caregiving.' This framework provides the model for six assessment and intervention studies described in the chapters which follow.

Assessment and intervention studies cover a range of chronic illnesses, including children with chronic conditions, parents of children with chronic conditions, spouses of cardiac patients, hemophiliacs with AIDS and their caregivers, seniors with stroke and heart failure, and nurses in HIV/AIDS care and community health. Intervention studies examined a range of social support, including face-to-face professional and peer support, telephone support, and dyadic peer support.

Subsequent chapters deal with training of support persons, mobilising

support, and family 'caregiving' issues. Assessment studies with healthcare professionals concerning their role in Self Help Groups found that professionals were called upon to serve as group facilitators, referral resources, consultants and educators. Professionals such as nurses and doctors tended to be better equipped to meet informational and consultant roles but had little if any preparation in group facilitation and mutual aid programs. Others (social workers) were better prepared in group process and facilitation, but had greater knowledge deficits for educational components of support groups. Drawing upon the findings of the assessment studies, a partnership training module was developed and used for preparation of lay and professional facilitators for each of the intervention studies, lending even greater consistency to the overall research program. Key relationship and support issues in chronic illness and 'caregiving' are identified in the findings from a series of focus groups (n=16), half with individuals dealing with chronic illness, the other with researchers and clinicians. Findings emphasised the importance of relationship processes as a key determinant of mobilisation of social support. Renegotiation of relationships to accommodate the changes in roles and capabilities from the impact of chronic illness is crucial in making the adjustment and enabling social support in chronic illness. Findings from a series of longitudinal qualitative studies with female caregivers of cognitively impaired seniors and premature infants helped to identify issues and barriers in gaining access to support. Barriers to accessing support included the tendency for women to assume 'caregiving' roles and be reluctant to seek help, lack of support both from close personal contacts and outside resources, and personal costs such as exposure and lack of privacy if support is requested. Strategies for obtaining support included communication of non-verbal distress cues and maintaining relationships where support is volunteered. Concluding chapters discuss themes and lessons learned in the programme of research and explore accomplishments and challenges of intervention research. Common themes from the assessment and intervention studies highlight the significance of social support from both peers and professionals, the need for different

interventions in different circumstances, and the potential impact on the health care system from support which sustains caregivers and enables continued care in the home. Participatory approaches and interdisciplinary collaboration are important.

Accomplishments from the Social Support Research Program are numerous. It is an overwhelming demonstration of the value of a coordinated comprehensive research programme which moves the knowledge base concerning social support a giant step forward. It highlights the value of interdisciplinary and community collaboration and increases understanding about chronic illness.

This volume and the research that informs it leaves no doubt as to the importance of social support in chronic illness. Strategies and resources for implementation are well grounded in the findings. Comments throughout the volume identify the importance of policy implications based upon what has been established. Herein lies the challenge. Social support can ease the experience of living with chronic illness. This is in itself a worthwhile end. When social support contributes to continued health and well-being in a protective way that forestalls health complications and allows for longer self-maintenance, it is likely to make a greater impact on policy and enjoy greater support at the macro level. The next logical step, especially in this period of emphasis on outcome measurement, is to establish meaningful outcomes as a result of social support. As acknowledged by several contributors, social support programmes have yet to demonstrate discernible changes in health outcomes. Evaluation of intervention studies readily identifies that social support is appreciated as an end in itself. Participants identify satisfaction with social support programmes, experience validation of their 'caregiving' roles, feel less alone in their circumstances, and have greater confidence for a better future. The challenge is finding if that translates to tangible outcomes such as longer time spent at home without hospitalisation or decreased morbidity in caregivers. These have yet to be demonstrated. Conversely, the challenge may be to convince policy makers that enhancement of coping and mediation of stress are in themselves

valuable ends to social support.

This book is well written and easy to read. Key points and relevant findings are highlighted in such a way as to make them meaningful and readily accessible. Academics and students from varied disciplines will find it a useful resource in establishing the significance of social support. Health care and social service providers will find it a valuable source of inspiration and direction in establishing support services. Researchers will find it a solid basis from which to launch research that extends the topic. It is a convincing and inspiring illustration of the value of an integrated research programme.

