Australasian Canadian Studies

Globalising Indigeneity: New Research Directions

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Globalising Indigeneity: New Research Directions

Editorial

This special issue of *Australasian Canadian Studies* was inspired by the passionate voice of Cindy Blackstock, who visited Australia in August, 2009. Cindy gave a keynote as part of the successful ACSANZ and Canadian High Commission sponsored Federation Dialogues Series. Cindy's keynote opens this issue of *ACS* which aims to showcase the depth and breadth of Indigenous Studies in Australia, Canada and New Zealand.

While under new editorship, *ACS* remains committed to mentoring established and emerging scholars in comparative Australian, Canadian and New Zealand Studies. Despite having one eye on these three Commonwealth countries, it is important to also look toward the developing field of Canadian Studies in the Asia-Pacific regions in order to collaborate with, and to highlight in *ACS*, the international dynamism of this field of research.

I would like to thank the previous editor of *ACS*, Dr Sonia Mycak and her editorial assistant Andrew Bilinski for over ten years of scholarly excellence and collegiality. I would also like to welcome the *ACS* Editorial Board. They and their peers are the unsung heroes of academic journals worldwide. It is their labour, their invaluable input, critique, suggestions and reservoir of knowledge that enables Peer Reviewed journals such as *ACS* to maintain scholarly impetus and reputation. I thank the Board for their commitment in bringing this issue together under tight deadlines and I look forward to being in dialogue with each board member as we work and shape forthcoming issues. My thanks also extend to the Faculty of Arts and the Centre for Canadian Australian Studies at the University of Wollongong and the Canadian High Commission, Canberra for their ongoing support.

The revamped design of the journal cover incorporates the dominant colours of Australia, Canada and New Zealand's flags while incorporating stylised edits of the new ACSANZ logo which is a contemporary mix of maple leaf and Southern Cross. Enormous thanks to Pia Petre for designing both this cover and the new layout of *ACS*. The cover image is courtesy of Elizabeth Cassell, a fellow Canadianist and lawyer, who is now completing a PhD about her work with the Innu residents of the Matimekosh and Lac John reserves in the municipality of Schefferville, Northern Quebec. This image is of Mushuau-nipi on the George River which is a traditional Innu meeting point and camping site.

I value your comments on this special edition of *ACS* while also looking forward to reading your scholarly contributions to future issues of the journal.

Robyn Morris, Editor

ACSANZ Federation Dialogue Series: "Is this Our Canada? Is this Our Australia? First Nations Child and Family Safety and Well-being in Two Commonwealth Countries."

August 4, 2009.
Emmanuel College, The University of Queensland.
Keynote speaker:

DR CINDY BLACKSTOCK
Executive Director, First Nations Child and Family Caring Society of Canada

"What a great honour to be on the lands of these traditional owners. From the moment I arrived in Sydney I could feel the wind at my back. It was as if I was being welcomed again by the spirits and reminded about my obligation to my ancestors to represent then in a respectable and honourable way. So, it is especially important to me that this [Dialogue] began in such a proper way with a welcome to county to try to honour all those people—past and present—and those who have had the great honour of joining the Indigenous Peoples of Australia and now call this country your home.

Some of you know of my country—Canada. It is actually your first Indigenous word from our world. It's a gift to all of us from the Mohawk nation and it means 'village'.

But who are we?

What do we care about?

What defines us as a people?

How much trouble are we prepared to get into to defend those values that define us most?

I love my country. I love the idea of freedom. In our country the eagle flies. It soars around the world of the sacred. It goes into the sky. It flies into the trees and can touch the water. But the truth is that the eagle's become caged in Canada. The great eagle isn't allowed to fly and soar as it once did. It is only to observe from the outside in the confines of what is acceptable within our country.

I love equality because I was taught in my tradition that there were all great, great people around the world of different colours and cultures and there would come a time in all of our communal history that when they kept their knowledge and their traditions alive they would bring a scared knowledge that was unknown to us; and together, we having lived in a responsible way, will be the keepers of a knowledge that would be necessary to give to the table. And it is only together, in the binding of those different ways, that we have any hope

of continuing as a society at all. In fact, it is the solution to the very sustainability of our humanity. It is bound up in the preservation of these different knowledges.

I believe in respect and cultural difference. And that doesn't mean that we work across difference, it is that we celebrate difference. That we understand that I will never know the magic of truly understanding who you are. But I know that you are the keeper and a great gift that you alone can give the world.

There are times in the history of all great nations when the moral temperature of the country is taken and this is Canada's time. Last year our Prime Minister stood before the world and he apologised to Aboriginal peoples for the wrongs that were done to them in Residential Schools. Between 1879 and 1996, Aboriginal children at the age of five were removed from their families not because they were neglected or not loved, or not cared for but because another society thought they knew better. And half of the children died there in those schools; from maltreatment and from the preventable cause of diseases. They lost their culture, their language, their sense of self and respect. And all Canadians lost the gifts of their presence; of all the things they could have given to us over those one hundred and thirty years. But as Wilma Cuss, my elder and mentor says, 'When you've done something wrong, your first duty is not to apologise. It is to learn.' For me reconciliation means not saying sorry twice. That is what reconciliation is.

So the temperature of the nation is taken in the way Canada is treating First Nations children today. There has never been a time when there have been more First Nations children in state care than it has been at this moment. In fact, there are three times the numbers of First Nations children in state care than there was at the height of Residential Schools. And one of the contributing factors to that is the government's own policy. You see, in Canada we have a reserve system. Some of you may not know this but we are the only country on the world, in the Western industrialised world, that has a raced–based piece of legislation called 'the Indian Act'. The government of Canada actually determines our blood quantum and decides whether we are status or non-status Indians.

Can you imagine if I said in the eminent group [before me] – 'I am going to decide whether who in this group is a status or non-status Australian. All the Indigenous people can be status Australians because they were here first. The rest of you that can prove your blood quantum at fifty percent to the first couple of boats that came in, you can be the status of Australians. The rest of you are non-status Australians.'

This is our Canada—and it creates a reserve system too. We have two types of reserves. We have wildlife reserves and Indian reserves. Because what they did is they took us off our land and they put us on to the crappiest land possible and they implemented a caste system which was not taken down for some time […] So we have First nations child welfare agencies who are doing amazing work but receive twenty-two percent less funding to service a First nations child than a non-Aboriginal child receives just across the Highway. Even the needs of First Nations children are higher.

We're a good people. We believe in working with the government even though the harms were done to us. We are the first to reach out in friendship to the government because we believe in the goodness of a society. So for over ten years we have sat at two tables with two different governments to try to develop evidence-based solutions with some of the leading researchers on all First Nations across Canada.

By the time a solution was developed our country was running a 22billion dollar surplus. Our solution would have cost less than 0.5 percent of that surplus to give equality to First Nations children and our government walked away. And in came another bureaucrat. A nice person I'm sure. Probably the same person who works for their Little League team and makes a donation to the children's hospital. And they looked at us and said, 'We know you have worked so hard for First nations children and we know they are being removed but please give us a little bit more time. I'm new on the file—I know you don't know me. I know you've been wronged, that things haven't worked out before—but trust me on this. I'm going to do everything I can. And don't take it any further because if you make a stink about it then I will lose control and I can't be of help after that.'

So we've heard that speech and we had a decision to make: Are we going to wait or not? We decided not to wait. Our organisation which was created by 105 First Nations Agencies worked with the Assembly of Nations and in 2007 we filed a Human Rights Complaint against the government of Canada for racially discriminating against First Nations children.

The day we filed that complaint I walked out of the House of Parliament with our Nation's Chief, Phil Fontaine. And it was one of the saddest days I've ever had. I could not believe that in the bottom of my heart our country would force us to file a Human Rights Complaint just to get equal treatment for First Nations children. But what was so interesting was Canada's response. When we filed the complaint, the first thing they did was refuse mediation on three occasions to the commission. They challenged the jurisdiction of the Commission to hear the complaint on two bases:

First they said its funding was not a service so the fact that I provide you Cheryl, for example, clearly with fifty cents to deliver the service and you Michael, a dollar, it is Cheryl who is discriminating because she is not using her fifty cents efficiently. If she were more financially accountable then we would not have this problem. That's argument number one.