Brian Edwards

Of Traces: A Deconstructive Poetics
Robert Kroetsch. *The Hornbooks of Ríta K*.

Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 2001.

Whatever else a "deconstructive poetics" might mean, it is likely to involve procedures that are playful, allusive, self-reflective, fragmentary and opposed to endings. When this text's "archivist" and reading guide, Raymond, declares kindly (and invitingly) that his contribution as occasional commentator might be titled "The Poetics of Rita Kleinhart," the game is well underway. Rita Kleinhart, he tells us, disappeared on June 26, 1992, aged fifty-five, from the Museum of Modern Art in Frankfurt. At her ranch house in Central Alberta, she left behind "neat stacks of scrawled notes, manuscripts, partially filled notebooks and, yes, unfinished (or unfinishable?) poems" and, as her intimate friend and "half lover of the plain truth," Raymond is following the traces. Located at Rita's dining room table, he becomes the voice as reading guide that leads us further into and never out of the maze, one more configuration of the author (and of the author as reader) in this R (Rita, Raymond, Robert) K (Kleinhart, Kroetsch) production. The result is a magical mystery tour, a book of poetry and prose that is (or may be) a fragmented narrative, biography, autobiography, fiction, reminiscence and critical study.

Raymond the archivist as amanuensis, a better-tempered Higginson to this reclusive Emily Dickinson of the Prairies (or fast-writing reconstructer to Carol Shields's Mary Swann)? But, as always, there is more and it is invoked in the trace ("The question is always a question of trace"), this figure and idea so important in Derridean deconstruction that serves to remind us of the wonderful play of signification. In the absence of whole truth, against that end-game,

there are so many possibilities and *The Hornbooks of Ríta K* turns about this poetics. In its guise of literary recovery and commentary, and with its deliberate mode of narrative interruptus, it addresses interrelated questions of how language works, the limitations (and plenitude) of knowing and the processes of desire, loss and possibility. These are not new in Robert Kroetsch's writing. They are, in fact, continuing writerly concerns, addressed in his poetry, fiction and essays, as evident in such long poems as "The Ledger," "Seed Catalogue" and "The Sad Phoenician" as in the self-conscious playfulness of *What the Crow Said* and the emphasis upon archaeology, beginnings, fragments, notes and deferral in the essay "For Play and Entrance: The Contemporary Canadian Long Poem." In the absence of whole truth and against completion, writers make literary sunshine from fragments, glimpses, beginnings and suggestions (a process that is encapsulated in the paradoxical title of Kroetsch's collected long poems *Completed Field Notes*).

So Raymond the archivist is a figure of the reader as Foucault's archaeologist, a literary sleuth and critic who is also, he says, Rita's former lover: "Rita and I were lovers for four years. During that time we met three times." But they continued to correspond. He refers to her letters, the simplest form of their exchanges, but it is part of this text's trickery (its confusion of forms, voices and meanings) that their words also correspond in ways that resist separation. In one self-congratulatory flourish, he asks "Did Rita write those exquisite lines, or did I?" Ostensibly focussed upon Rita, her life and her writing, his words intermingle with hers, becoming indeed the major part of the text we read, and against the usual ordering systems of definition (of voice, character, event) the text offers its own clues (reading cues) to the processes of its confusion: "'fragments after a fragment.' That would be my title for Rita's work," "the poem as relentless as a mirror held in a hand" (a reference to the hornbook form), and "The poem is always stating its own poetics." Amidst the erotics of signification in this "lover's discourse," the act of writing is itself represented as an act of love; if it is imbued with the stuff of memory, loss and nostalgia, it offers as well a desire for contact, communication and continuation.

What do we make of Rita's fascination with back doors, a motif repeated graphically in the book and linked with her attempt to write a "collective biography" of her neighbours? It is a practice that has her "being labeled not only a recluse, but also a snoop and a thief, a voyeur, a strange bird and, as some of her farther neighbours put it, a nut case." If it suggests a recluse's sympathy with rejection and denial, with the banal and the passed over, it also serves a poetics of recovery in the fragment. From Heraclitus, Wordsworth and Coleridge and Valéry, to Patrick White and Gabriel García Márquez, so many writers continue to emphasise the immanence of the extraordinary in the ordinary. And, of course, the act of learning (and relearning) to see is caught up with aesthetics, language and ideology. It is appropriate that Rita takes back door photographs in which the subjects are "nothing so much as blurs." As outlines and suggestions, they invite the desiring poet while serving a thematics of the always incomplete, of more and yet more in the realm of the possible.

The geographical and imaginative centre is Alberta and a prairie landscape that includes Edmonton, Calgary, the North Saskatchewan and the Battle River. This is home territory and it occasions many memorable lines:

> prairie/rain: do not look now but
>
> there is a ship on the horizon

> The long lane that leads from the paved road to her ranch house is indeed covered with crushed red shale. Saskatoons and chokecherries grow in patches here and there, along the lane. Pasture sage finds a place in the bunch grass. Wild roses. A slough with its ring of willows and trembling aspen. But what one sees mostly and simply is barns, granaries, corrals, a ranch house that is at once rambling and severely unprotected, there on a stretch of prairie overlooking the wide valley of the Battle River.

There are also references to Germany, Portugal and Japan, the latter

in a section titled "The Kyoto Mound" that locates Rita in Kyoto and Raymond in Alberta and, like other sections of the book, deals fragmentarily with place while concentrating on ideas of movement, messages and communication, on those variously displaced means by which writing is made. For, despite the teasing about Rita and Raymond, and the implicit invitation to the reader to try to construct from its discontinuous presentation a sequential narrative of their relationship, the text's primary focus is on language and writing. Is writing an act of inscription or evacuation, a means of assertion or an attempt at freedom, associated with control or with surrender, essentially narcissistic or selfless, or, from time to time, all of these? No answer will be the final answer. Perhaps it is significant that hornbook #1 [revised] (and not presented until page 100) is: "if you want to be a poet/you have to be a poet." Against terror of the blank, in the face of the awful "O" of oblivion or the threat of "nothing," writing continues in its modes of uncertainty, wit, comedy, anguish and celebratory joy.

The Hornbooks of Ríta K is packed with ideas about the exchange processes, the sharings, that constitute writing. With a framework that allows such a variety of procedures, it is rich in ideas, modes and range. It is not at all surprising that it was nominated for the Governor General's Award, an award that Robert Kroetsch has won for fiction with *The Studhorse Man* (1969). So many traces and, in confirmation of its poetics, the last entry, metaphorically speaking, takes the reader back to beginnings:

> And sure enough, there it was,
>
> not the sought-after needle, but,
>
> to my agreeable astonishment,
>
> the haystack in the field by the lane

Shirleene Robinson

David T. McNab, ed. *Earth, Water, Air and Fire: Studies in Canadian Ethnohistory*.

Waterloo, Ontario: Wilfrid Laurier Press, 1998.

This commendable text, edited by the well-known Canadian public historian David T. McNab, contains fifteen diverse papers dealing with various facets of Canadian indigenous ethnohistory. The papers emerged from an interdisciplinary conference entitled "Earth, Water, Air and Fire: Worlds in Contact and Conflict: A Conference on Ethnohistory and Ethnology," which was held at Bkejwangong (Walpole Island), between Ontario and Michigan in 1994. The title of the conference and this book was selected to represent the holistic worldview of Canadian Aboriginal people. This edited collection brings together a range of different perspectives and provides an interesting and worthwhile consideration of selected neglected aspects of Canadian history.

Aside from an introduction and a retrospective chapter authored by David T. McNab, the book is organised into five main parts. The first section sets out two Canadian Aboriginal perspectives. The remaining four parts are arranged by geographical location, as follows: Bkejwanong; Atlantic Canada - the Mi'kma'ki and the Mi'kmaq Nation; Ontario: Sovereignty, History and Law; and finally, the North, Gender and Aboriginal Governance.