Argument number two is that we, the Federal government, provide equal treatment to all First Nations children then in my view they provide equal discriminating treatment and the fact that provinces provide a higher level of treatment is not within our power as a Federal government.

It is basic that in 2008 my government wanted out of one of its founding principles of equality on a legal technicality. If the Commissioners of the Human Rights Commission were not committed and not convinced and of September, 2008 they ordered a Tribunal—a full public hearing under a subpóena and under oath and our government immediately appealed. They had no interest in having this heard before the Canadian public.

They also cut funding to my organisation by one hundred percent. We receive no federal funding and yet we have not gone away. They cut our political organisation by eight-five percent and we have not gone away.

On September of this year [2009]. –if you come to Ottawa—day one of the Tribunal begins and for the first time in Canadian history the Government of Canada will be held accountable for its treatment of First Nations children. And so, it is after hearing all the evidence before it—that the government of Canada will be found for discrimination against First nations Children. And it will go down in history that when confronted with this moment when it had the moral choice to decide whether to actually use this and do the right things or whether we fight for the right as a country to discriminate against abused and neglected children. Our country has chosen the latter. My hope is not with the Canadian government anymore but with Canadians—with every caring Canadian who believes in the values and as a people who understand that we cannot send young me and women to Afghanistan to die for the values of equality and freedom while we deliberately fight for the right to discriminate against abused and neglected children in our own backyard.

When the Tribunal is over I want to walk by the House of Parliament as I do everyday on the way to work. I want to believe in that Canada stands for freedom and equality. I want to believe that our country and our people stand up to be counted when it matters the most. This is not an issue for First Nations people—it is a question of whether we are one village, one Canada—at all"

Crocodiles and Polar Bears: Technology and Learning in Indigenous Australian and Canadian Communities

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Crocodile infested, swollen rivers, Troop Carriers, light planes and red dirt typify the landscape of remote tropical Northern Territory in Australia. In contrast, the remote landscape in far northwestern Ontario in Canada is characterised by rough terrain, snow and ice, sea planes and sometimes even polar bears. The traditional owners of the land in these two very different locations face similar issues in accessing adult learning and ongoing educational opportunities. This paper compares and contrasts the experiences of two groups of adult Indigenous students, one from the northern Australian tropics and one from far Northwestern Ontario, and examines the ways that technology is used to try and bridge the distance between Indigenous adult learners' goals and educational opportunities. The paper's major finding is that the educational gap between Indigenous and non Indigenous learners in Canada is closing, while the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous Australians is widening. This reflects in part that Indigenous adult learners in Northwestern Ontario are being better served in comparison to their counterparts in the Northern Territory of Australia.

Employment statistics for the Indigenous populations of Australia and Canada indicate that, as employment skill requirements grow to reflect the growing technology trends of the local and global markets, the employment gap will widen between those with access to and knowledge of technology, and those without. This imposes a significant threat to under-skilled Indigenous people, who will be excluded from new economic and employment opportunities, and pushed further to the margins of society (Greenall & Loizides 2001; Miller 2006). This paper explores the way in which Australia and Canada engage with issues relating to Indigenous adult education in remote locations. Integral to this, is an assessment of the way in which Australian and Canadian learning organisations utilise computer technology to further Indigenous literacy and learning

services. For example, computer technology has been employed in the remote areas of Australia's Northern Territory to support English Language and Literacy students when their physical attendance in the classroom proved difficult or impossible. This Australian initiative will be contrasted to the Good Learning Anywhere program instigated in remote Northwestern Ontario, Canada. This program is a provincially funded, community-based program which has used an online synchronous learning platform to reach remote and isolated Indigenous learners. It will be argued that the overarching aim of both nations' programs is to provide Indigenous adult students with opportunities to further their literacy and employability skills.

The great size and low population density of Australia and Canada strongly impact in similar ways on the lives of their citizens. In terms of land mass, Australia is the sixth largest country in the world, and Canada is the second largest, after Russia. Canada and Australia have amongst the lowest population densities of any nation on earth, with Australia hav ing a population density of 2.7 people per square kilometer and Canada having a slightly higher population density of 3.3 people per square kilometer (ABS 2008a). The population distributions across both countries are similar, with a high concentration of the population of each country clustered in urban areas. Outside of the urban areas, both countries contain large geographic areas which are sparsely populated. In both Australia and Canada, Indigenous people[1] constitute a small proportion of the overall population, 2.5% of Australia's population (ABS, 2008a) and 3.8% of the population of Canada (Statistics Canada 2009c). While there is some difficulty in comparing the population spread of Indigenous people across both nations, it is noted that higher proportions of the Indigenous populations live outside of major population centres than the general population.

Australia's development of the Australian Standard Geographic Classifications (ABS 2005), takes a geographical approach to defining remoteness based on the Accessibility/ Remoteness Index of Australia (Commonwealth Department of Health and Aged Care 2001). The Australian Standard Geographic Classifications are linked to population size and road distance from service centres, and include five categories of remoteness: Major Cities, Inner Regional, Outer Regional, Remote and Very Remote. These classifications reflect the accessibility of goods, services and opportunities for social interaction. At one end of the scale, the classification 'Major City' indicates relatively unrestricted accessibility, while the classification 'Very Remote' indicates quite limited accessibility. In Australia, 74% of the Indigenous population lives in Major Cities and Inner and Outer Regional areas and 26% live in Remote and Very Remote areas. This contrasts with less that 2% of the non-Indigenous population in Australia who live in Remote and Very Remote areas (ABS 2008).

In Canada, an Urban area has "a minimum population of 1,000 persons and a population density of at least 400 persons per square kilometer" (Statistics Canada 2009a 45), and any area outside of an Urban area is classified as Rural (Statistics Canada, 2009). Using the Canadian definitions, and based on 2006 census data, 80% of the Canadian population live in Urban areas (Statistics Canada 2009b); whereas, for the Indigenous population, this reduces to 59% (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada 2007). This translates to 41% of the Indigenous populations living in rural areas; double the rate for non-Indigenous people. There is reasonable argument that there is under reporting of Indigenous people, as 22 of the nation's largest Native Indian bands refused to take part in the 2006 census. Taking these numbers into account, analysis of additional data reveals that more than 60%, a substantially larger number of Indigenous people than indicated in the census, live in rural areas (Burleton et al. 2009). Despite the difficulty of direct comparison, the Australian and Canadian statistics on population spread show that Indigenous people in both countries are more likely to live outside of major areas of settlement than the non-Indigenous populations. For the purposes of consistency in this paper, the term *remote* will be used from this point forward to refer to geographic isolation that encompasses both Remote and Very Remote locations in the Australian context, and isolated rural locations in the Canadian context.

There are many other similarities between the Indigenous populations of Australia and Canada. Both countries have aging populations with the Indigenous populations comparatively younger and growing at a faster rate than the non-Indigenous populations. In Australia, the median age of the population is 37 years, compared to the median age of 21 years for the Indigenous population (ABS 2008), a gap of 16 years. In Canada, the median age of the population is 39.5 years (Statistics Canada 2009d), almost 13 years higher than the median age of 27 years for the Indigenous population (HRSDC 2010). The age differential between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations of Australia and Canada is primarily a result of higher fertility rates in the Indigenous populations of both countries (ABS 2009b; HRSDC 2010) although an increasing number of people self identifying as Indigenous has impacted on Indigenous population growth in both countries (ABS 2008a; Burleton et al. 2009). As a result, the Indigenous populations are growing at a faster rate than the general populations. In Australia the overall fertility rate for Indigenous women is 2.52 babies per woman compared with a rate of 1.97 for all women in Australia (ABS 2009b). Similarly, in Canada, the overall fertility rate for all women was 1.59 babies per woman in 2006 (CBC News 2008), less than the replacement rate, while Canada's Indigenous population grew 20.1% from 2001 to 2006 (HRSDC 2010).