There is an admirable diversity of topics within these five broader categories. In the section dealing with geographical area of Bkejwanong, Dean M. Jacobs, the executive director of Nin.Da.Waab. Jig., the Bkejwanong Island Heritage Centre, has authored a very illuminating piece on Bkejwanong perspectives on earth, water, air

and fire. He points out the way that the four elements are central to Bkejwanong spirituality. His account successfully conveys the depth of Bkejwanong spirituality and the Bkejwanong attachment to land.

In part three, the section entitled "Mi'kma'ki and the Mi'kmaq Nation," the most remarkable chapter is that authored by Theresa Redmond on Nova Scotia Indian Policy and Mi'kmaq Agriculture between 1783 and 1867. Redmond explores commercial agriculture as one facet of Mi'kmaq land use in the later nineteenth century. Her account captures the successful movement of the Mi'kmaq into agricultural endeavours as white people were usurping their land.

Part four, entitled "Ontario: History, Law and Sovereignty," contains the chapter I found to be the strongest in the entire text. This chapter, entitled "The Uses and Abuses of Power in Two Ontario Residential Schools: The Mohawk Institute and Mount Elgin," is authored by Elizabeth Graham. Graham conducts a thorough investigation of two schools that were founded in the nineteenth century in an attempt to deal with what was termed the 'Indian problem' by 'civilising' indigenous children and training them to become menial workers. Graham explains how indigenous children who were placed in these schools were segregated from their parents and were forced to endure conditions that were comparable to being gaoled.

Part six, entitled "the North, Gender and Aboriginal Governance," contains the most controversial page in the text - a very challenging piece by Joan G. Fairweather. Fairweather conducts a comparative analysis of Aboriginal reserves and self-government in Canada and South Africa and argues that the differences in the experiences of indigenous Canadians and South Africans can be summed up in one word: labour. She contends that the African population of South Africa were almost entirely regarded as menial workers, whose sole purpose was to serve the needs of white society. In contrast, she claims that policy towards indigenous Canadians tended to emphasise 'civilisation' and the gradual amalgamation of these indigenous people into white society. While Fairweather does raise some interesting points, I believe her account is perhaps a little too simplistic and does

not properly consider the use of indigenous labour in colonial Canada.

Overall, it must be said that *Earth, Water, Air and Fire: Studies in Canadian Ethnohistory* is a particularly worthwhile text. It is enriched by the diverse interdisciplinary backgrounds of its various contributors and the papers in the text are all well-written and thoroughly documented. It provides a clear and cogent overview of various facets of Canadian ethnohistory and will make a valuable addition to the collection of anyone interested in the perspectives and history of indigenous Canadians and of course, Canada.

David J. Rovinsky

Gordon Robertson. *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant: Mackenzie King to Pierre Trudeau*.

Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2000.

While in the 1990s Stephen Clarkson was able to write that Pierre Trudeau still haunted Canadians, Trudeau's death has been just one of the factors to remind us that "his" era in Canadian politics is quickly receding into the past. One other factor, less dramatic but more important for scholars, is that major figures from that time have all retired and are publishing memoirs. One of the most recent contributions to this body of work is Gordon Robertson's *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant*. Robertson brings the perspective not of a politician, but of a public servant, one of the most highly ranked public servants who served both as deputy minister and secretary to the Cabinet. In his memoirs, Robertson traces some forty years of Canadian history as viewed from inside the federal public service. In so doing, he focuses upon his relationships with five prime ministers, his role in the political development of the Canadian North, as well as the ever-present constitutional issue.

Robertson's book is divided into three sections. The first section deals with his Saskatchewan boyhood, his studies at Oxford University, and his early career with the Department of External Affairs during the Second World War. The second deals with his time as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories and Deputy Minister of Northern Affairs, and the final section, occupying close to half of the book, deals with the national unity question from the election of Jean Lesage as premier of Quebec in 1960 to the Charlottetown constitutional referendum of 1992.