Socio-economic indicators

While geographical and population profiles are important in such comparisons, there are also many similar socio-economic factors, including education, health,

geographical remoteness, employment and literacy, which impact upon the Indigenous people in Australia and Canada. In both nations Indigenous people experience high levels of disadvantage in comparison to the non-Indigenous populations, with the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous disadvantage more pronounced in the Australian context.

Education

In both Australia and Canada, there is a substantial education gap between Indigenous adults and the general adult population, with lower levels of participation for Indigenous people than non-Indigenous across all educational sectors. In Australia only 36% of Indigenous 17 year old children are reported to be attending secondary school as compared to 66% of non-Indigenous children of the same age (ABS 2008a). Canada has a better track record than Australia in this regard, although less than 50% of the Indigenous population has completed a secondary education, as compared to 70% of the non-Indigenous population (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada, 2007).

In Australia, the level of participation in non-school education for Indigenous people is lower than that for the non-Indigenous population; however, it has shown substantial increases, and in the over 35 age group, there are similar levels of enrolment in tertiary education courses for the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations (ABS 2008a). The increasing numbers of Indigenous Australians enrolling in non-school courses have been mainly in vocational education and training courses, and increased enrolments have not translated into successful completions. Indigenous people are only half as likely as non-Indigenous people, 25% as compared to 47%, to have a non-school qualification (ABS 2008a).

In Canada, the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous enrolment in tertiary education has been closing. In Canada, 50.7% of the whole population has at least some post-secondary education as compared to 34.5% of the Indigenous population. Similarly to Australia, the increases have been primarily in the vocational and training area, where the rate of Indigenous achievement of 14.2% is almost the same as the 15.3% rate for the whole Canadian population, whereas for university achievement, only 5.8% of the Indigenous population have university qualifications as compared to 18.1% of the wider Canadian population (Burleton et al. 2009).

Employment

The Australian 2006 census (ABS 2008a) found that 46% of Indigenous people were employed, as compared to 62% of non-Indigenous people, with more than half, 59%, of employed Indigenous people working in low skill occupations. Indigenous people were three times more likely to be unemployed than non-Indigenous people, 16% compared with 5%. Employment status, occupation and hours worked impact directly on household income levels. At the time of the 2006 census, the mean gross household income for Australian Indigenous people was 469AUD per week as compared to 740AUD for non-Indigenous people, with the disparity increasing as remoteness increases. At a national level, 39% of all Indigenous people are considered to be living in low resource households as compared to 8% of the non-Indigenous population.

Unemployment remains high among Canada's Indigenous population as well. In 2006, the employment rate for Indigenous people of core working age was 53.7% (Statistics Canada 2009c), compared to 81.6% for non-Indigenous people (Statistics Canada 2008c). For Indigenous people living on reserves (in discrete Indigenous communities), employment levels were much lower than other Indigenous people, with only 39.1% of on-reserve people employed (Burleton). Despite this, the gap between median earnings is smaller than that in Australia, with pre tax weekly earnings for the Canadian population at 796CAD a week compared to 711CAD for the Indigenous population (Burleton).

Health

In Australia, and to a lesser extent in Canada, the effects of socio-economic disadvantage are highlighted by the comparatively poor health outcomes for Indigenous people. Mortality rates for Indigenous people in both countries are increasingly related to lifestyle factors, such as smoking, alcoholism, substance abuse and obesity. In Australia and Canada, non-Indigenous people can expect to live longer than the Indigenous population. The effects of poor health, as well as increased levels of suicide, accidents and violence for Indigenous people, translate to a seventeen year difference in life expectancy for Indigenous people in Australia as compared to the non-Indigenous population (Australian Government 2008). In Canada, there has been improvement in Indigenous life expectancy and the gap has shrunk to less than six years (Cooke et al. 2007). An Indigenous Canadian can expect to live for 72.9 years, while an Indigenous Australian person has a life expectancy of only 59.6 years.

Remoteness

For each of the student groups, the context of their lives is in a remote environment. Remoteness in the Northern Territory and remoteness in Northwestern Ontario look quite similar. Both areas are geographically isolated, and access to goods and services is further limited by climatic extremes, water, snow and ice. In Australia and Canada, the socio-economic indicators show that there are marked increases in disadvantage associated with geographical remoteness, particularly for 'those who live in discrete Indigenous communities' (Cooke et al). Although the Indigenous population of Australia is only 2.5% of the total population, Indigenous people comprise 32% of the population of the Northern Territory, a total of 66,600 people. The majority, 79%, of the Indigenous population in the Northern Territory live in remote areas and 59% of the Northern Territory Indigenous population speak an Australian Indigenous

language at home (ABS 2008a). The Indigenous population of the Northern Territory is spread across discrete Indigenous settlements, the larger ones called communities, plus an estimated 500 smaller settlements (Altman et al. 2008) called outstations or homelands, which are small decentralised communities of close kin, established by the movement of Indigenous people away from larger settlements to land that has social, cultural and economic significance to them.

A remote community[2] in the Northern Territory may be hundreds of kilometres by unsealed dirt road from a regional service centre. Roads into communities in the Top End of the Northern Territory may be cut for up to five months of the year during the wet season as a result of swollen, crocodile infested rivers. During these months, the only access into communities is by light plane. Other communities are similarly cut off during the wet, with dirt roads waterlogged and impassible. Many communities are located on islands off the Northern Australian coast, accessible year round only by small plane or by boat. In many of these communities people have to travel vast distances, at great cost, to get to a shop to purchase staple goods. In these communities hunting and food gathering may be a practical and economic necessity to supplement shop bought food, as well as evidence of the continuation of traditional cultural practices and values.

The Canadian Indigenous population living outside of urban areas are categorised as living either on or off reserve. These reserves are legally defined settlements or designated land for First Nations or Indigenous people as declared in the Canadian Indian Act (1876). The area referred to in this paper consists of approximately 35 communities, directly North of Sioux Lookout, Ontario in the region of Northwestern Ontario. These communities are part of the larger Nishnabwe Aski Nation (NAN) which compromises 49 communities in Ontario's North and occupies over 60% of the province of Ontario. The total population of these communities is approximately 35,000 people which include members of three First Nations people, the Cree, Ojibwe and Oji-Cree Nations.

In this region, communities are far away from other communities and there is no large urban centre past Sioux Lookout, Ontario. People cannot commute out of their communities to access jobs on a daily basis or to access social or medical services on demand. Transportation to and from these communities is expensive, jobs are few and far between, living expenses are high, access to medical services is extremely limited, and in order to obtain opportunities to a higher education, residents often must leave their communities for an extended period of time. These Indigenous communities are surrounded by abundant lakes carved in the vast forests of the Canadian Shield. Travel to the communities by road is limited, but can happen by aircraft year round. Water planes are also used in the summer and ski planes in the winter. The communities can

also be reached by winter roads over the lakes which are covered by snow and ice in the winter months.

In Australia, as remoteness increases, school completion rates for Indigenous people drops significantly, as does the likelihood of having a non-school qualification. In the Northern Territory, educational attainment rates are lower than for Australia as a whole. Only 6% of the Indigenous population of the Northern Territory has a post-secondary qualification, as compared to 33% of the non-Indigenous population, and when it comes to a university qualification at Bachelor degree level or higher, only 0.8% of Indigenous people, as compared to 12% of non-Indigenous people have obtained this level of qualification (ABS 2008b)

Indigenous people in remote areas of Australia have lower household incomes than Indigenous people living in cities. Overcrowding is a factor in Indigenous households, and this issue increases in very remote areas, where 40% of households require at least one extra bedroom. Living in a remote location also significantly reduces the likelihood for an Indigenous household to have a computer or internet access. It appears that the Indigenous unemployment rate in remote areas is lower than other areas; however, this is a result of lower participation rates in the labour force as well as participation in remote Community Development Employment Projects (CDEP), a federal government scheme which provides the exchange of unemployment benefits for work and training opportunities where there is a limited labour market. Indigenous people are disproportionately represented in low paid, low status occupations and in remote communities this is further exacerbated under CDEP, as almost half of the jobs provided are as laborers (ABS 2008a).

Remoteness in Canada has a similar, challenging lifestyle on Indigenous people as it does in Australia. Most communities in Northwestern Ontario are equipped with basic amenities such as a primary school, a small store, a nursing station, a church and often an ice hockey rink; however, the lack of a variety and scope of services provided proves to be a barrier for those who reside in these locations. The cost of living in these communities can also be exorbitant, as the goods must be delivered into the communities either by winter roads or by plane.

In terms of educational outcomes, Indigenous Canadians achieve the highest levels of educational achievement if they live in cities, second highest if they live in towns, third highest if they live in rural areas, and the lowest levels of educational achievement is achieved by those people living on reserve, where 59% of people are not completing high school (Mendelson 2006). The employment rates are around 15% higher for Indigenous people living off reserve than on reserve, with 39.1% of the Indigenous population living on reserve employed, compared to 53.8% of the Canadian Indigenous population (Statistics Canada, 2008c). Median income is also much lower for Indigenous people living on reserve than in any other location (Burleton et al.).

Adult literacy and technology

In terms of their general populations, Australia and Canada share similar literacy profiles as shown in the data collected under the International Adult Literacy and Life Skills Survey, conducted in Australia in 2006, and the findings from the International Adult Literacy and Skills Survey (IALSS) conducted in Canada in 2003. These surveys were part of an international study coordinated by Statistics Canada and the Organisation for Economic Development (ABS 2007) to compare literacy levels across countries. Many of the skills needed to access computer and other information are linked to people's levels of literacy.

The developers of the surveys ranked proficiency from one, being the lowest level, to five as the highest level, with level three being the "minimum required for individuals to meet the complex demands of everyday life and work in the emerging knowledge-based economy" (ABS 2007). In Australia about 47% of the whole population was under this minimal level in literacy, 53% were under the minimal level in numeracy and 70% of the Australian population was under minimal required levels in the area of problem solving. The figures for the Canadian population were similar (ABS 2007), showing that in both countries, significant proportions of the populations have insufficient literacy and numeracy skills to operate effectively in the workplace or in the community. The surveys show a strong correlation between educational level and achieved literacy levels, and also that those people with higher literacy scores are more likely to be employed, have higher incomes and use the internet. These surveys indicate that the overwhelming majority of the Indigenous people of Australia and Canada do not have the requisite literacy and numeracy skills to fully participate in contemporary society.

The increased importance of new workplace and social technologies indicates that unequal distributions of literacy proficiencies will likely lead to increasing inequalities in social and economic outcomes between societal groupings. This will make the maintenance and acquisition of new competencies even more difficult (Bougie 2008; Greenall 2005; Greenall & Loizides 2001; Miller 2006). In response, Indigenous communities in Canada, governments and educational institutions in both countries and national and international literacy organisations are coordinating efforts to implement technological learning strategies. These strategies aim to address the 'digital divide'; the growing global phenomenon that is creating greater distance between those having access to information and communications technology (ICT) and those who do not, due to geographical and social isolation, poverty and political factors (AISR 2006; Brescia & Daily 2007; Hodson 2004; Hunt 2001; Miller 2006).

A major factor contributing to this 'digital divide' is the lack of access that many Indigenous people have to information and communications technologies. In Australia, there are very low rates of home computer ownership in remote Indigenous communities. The effect of this is that there is a significant reliance on access to computers in locations outside the home, such as workplaces and public locations. While the Australian 2006 census showed increasing home ownership of computers across the Indigenous population nationally, home internet access decreased as remoteness increased and only 8% of Indigenous people living in remote areas had home internet access (ABS 2008). Limited home ownership of computers is also a reality for Canadian Indigenous people living in remote locations.

Australian Case Study: Batchelor Institute Action Research Project

Batchelor Institute of Indigenous Tertiary Education is located in the town of Batchelor, 100 kilometres south of Darwin in the Northern Territory, Australia. Batchelor Institute is a dual sector tertiary institution which provides vocational education and training courses as well as degree and post graduate level programs to Indigenous Australians. In 2008, a twelve month action research project was conducted with students enrolled in Certificate III in Spoken and Written English, to investigate how communications technology could be used to support their learning.

A total of 37 students were enrolled in the course, 32 of whom lived in Remote or Very Remote areas of the Northern Territory. Thirty five of the students speak English as a second or other language and have an Australian Indigenous language as their main language spoken at home. The Certificate III in Spoken and Written English (NSW AMES 2008) was delivered as a series of one or two week intensive campus-based workshops, with 13 workshop weeks scheduled over the academic year. For most of the students, it was difficult to attend all of the workshops, even though arrangements to travel to the campus from their communities were organised for them, and costs for transport, food and accommodation were covered by Batchelor Institute. The students gave many reasons for not attending workshops, including work and family responsibilities, caring for a family member, illness or caring for someone who was ill, sorry business (funerals) and cultural business. During the project, 60% of students attended less than half of the workshop weeks while only 14% of students attended more than 80% of the workshops. Only two students had 100% attendance.

Data from previous years indicates that this low attendance rate impeded the students' progression resulting in a large proportion continuing their studies over successive years. To combat this, the action research project examined the notion of integrating computer and communications technology into the course arguing that it would assist students to develop the technology based skills and confidence needed to become independent learners. More importantly, with these skills they would be able to continue their learning outside of workshops. The project included the development of online materials that students could access between workshops thereby lessening the previous emphasis which had been placed on face-to-face learning.

The inclusion of technology based learning tools as the core of the project was a

product of students' expressed and observed interest in developing their computer skills. Feedback from students showed that they enjoyed using new technology-based tools to consolidate, practise and develop their English language and literacy skills. The incorporation of technology-based teaching and learning was also based on the premise that language learners, like all other students, "need exposure to Web 2.0 approaches to develop the skills they'll require for the workplace and the wider world when they graduate" (Coughlin 2008, p. 12). Much of the preliminary subject planning occurred in the first of the two action research cycles. This included an initial survey on student access to computers with internet connections, in the communities in which they live.

At the time of the research, not one of the participating students had a home computer. This is not surprising given the findings of recent research which shows that people with poor English language skills, Indigenous Australians and people living in remote areas are less likely to have a home computer or to have internet access than other Australians (Daly 2005). Conversely, and given the lack of home computer ownership, it was somewhat surprising that the students overwhelmingly indicated that they could access a computer in their community. Of the 25 students who participated in the initial survey, eight students indicated they had access to a computer at a council office (the administrative hub of a community), five at a library, five in their workplace, two said that they had a computer at home, but on investigation this was actually in a schoolroom on their outstation, and one said that she had access to computers at a Batchelor Institute owned study centre. Four responses were ambiguous.

In subsequent surveys, interviews, and focus groups during the year, students consistently reported that the reason for not doing follow-up work or homework tasks outside of workshops was due to a lack of computer access. From these responses a seeming paradox has emerged. Some students had computers in their workplaces, but could not access these during the work day as they were either being used by someone else or they were involved in their paid work and could not find time to use the computer for study purposes. When they did have time, after work, they did not have the opportunity as the offices were locked and the computers inaccessible. In this sense, access that students had to computers in their communities was often limited to time frames which were unsuitable to them, and for those living in larger centres, computer use at libraries was restricted to half hour bookings, which most students regarded as an insufficient time period for study purposes. In some communities, study centres containing computers were locked and not available for use by people in the community unless a visiting lecturer could provide entry to the centre and support for the students.

It is clear that lack of access to computers within private homes and within the wider community is a critical issue for the Indigenous students participating in this research. The issue was one of access which does not necessarily equate to ownership.

Computers are available but not at the times most suitable for these particular students. From the outset, an integral part of this project was familiarizing students with the use of digital software as students had differing levels of competencies and understanding. For example, some students had not used computers prior to entering into the course, while others had some competence in using a range of technologies, particularly mobile phones and MP3 players. Some students had used digital cameras, while others had not, and none had used digital video cameras and editing software or some of the other tools that were utilised in the project. In essence, for the majority of these students, computer technologies were not a part of their daily lives.