In some ways, there are two distinct works. In the first half of the book, Robertson comments upon his own personal experiences as a senior civil servant, both in working for Mackenzie King, Canada's most successful and most idiosyncratic prime minister, and in two important positions covering the Northwest Territories. Robertson devotes a chapter to King, focusing less on King's accomplishments as prime minister than upon their personal relationship. He comments at some length upon King's eccentricities, dwelling upon a number of instances that illustrated the difficulties Robertson (or any adviser) faced in serving the prime minister.

Much more involved, and much more interesting, is Robertson's discussion, over five chapters, of Robertson's interest in the Canadian North. In 1953, the government of Louis Saint-Laurent created a new Department of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources, and named Robertson the department's first deputy minister. Over the following ten years, Robertson worked with northern issues, serving as Commissioner of the Northwest Territories for most of that time. Robertson spent much of his time resident in the Territories, where he presided over the small elected legislature, and had the occasion to travel to some of the most remote yet populated parts of Canada. Robertson continued in this role after John Diefenbaker became prime minister in 1957, and served under several different ministers. While Robertson takes some credit for raising the profile of northern issues in Canadian politics, his real legacy was in something that would occur some thirty-five years after he left the post. In 1960, Robertson proposed the division of the Northwest Territories in two, creating a new territory in the eastern Arctic. In July of 1999, Ottawa created the territory of Nunavut, with government in the hands of the territory's Inuit majority.

In 1963, with Lester Pearson's accession to the prime ministership, Robertson became the clerk of the Privy Council. He served in this position throughout Pearson's five years in office, paralleled by the Quiet Revolution, a time of growing nationalist sentiment in Quebec, with new demands for constitutional change reflecting the province's

role as home to half of Canada's duality. As Robertson's narrative moves into this period, the book becomes less of a memoir and more a piece of political argumentation. Robertson accepted the legitimacy of Quebec nationalism right from the election of Jean Lesage as Quebec premier. Before entering provincial politics, Lesage served as the first Minister of Northern Affairs and Natural Resources. As such, Lesage and Robertson had a close personal relationship that, one would infer from the text, influenced the latter's attitude toward Quebec nationalism.

As the Pearson government broadly sought to accommodate Quebec nationalism through such policies as the acceptance of a Quebec Pension Plan separate but related to the federal plan, and the creation of the Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism, Robertson writes approvingly of Pearson's accomplishments. Not only did the government survive five years without an overall parliamentary majority, it introduced several important social measures, as well as a new Canadian flag. At the same time, Pearson handled the thorny issue of federal-provincial relations well, in marked contrast to their acrimonious state under Pearson's successor, Pierre Trudeau.

Robertson served as secretary to the Cabinet during Trudeau's first eleven-year period in office, weathering such emergencies as the October Crisis of 1970 and the election of the separatist Parti Quebecois in 1976. Robertson is by and large complimentary of Trudeau, suggesting that Trudeau performed better than expected in a job not normally suited to an intellectual.

With the defeat of Trudeau's government in 1979, Robertson retired from the public service to begin a second career in the academic world. Though he personally had left the government, Robertson continues his narrative through Trudeau's second period in power after the 1980 election, and the two-term government of Brian Mulroney. The discussion in these chapters is exclusively focused upon the constitution, and the tone becomes rather bitter toward Trudeau. Robertson accuses Trudeau of misleading Quebec voters during the

1980 referendum campaign, excoriates the process leading to the 1982 Constitution Act as a "power play" on Trudeau's part, and goes on to blame Trudeau for the defeat of the Meech Lake Accord in 1990, finding many of his public statements "appalling."

While for the most part, Robertson provides a very interesting and useful memoir for those interested in Canadian political history in the half-century following the end of World War II, the final chapters on the constitution are troubling. In these chapters, Robertson necessarily writes as an outside observer; after returning to power in 1980, Trudeau made it clear that Robertson would not be asked to return to the public service. Perhaps unconsciously, this rejection was a turning point for Robertson, for his analysis of Trudeau becomes bitterly negative. He accuses Trudeau of becoming autocratic, and of meddling in something that was no longer his concern when he opposed Meech Lake. The assumption behind the comments is that prime ministers could not seem to do anything right once they no longer had Gordon Robertson there to advise them.