During workshops the students were introduced to a range of computer based tools and skills such as word processing, email and the internet. Students created PowerPoint audio books, used Audacity freeware for voice recording, and learnt how to create short animations using Marvin software. Students researched and created the storyboards for a movie, which they acted, videoed and edited. They also used the Moodle Learner Management System, which they knew as MyLearn, to participate in a range of activities including using wikis, discussions, glossaries as well as accessing audio, video and other resources, tools and activities which were part of the course learning materials. One of the aspects the students particularly liked on the MyLearn site was looking at photos of themselves and other students which had been, taken during workshops. Students could also take their own photos and send them directly to the site via their mobile phone.

The exploration of the opportunities arising from communication based language and literacy learning drove the use of technology. At no point was technology used for its own sake. Technology allowed students to actively engage in language and literacy learning experiences while developing a range of skills which are essential in the knowledge economy. Students could work either independently or as part of a team which in turn developed their creativity and presentation skills. Students overwhelmingly expressed a desire to use computers for study outside of class. This however, contrasted with the actions of most students, with homework participation rates lower than 50% across the research period. The outcomes of the first action research cycle led to slightly changed assessment tasks in the second cycle. The homework activities given to students in the first cycle were optional, in the sense that they were not formally assessed. This may have impacted on student motivation engagement in tasks outside of workshop periods, given the other demands in their lives.

The second action research cycle coincided with Semester Two of the academic year as well as the implementation of a new curriculum. This included the inclusion of several assessment criteria which would make all students' engagement with study outside of the classroom mandatory and assessable. For many students the action research model provided the structure for active involvement in the research process,

and allowed students input into their learning. Many students gained insights into the issues impacting upon their learning processes through focus group discussions and reflective surveys. This insight did not necessarily translate into improved engagement in study and completion of homework tasks for all students as many were not used to this level of input into their learning. It could be argued however, that in some ways the research project provided them with the opportunity to become more reflective learners who were more aware, and in control, of their own learning.

In isolation, the use of technology in this action research project was not enough to make a large difference to student learning and progression. However, the project did make explicit the complexity and range of issues that impact on a student's capacity to progress through the Certificate III in Spoken and Written English. At issue was the juxtaposition between the inherent value that students placed on learning, on study or home-based learning activities, as well as factors that encroached upon their capacity and preparedness to, complete or even attempt, these activities.

All the evidence gathered during the project reinforced the fact that the students were highly motivated by the use of technology in their learning, both inside and outside of the classroom. However, access to computers outside of workshop periods remained an issue, given the lack of home ownership of computers and the restrictions inherent in the use of community computers. Factors that influenced the amount of time that students committed to study outside of workshop periods, as well as student attitudes, motivations and education goals were also impacted upon by work commitments and lifestyle factors such as overcrowding within the home. While this study clearly demonstrates that technology, on its own, is not a solution for improving participation in study outside of workshops, the broad issue of access to computers for Indigenous people living in remote communities requires further examination in light of the increasing importance and possibilities afforded, in Australia and worldwide, by online and mixed mode delivery of educational programs

Canadian Case Study: Good Learning Anywhere program

In Canada, the province of Ontario provides funding for adult literacy programs through the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. There are four streams of adult literacy, Anglophone, Francophone, Native (Indigenous) and Deaf. Approximately 400 literacy organisations are supported by umbrella groups and coalitions to provide free literacy upgrading and employment skills to adult learners in the province. In 2003, one of the Native literacy organisations, the Sioux Hudson Literacy Council (SHLC), became involved in a project to reach learners at a distance.

The Sioux Hudson Literacy Council (SHLC) is located in Sioux Lookout Ontario, a small town approximately 365 km north/northwest of Thunder Bay, Ontario. The SHLC created Good Learning Anywhere to provide online literacy and other

educational courses to the 35 isolated, remote Indigenous communities in Northwestern Ontario who, prior to this initiative, had no access to adult education courses. SHLC created curriculum and delivered courses using the synchronous platform called Centra that is now provided for all literacy agencies in Ontario, through a coordinating centre initially organised for colleges and universities, called Contact North/*Contact Nord*. The Centra platform has a number of tools in the live time classroom setting including the ability to show slides, talk live time with students, provide immediate feedback, initiate website and application sharing and facilitating segregated group work opportunities.

Contact North/*Contact Nord* provides technological resources and support to communities who request the service. Once a request is made by a community, Contact North/*Contact Nord* discusses the courses, and determines the number of community members that would like to enroll. The community is required to provide a rent free space for the equipment. Contact North/*Contact Nord* provides a computer, webcam, microphone, speakers, and an interactive web tablet. A local community member is trained in how to run the small learning site and is employed part time by Contact North/*Contact Nord* to open the centre when students request access in order to take courses.

Internet connectivity has been brought to the communities by a federally funded initiative headed by an organisation called Keewaytinook Okimakanak (KNet). KNet council provides health, education, economic development, employment assistance, legal, public works, finance, research, clean water, cellular, administration and computer communication services to many of the Indigenous communities in Northwestern Ontario. The internet services brought to the north by KNet, provide the means of communication with doctors and specialists for patients in the communities. It also provides an asynchronous high school environment for remote and isolated youth.

SHLC has reached learners in the remote communities in Northwestern Ontario using the existing internet connectivity. SHLC has developed many courses since 2003 which have been created with the idea that students can reach personal goals such as reading to their children, or filling in a job application and creating a resume as well as move on to further education and/or employment goals. Some of the courses have included, Internet for the Terribly Terrified, Pre Graduate Diploma of Education courses, Internet Safety and Security, Literacy and Numeracy Courses. SHLC is currently in partnership with a mining company, providing employment readiness courses to Indigenous learners who are working in the mine setting.

One of the many projects that the SHLC developed was in collaboration with Confederation College. The outcome of this project was a course called Teacher Assistant Career Training (TACT). The TACT program was an eight month workplace readiness program that provided literacy and employability skills to help individuals who lived and worked in Indigenous communities. All of the individuals

in this program were employed in the school system in their community as a teacher's assistant. The TACT program provided a series of eight courses including Child Development , Communication Skills, Exceptionalities, etc., that helped train and provided development for these individuals to be the best they could be in their jobs. A total of 43 students enrolled in this program, of which nearly half completed the first eight month pilot.

The Centra platform initiative, also known as e-Channel, provides opportunities for all literacy learners across Ontario to participate in real time classroom settings at the learner's pace. Access to learning can be from the comfort of their homes or from a supported community setting. This mode of online learning allows Indigenous people to access learning from urban or remote environments. The Good Learning Anywhere project won the Council of the Federation of Literacy Award in 2007 for innovation in literacy practices and later that year was mandated by the provincial government to expand their services to reach all Indigenous adult learners at a distance. There are currently over 800 learners in the program and over 1200 other learners have already accessed the online learning experience. The project was recently funded for another two years of service to Indigenous learners in the province.

What we can learn from each other

Although there are many similarities between Australia and Canada in terms of physical size, history, and the profiles of the Indigenous and non-Indigenous people in each country, the case studies presented show that the two nations have taken different approaches to adult learning and access to these services in Indigenous communities, including language and literacy education and technology in education.

In both countries, there is an education gap between the Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations. Canada however, appears to have greater success in working towards achieving more equitable outcomes. In both Canada and Australia, there is evidence of improved educational outcomes for the whole population over time. In Canada, the gap is closing between Indigenous and non-Indigenous outcomes, whereas in Australia, Indigenous attainment is not keeping up with improved educational outcomes across the whole of the country, resulting in a slight widening of the gap in educational attainment (Cooke et al. 2007). These case studies highlight three main differences in approach in the educational provision to Indigenous people in the Northern Territory and Northwestern Ontario:

1: The Adult Literacy Sector

In Australia, there is no adult literacy sector which encompasses English language, literacy, numeracy and work readiness programs. Such programs have, in the main, been incorporated into the state and territory vocational education and training (VET) sectors as part of the employment focused national training system. On the one hand, this situates literacy and numeracy within the context of vocational training packages, which widens the potential scope and reach of adult language, literacy and numeracy delivery; however, as a result of the embedding of these skills into vocational programs, they have become less visible, and in the Northern Territory, there has been no recognition of the teaching support required for the integration of language, literacy and numeracy within training packages. Language literacy and numeracy outcomes have been identified in most training packages, but the vocational staff who deliver these, are not necessarily skilled in delivering and assessing the language, literacy and numeracy components of the courses.

Furthermore, the primary focus of the VET sector is to achieve vocational outcomes which are widely accepted to stem from training at Certificate III level and above. Indeed, the Council of Australian Governments National Education Agreement has, as one of its five main outcomes, the successful transition from school to work for young people, which is to be measured by "the proportion of 18 to 24 year olds engaged in full-time employment, education or training at or above Certificate III" (COAG 2009 10). This has the effect of marginalising the delivery of lower level programs, which do not have direct employment outcomes. This ignores the social capital outcomes that have been shown to come from participation in adult language, literacy and numeracy programs, as well as the needs of vast numbers of Australian people, including Indigenous people, who, as demonstrated by the findings of the Adult Literacy and Life Skills survey, have low literacy and numeracy levels.

In Canada, adult language, literacy and numeracy and work readiness programs fall within the Adult Literacy Sector of the Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities. The Adult Literacy sector's funding is separate to the vocational education and higher education sectors, and focuses on the delivery of programs to adult learners. The programs developed and delivered are valued independent of employment outcomes.

2: Funding

In Australia the higher education sector is funded by the federal government and the VET sector is funded by the six states and two territories. The federal government provides funding for three enabling programs, the Adult Migrant English Program (AMEP), for migrants and refugees, the Language Literacy and Numeracy Program (LLNP), for registered unemployed, and the Workplace English Language and Literacy (WELL) program. The 2009-10 Federal budget allocated AU$21.6 nationally over four years to the WELL program, which supports workplace based literacy and numeracy projects (Gillard 2009). The LLNP is funded at around AU$70 million a year nationally for 2010-2013; however, the inflexible delivery and funding model, high administrative requirements, and prescriptive hours of attendance, make it unsuitable and unviable for delivery to students in remote Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory. As a reflection of this, neither of the two largest VET providers in the Northern

Territory have tendered for LLNP funding for the 2010-2013 period. An analysis of Commonwealth government Specific Purpose Payments for Indigenous education also found that "not only are poor educational outcomes failing to improve, but the funding for Indigenous education is failing to increase and this is in spite of the solid business case for increased funding" (Lea and Walsh, 2008 50).

In March 2010 the Australian Workforce Futures strategy was released. This strategy recognises 'literacy and numeracy skills […] as fundamental to improved workforce participation, productivity and social inclusion' (Skills Australia 2010 35). The strategy recommends the development and implementation of a national adult literacy and numeracy strategy. This is a welcome initiative; however, not so the additional funding of AU$50million to the LLNP and WELL programs. Additional funding is welcome for adult language, literacy, and numeracy programs, but the assertion that the LLNP program represents a 'successful approach' (Skills Australia, 2010) would be disputed by the major providers of adult literacy and numeracy to Indigenous adults in the Northern Territory.

Within the VET sector in the Northern Territory, there has been an increase in the total amount of vocational funding over the past few years; however, over the past decade funding, which is based on a fixed rate for each hour of delivery conducted, has not kept pace with the costs of delivery, particularly with the increasing cost of educational delivery to remote locations. There is no funding within the VET system that is tied for the delivery of language, literacy or numeracy programs, although accredited courses can be, and are, delivered as part of the VET system. The available funding in the VET system is directed principally towards vocational training programs, at the expense of programs that give people the skills and confidence they need prior to entering those courses.

In Canada, funding for primary, secondary and post-secondary education is a responsibility of the departments or ministries of education in the country's 13 jurisdictions, comprising of ten provinces and three territories (Council of Ministers of Education, Canada 2007). In Ontario, the Ministry of Training Colleges and Universities currently provides C$75 million a year for literacy and basic skills programming in the province of Ontario. In Ontario, there is ongoing consultation with peak Indigenous organisations, such as the Ontario Native Literacy Coalition, with regard the design and implementation of adult literacy programs. Funding for Indigenous adult education programs is distributed to and managed by Indigenous organisations such as the Sioux Hudson Literacy Council. The Canada-Ontario Labour Market Agreement announced in February of 2008, that in each year over the next 6 years, a total of C$34 million annually will be invested in foundation skills training and supports, in order to increase the opportunities for learners to improve their ability to access the labour market.

3: Information and communications technology

In Australia, computer infrastructure to remote Indigenous communities varies from community to community. The federal government National Broadband Network promises $43 billion over 8 years to build a national broadband network servicing every home in Australia (Conway, 2009). This ambitious project aims to link 90% of Australia with an optical fibre network; however, the remaining 10% of homes, those in remote areas of Australia, will be serviced by substantially slower wireless and satellite technologies.

Appropriate infrastructure is critical for Indigenous communities; however, it is only one factor that impacts on access to computer-based learning. There are currently limited, if any, locations within Indigenous communities where people can access computers for the purpose of study. Where there are facilities, in council offices and libraries, computer access is usually restricted to business hours, and the locations are rarely conducive learning environments. For remote Indigenous communities which do have study centres, these are generally locked up when a visiting lecturer is not in the community. Technical support in remote Indigenous communities is rare, and there is limited funding available for purchasing computer hardware and software for students to use in communities. There are no funds provided from within the VET sector for employing and training local staff to manage community based training facilities, or for covering the ongoing costs of access to internet service providers.

The infrastructure and support for online educational provision to adult Indigenous students in Northwestern Ontario is substantially greater than that available to adult students in Indigenous communities in the Northern Territory. This base has enabled the development of a strong online education system in Northwestern Ontario which has opened up a range of educational opportunities for Indigenous people within their own communities.

In Ontario, government funded high speed internet access has been provided to all communities. This infrastructure has been utilised by education providers to deliver a range of programs. Between the years 1975 and 2000, KNet received about C$30 million dollars to develop, maintain and create services on the internet for remote and isolated communities in Northwestern Ontario (University of Guelph, 2000) and the project continues to grow and flourish today. Contact North/*Contact Nord* was established 20 years ago and provides technological support to learners who live in remote and isolated areas, connecting them to literacy, college and university courses.

In late 2007, the Ontario Ministry of Training, Colleges and Universities contracted Contact North/*Contact Nord* to provide e-Channel technology (Centra 7.6) to all Literacy Organisations, Network Umbrella Groups and Provincial Organisations in the province. Contact North/*Contact Nord* continues to receive funding to provide these services. However, despite the technical support provided in setting up for

the Indigenous programs in Northwestern Ontario, as well as the technical support available by phone, online delivery is not all plain sailing. Connectivity was the main problem encountered by students, and 67% of learners in a Sioux Hudson Literacy Council course were faced with computer problems during their studies.

Building for the future

This study indicates that the Indigenous adult learners in Northwestern Ontario are better served in comparison to their counterparts in the Northern Territory of Australia, in terms of access to a learning system that delivers a range of adult literacy courses to remote Indigenous learners. However, this does not override the reality of the vast educational disadvantage experienced by the Indigenous populations, in comparison to the non-Indigenous people, in both Australia and Canada, and the significant gains that need to be achieved in both countries in order to achieve parity in education, employment, health and other socio-economic, outcomes. The disparity is greatest for those Indigenous people living in remote areas, in discrete Indigenous settlements, be they communities, homelands or on reserves.

There are obvious similarities in the needs of Indigenous adult learners in both Australia and Canada, and the differences in the ways that each country has addressed these needs suggests an effort of collaboration be made to bring together literacy practitioners, advocacy groups and policy makers cross nationally to reflect on and reform, where need be, the adult learning approaches in each country. A joint, cross national advisory committee could provide a forum for the discussion of best practices, through to the barriers in literacy learning, and present opportunities to share, learn and perhaps move forward together for the betterment of Indigenous adult learners in both Australia and Canada.

This study, has resulted in further areas to be explored and discussed, including the crucial need for the inclusion of Indigenous Language and Indigenous Knowledge in mainstream educational programs, the development and implementation of ground up approaches to community learning programs, the establishment of local and peer mentoring programs, community technical maintenance support and online instructor training, to name a few.