Despite this reservation, and the tendency of any memoir to have self-serving portions, *Memoirs of a Very Civil Servant* is a well-written contribution from a public servant with several decades of personal experience working with Canada's political leaders.

Cynthia Sugars

Greg Ratcliffe and Gerry Turcotte, eds. *Compr(om)ising Post/colonialism(s): Challenging Narratives and Practices*.

Sydney: Dangaroo, 2001.

The concluding essay by Saeed Urrehman in this recent collection on postcolonialism contains a sobering wake-up call. Challenging the much celebrated "epiphany of postcoloniality" and "the theoretical anaesthesia of a euphoric hybridity," Urrehman argues that postcolonial theory is a disturbingly compromised discourse. Its radical potential, he maintains, has been subsumed within a Western episteme, and continues to be blatantly incognizant of the clear disparities between privileged Western theorists and those in the Third World whose liberatory hybridity they euphorically persist in celebrating.

I begin with this article because it forms an important closing piece to what is a challenging and provocative collection of essays on the compromised nature of contemporary postcolonial theories and methodologies. Emerging out of the "Compr(om)ising Post/colonialisms" conference held at the University of Wollongong in 1999, this collection gathers essays from a range of disciplines which all share a similar goal of revisiting the project of postcolonialism itself. The editors are right to suggest that the field of postcolonialism is marked by a series of internal conflicts, what they describe as "the simultaneous act of constitution and dissolution that marks the project of post-colonialism." This is where the contribution of this collection is most notable, for rather than launching an outright condemnation of postcolonialism as a flawed methodological and critical practice, it provides an important recasting of this field of

research with the aim of rectifying some of the problems that have been identified with the discipline. Including a variety of approaches, from analyses of films and literary texts, to the politics of aboriginal issues, to South Pacific identity politics, to inquiries into theoretical practices themselves, this collection makes a fine complement to other interrogations of postcolonialism that have emerged in recent years: texts such as Aijaz Ahmad's *In Theory: Classes, Nations, Literatures* (1992); Arif Dirlik's *The Postcolonial Aura* (1997); Rowland Smith's *Post-Colonizing the Commonwealth* (2000); and Graham Huggan's *The Postcolonial Exotic* (2001).

Opening with an amusing account of a pair of "ethnic" shorts that mysteriously appear in his friend's laundry basket in Brittany, Paul Sharrad investigates the dehistoricised origins of the institution of postcolonialism and the ways it has become compromised within the metropolitan "poco" industry. As Sharrad states, "the issues of postcolonial studies are not dead, they've just gone commercial." The brand name on the shorts ("American Way: Clothing you can't ignore") reflects some of the ways "the culture-power dynamic entrenched through the colonial past is still working to maintain a First World domination of the rest." Sharrad's argument is timely, and especially important in view of the role of postcolonialism in an age of increasing globalisation.

This is a consistent theme in many of the articles collected here. The increasingly oppressive nature of the "poco" theoretical industry is attacked head-on by Juliana Nfah-Abbenyi who argues that postcolonialism is in danger of becoming a form of "intellectual terrorism" through the ways that its esoteric discourse excludes the uninitiated. Penny van Toorn similarly notes the ways colonial power relations are consistently reproduced in institutional practice: teaching, research, editing, funding, professional advancement, and the like. A certain theoretical framing of one's writing, she states, is what enables access to these realms, and yet that very prescriptiveness excludes those who would most benefit from them-namely Aboriginal authors. Pam Johnston makes a similar case for the ways postcolonial

theory has in effect appropriated Aboriginal cultures without addressing the realities of Aboriginal experience. As Johnston puts it, "The word 'post(-)colonial,' the institutions and the discussions that support it continue to render Aboriginal humanity as abstract. . . . The word 'post(-)colonial' becomes another agent of a conceptual transformation of colonialism that makes invisible and excludes 'the other.'"