This paper has outlined two distinctly different experiences of Indigenous adult learning in two very different regions of the world, and in doing so has highlighted the similarities of the profiles and needs of those Indigenous populations, as well as the ongoing challenges that exist in delivering and supporting adult literacy learning at a distance. The authors invite Australian and Canadian literacy practitioners, policy makers and community members, to reflect on and learn from the experiences described herein, and to continue to forge a path to improve adult learning in remote Indigenous communities.

Acknowledgements

(Endnotes)

1 The term Indigenous will be used in this paper to describe the first inhabitants of each country. In an Australian context, the term Indigenous is inclusive of "people who identify or are identified as being of Aboriginal origin" (ABS 2008a, p. 86) and Torres Strait Islander peoples; those people originating from the area "comprising islands in the sea between Cape York and the coast of Papua New Guinea, which make up the 'Torres Strait Indigenous Region" (ABS 2008a, p.98). In the Canadian context, the term Indigenous will replace the general term, Aboriginal or First Nations, which is used to refer to the first inhabitants of North America. In Canada, three groups of Indigenous people are recognised under the Constitution. These are First Nations or North American Indian people, Métis, and Inuit people. First Nations people include those affiliated with a number of North American Indian bands, or groups. The Métis people are 'of mixed North American Indian and European ancestry… [and] have a unique culture that draws on their diverse ancestral origins, such as Scottish, French, Ojibway and Cree' (Statistics Canada 2009a, p.42). The Inuit people are descended from speakers of the Inuktitut language and most live in the northern regions of Canada (Statistics Canada 2009a, p41).

2 The term Indigenous communities will be used to describe both communities and homelands

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What Kind of Policy Matters? Recognition, Redistribution, and Indigenous Health Outcomes in Canada and New Zealand

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Indigenous studies literature has long highlighted the importance of government policies recognising rights to Indigenous self-determination as the key to improving Indigenous outcomes. But while there is evidence that misrecognition stemming from colonisation and systemic discrimination has an impact on health, do we know for sure that policies of self-determination make a difference to Indigenous health? In comparing Indigenous health policies established in both Canada and New Zealand, this paper argues that to date there is very little evidence supporting this claim. The incomplete recognition of Indigenous self-determination is certainly an important factor. In asking whether other kinds of policy do matter to Indigenous health, this paper highlights the importance of regressive and progressive policies of redistribution affecting general access/affordability and income inequality and poverty amongst the entire Canadian and New Zealand populations. These not only mediate any Indigenous-specific health policies implemented but also directly shape Indigenous health outcomes. This does not mean we should abandon recognition-based policies focused on self-determination, as they are important for other reasons. Instead, the paper argues that Fraser's (2003) proposed 'two-dimensional' conception of justice, which accounts for both recognition and redistribution, has value in an Indigenous policy context.

Keywords: *Indigenous Health; Self-determination*

Indigenous studies literature stresses the importance of government policies recognising Indigenous rights to self-determination. In countries where Indigenous peoples have been internally colonised, this usually represents a call for Indigenous jurisdictional authority over matters of direct relevance, made possible through a *shared* governance model at the intra-state level, rather than political and territorial separation. Importantly, such policies of recognition are considered crucial for overcoming not only the shared histories of colonialism and systematic discrimination faced by Indigenous peoples but also their relative socio-economic disadvantage.[1] This belief has been heavily influenced by the

unique empirical findings of the Harvard Project on American Indian Economic Development, which argues a 'nation building' approach focused on developing quality, self-governing political institutions that exhibit 'cultural match' with tribal traditions as more effective than the usual 'jobs and income' approach endorsed by governments wanting to enhance economic development without addressing issues of self-government (Cornell & Kalt 2003a).

Although Cornell and Kalt claim that "[o]ver the last century in the United States, Indigenous self-determination is the only federal policy that has had any broad, positive, sustained impact on Native poverty" (2003 ii), they found that improved socio-economic outcomes do not *necessarily* emerge from policies of self-government or even the superior resources available to some tribes.[2] This suggests that policies of self-determination implemented in other national settings may not replicate the positive gains made in some American Indian communities. The Harvard Project's (2008) core concern has also been on monitoring economic development not health, the focus of this paper, and the evidence that self-government in the United States has improved Indigenous health is mixed (Kunitz 2008; Roubideaux 2009).

This paper explores the role of policy in shaping Indigenous health in two further countries, Canada and New Zealand. Both are former British colonies with Westminster-based parliamentary systems and have made significant steps towards recognising the fundamentally negative impact of colonisation on their respective Indigenous populations. This is important because in Canada the reserve system and institutionally racist policies such as residential schools, the geographical remoteness of many First Nations communities and the differing legal entitlements/jurisdictional responsibilities for 'registered' or 'status Indians' emerging from the 1876 Indian Act are all associated with poor health access and outcomes.[3] In New Zealand, these issues are less relevant but Kunitz (1994) argues that Māori dispossession from all but 5-6% of their original land base and their resulting lack of resources may explain the especially severe and prolonged population collapse following colonisation and their susceptibility to diseases that flourish under conditions of poverty, overcrowding and malnutrition. Dispossession and consequent policies of assimilation have also been associated with 'post-colonial traumatic stress disorder' and many other negative Māori health outcomes (Durie, Milroy & Hunter 2009; Turia 2000).

If the lack of recognition of Indigenous culture, language and political institutions associated with colonisation matters to Indigenous health, it is a natural assumption that policies of recognition, such as those acknowledging Indigenous rights to self-determination, are most likely to improve health outcomes. The first section of this paper puts this assumption to the test, exploring Canada's Indian Health Transfer Policy

(IHTP), which has devolved considerable autonomy and control over primary healthcare to First Nations living on-reserve as part of a formal policy of self-government. It then considers the devolution of funding to Māori health providers, which was part of a competitive, contractual process rather than a policy of self-government. Given these policy differences, the relevant literature is reviewed to assess the relative impact of these policies on Indigenous health over the past two decades.

In finding little evidence that either policy has made a noticeable difference to Indigenous health outcomes, the paper stresses the difficulty of claiming that policies of self-determination are the 'solution', given the complex social realities in which Indigenous peoples live. This is not to say recognition of self-determination rights does not matter, for it remains a crucial component of the politics of recognition necessary to establish a nation-to-nation relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state (Alfred & Corntassel 2005; Fleras & Spoonley 1999). However, colonisation also shaped redistribution, including Indigenous access entitlements and their positioning within the modern economy. In this way, 'indigeneity' is a two-dimensional social division rooted simultaneously in the economic structure *and* the status order of capitalist society, resulting in both maldistribution *and* misrecognition. However, Fraser (2003) notes that neoliberalism has encouraged a false antitheses between redistribution and recognition, each being associated with specific but different social movements. This divide is frequently evident in the Indigenous studies literature, which certainly does not ignore redistributive issues but tends to position maldistribution as an outcome of misrecognition, thus focusing largely on policy options relating to greater acknowledgement of Indigenous self-determination rights (e.g. Alfred & Corntassel 2005; Fleras & Spoonley 1999; Loppie Reading & Wein 2009).

The second and third sections of this paper, however, demonstrate that matters of recognition cannot be separated from those of redistribution. At the same time Indigenous health policies were being introduced in Canada and Māori in New Zealand grasped opportunities made available through contractualism in the 1980s and 1990s, there were significant, anti-redistributive reforms that diminished health access and affordability and increased income inequality and poverty. All are known to have a major impact upon health and are associated with neoliberalism's undermining of the welfare state (Coburn 2000; Wilkinson & Marmot 2003). We must thus account for the political-economic context shaping the lives of *all* Canadians and New Zealanders when explaining Indigenous health outcomes. That certain redistributive policies are also shown to improve Indigenous health where Indigenous-specific policies have not, leads to the conclusion that a politics of recognition alone is unlikely to achieve the goal of health equity between Indigenous and non-Indigenous citizens, although it remains important for other reasons. As such, Fraser's proposed 'two-dimensional' conception of justice, which "treats distribution and recognition as distinct perspectives

on, and dimensions of, justice" (2003 35), encompassing claims of both types without reducing either dimension to the other, may have value in an Indigenous policy context.