This volume is particularly useful for those interested in the cultural politics of settler-invader societies (Canada, Australia, New Zealand), for many of the essays explore the discourse of settler nationalism and its relation to the often overlooked or assimilated presence of indigenous populations. If settler-invader contexts highlight postcolonialism's complicity more readily than many other locations, it is imperative that formulations of settler postcolonialism confront the "invader" half of the settler-invader legacy. Thus both Johnston and van Toorn pose a question that is crucial for a reconsideration of postcolonial theory at this historical juncture: How can the potential of postcolonialism be made to work *for* Aboriginal peoples and their struggles?

Hanna Jaireth makes some progress towards this troubled question in her assessment of the ways human rights discourse impinges on claims for Aboriginal self-government. In her account, it is postcolonialism's ability to tread the ground of paradox, to allow for contesting claims, that is perhaps its most important contribution to Aboriginal politics. This is an issue that has been explicitly articulated by Canadian philosopher Charles Taylor's conception of "deep diversity" in Canadian society, as well as by Australian postcolonial theorist Alan Lawson in his notion of "proximities" and the mutually impinging demands of settlers and aboriginals. Jaireth here provides an articulate and useful account of the philosophical premises and conflicts that inform the definition of the status of Aboriginals and minorities within a liberal politics.

The emphasis on socio-cultural politics evident in this essays is complemented by a range of pieces focussing on particular

texts and writers: from Terry Goldie's analysis of the Mudrooroo controversy; to Cath Ellis and Adam Shoemaker's interrogation of the "schizophrenic" postcolonialism evinced in the British Airways world-marketing campaign (what they refer to as a "postcolonial form of reinvented imperialism"); to Christopher Gittings's account of the ways melodrama was used in settler propaganda films in early twentieth-century Canada; to Greg Ratcliffe's interpretation of Rodney Hall's *Captivity Captive* and the ways it provides an interrogation of the compromised nature of Australian national identity narratives. Goldie's distinction between "identity" and "identification," and Mudrooroo's occupation of various points on the continuum between these, provides one way of addressing the contesting claims for essentialist identity constructs and the interrogation of such authenticating identity narratives that continue to haunt postcolonial discourse. The compromise that comprises Mudrooroo's conflicting positions might thus be seen as an enactment of the contemporary dilemma of postcolonialism's theoretical predicament.

The opening "keynote" papers by Diana Brydon and Helen Tiffin are ground-breaking in their attempt to re-direct the current direction of postcolonial inquiry. In "Unjust Relations: Post-Colonialism and the Species Boundary," Tiffin explores a much underrated but crucial issue for postcolonialism: the othering of animals which lies at the base of constructions of human subjectivity, and, by extension, of discourses of racism. The foundation of imperialist oppression, she argues, is an investment in speciesism, and Tiffin is adept at highlighting many everyday moments when even the most politically correct (postcolonial?) individual comes up against his/her own compromised investment in the assumptions of this discourse.

Diana Brydon's "Compromising Postcolonialisms" sets Tomson Highway's *Kiss of the Fur Queen* in the context of contemporary debates about postcolonialism. Her sense is that postcolonialism "is obsessed by its own compromises and contaminations," but what she wants to explore is the ways critics position themselves in relation

to these compromises. Brydon, like Tiffin, is concerned to assert the validity of literary analysis as a means of enabling cultural and material intervention. Her fear that we may be entering an era when critiques of capitalism have been displaced from economic debates are echoed by Urrehman and Sharrad. It is therefore imperative, she argues, that postcolonial debates and literary study address this shift. Thus, she argues for a literary criticism that is "attuned to the operation of economic and political forces," and Highway's disturbing novel is assessed for its illustration of the uneasy, yet nevertheless "inter-animating," relation of cultural expression and political intervention.

In the end, none of the writers in this collection is advocating an outright rejection of postcolonialism but is instead asking how postcolonialism might be made to live up to its potential. Critiques of the postcolonial, Brydon states, "identify genuine injustices that cry out for remedies. . . . The liberation movements of the 1950s and 60s have not led to the decolonisations they promised. Neither have the self-identified subversions of postcolonial literary readings led to identifiable social improvements. Postcolonial critics need to examine both legacies for their strengths and weaknesses." *Compr(om)ising Post/colonialism(s)* is refreshingly uncompromising in its pursuit of this goal.

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