Indigenous Health Policies

Although Canada and New Zealand share many similarities, their governments have offered significantly different levels of recognition of Indigenous self-determination, both generally and in the area of health. Some Indigenous peoples may challenge the goal of socio-economic parity with non-Indigenous peoples (Cunningham & Durie 2008), but in assessing the impact of the Indian Health Transfer Policy and the development of Māori health providers on health outcomes reference is made to Figure 1. This provides comparative data relating to: select health outcomes in Canada and New Zealand, both for the total population and for the Indigenous sub-group; the gap between the Indigenous and total population for each health indicator; and whether this gap has increased or decreased over the past two decades. Note that data about the on-reserve First Nations population is available only for 1997 and 2001/2. Figure 1 thus does not present the most recent data for Māori and is limited to only seven indicators where comparable data is available. Other health indicators are discussed where relevant for each country.

Canada: Self-government and the Indian Health Transfer Program Policy

The 1982 Constitutional Amendment Act affirmed the Aboriginal and Treaty rights flowing from the 1763 Royal Proclamation, recognising an inherent right of self-government that was formalised in a policy on Aboriginal self-government in 1995 (Lavoie 2005). Focused on the delegation of federal responsibilities and social services, such as health, to Aboriginal governments, this has offered limited jurisdictional powers compared to those available to American Indian tribes in the United States (Cornell & Kalt 2003b). Nonetheless, since 1979 the explicit goal of federal Indian health policy has been "to achieve an increasing level of health in Indian communities, generated and maintained by the Indian communities themselves" (Health Canada 2000 cited in Lavoie 2005 50). By the 1980s, this policy was equated with the transfer of federal funding and control for primary health care to First Nations communities, many of which already had on-reserve nursing stations or health centres (Lavoie 2004). Plans to deal with off-reserve services and services to Métis and urban Aboriginal peoples virtually disappeared from the national agenda (Lavoie 2005), not surprisingly given the federal responsibility for on-reserve First Nations and the greater difficulty in conceptualising self-government off-reserve (Browne, McDonald & Elliot 2009).

By 2005, 47% of First Nations communities were involved in this devolution process through transfer agreements, while a further 32% had integrated community-based health services contribution agreements offering less discretion over local use of health resources (Lavoie 2005; Smith et al. 2008). The services devolved under the IHTP

are defined by the federal government and include communicable disease control, environmental health and treatment, community health and prevention and alcohol/drug counselling. Only 75 nursing stations offered a comprehensive complement of primary health care services on-reserve in 2002, so most communities were limited to health promotion and prevention, inhibiting their scope for improving Indigenous health outcomes (AFN 2007). The transfer process also excludes non-insured health benefits, social services and mental health services. However, all services chosen by the community have been block funded under a single flexible agreement for a period of three to five years, in an effort to provide stability and overcome jurisdictional barriers (First Nations and Inuit Regional Health Survey National Steering Committee - FNIRHSNSC 1997; Lavoie 2005).

Our ability to assess the impact of the IHTP is limited by surprisingly little comparison between those First Nations communities involved or not with the full IHTP process. A 1991 review did find that health transfer initiatives helped communities establish and control health programs according to cultural, social and health needs but also that health service delivery was further complicated by inadequate and inequitable funding, concerns about the federal government off-loading its fiduciary responsibility onto provincial governments and shifts in federal government enthusiasm (Lavoie 2005; Romanow 2002; Smith et al. 2008). The FNIRHSNSC (1997), however, reports a positive correlation between living in a health transfer community and First Nations individuals rating their access to health services favourably in comparison to other Canadians, even after controlling for factors such as remoteness and community size. While this would suggest the IHPT policy has had a positive effect on health access, 33% of First Nations adults on-reserve still encountered waiting lists which were too long and 18.5% said 'doctor or nurse not available in my area' in 2001/2 (AFN/FNIGC 2007). This may be why 'Aboriginal control of health care services' ranked fourth (at 66%) behind 'information on health-related topics', 'increased funding' and 'better housing' (84-85%) when a First Nations Centre (2003) poll asked First Nations living on or near a reserve what ideas would most improve Aboriginal health.

Figure 1 shows that overall there has been improvement on the long-term health outcomes of life expectancy and infant mortality in the last two decades, although gaps still remain when compared to the total population. Given the preventative and health promotion focus of First Nations health services, however, one might expect the greatest improvements in diseases affected by lifestyle and risky behaviours. Figure 1 nonetheless indicates a worsening of diabetes and obesity prevalence amongst First Nations that far exceeds the total population. In the mid-1990s, both groups has a diabetes prevalence rate of 3% but by 2002/3 total population prevalence had increased only to 5.2%, while amongst First Nations it jumped to 19.7% (HCC 2007; AFN/FNIGC 2007). Figure 1 also indicates that First Nations tuberculosis (TB) rates have

remained relatively steady over the long term, hiding spikes created by outbreaks in specific communities.

	Canada	First Nations	Gap	New Zealand	Māori	Gap
Life expectancy at birth, total population (2001)	78.7	72.9**	5.8	79.6	71.1	**8.5**
Infant mortality (deaths per 1000 live births (2000)	5.3	6.4 **	1.1	5.0 ***	8.1 ***	**3.1**
Diabetes prevalence, self-reported, adults 15+, 2002/3	5.2%	19.7%**	**14.5%**	2.4%****	6.2%	3.8%
Obesity prevalence in adults, age-standardised, 2002-3 #	15%	36%	**21%**	27.4%	42.1%	14.7%
Tuberculosis rate, per 100,000 ##	6.0	61.5	**55.5**	9.8	14.9	5.1
Suicide, age-standardised rate per 100,000 population (2000) ###	12	24	**12**	10.2 ***	16.5	4.3
Self-rated general health, excellent or very good, age-standardised ####	61.4%	73%	**11.6%**	60.6%	50.6%	10%

Fig. 1: Health outcomes in Canada and New Zealand 4

The only compelling evidence that self-government makes a significant difference comes from Chandler and Lalonde (1998), who found a relationship between youth suicide and markers of 'cultural continuity' (such as self-government, control over health and education and having culturally-specific facilities). Over the five years studied, self-governing communities in British Columbia had a suicide rate of 18.2 youth suicides per 100,000 compared to a rate of 121 in other communities. Control over health care services also had a specific effect but the suicide rate fell to zero when all six protective factors were in place. Data from 1993-2000 confirmed these findings

and identified three additional community-level factors associated with decreased rates of suicide: an advanced stage of land claims negotiations; women as the majority of elected officials; and local child protective services (Chandler & Lalonde 2008). Policies promoting self-determination may thus be associated with Aboriginal suicide declining faster than for the total population between 1979-81 and 2000, although mental health is not an area funded through the IHTP and First Nations on-reserve suicide rates remain far higher than those of other Canadians.

New Zealand: Biculturalism, Contracting out and Māori Health Providers

In contrast to Canada, New Zealand governments have made no commitment to provide for Māori self-government. The 1840 Treaty of Waitangi is commonly regarded as the basis for a 'partnership' relationship between Māori and the state and a formal policy of biculturalism has been institutionalised since the 1980s, introducing a Māori 'perspective' to government, Māori involvement in policy development and Māori-led and focused services in some specific policy areas, such as education and health (Durie 1998; Fleras & Spoonley 1999). However, with issues of self-governance usually subordinated to a needs-based focus on the relative socio-economic disadvantage of Māori, there has been no systematic policy of jurisdictional devolution of funding to Māori organisations (Humpage 2006). The Fourth Labour government did use the language of self-determination when promoting the devolution for social service funding to tribal control in 1988 but from 1990 the National government 'mainstreamed' responsibility for all social service delivery, leaving the Ministry of Māori Development with only a policy and monitoring role. However, because mainstream government departments were generally unable to provide the 'culturally appropriate' services required under a policy of biculturalism, Māori service providers were contracted to provide them (Fleras & Spoonley 1999).

The Department of Health was an early leader in implementing this bicultural project yet the development of Māori health providers emerged out of broader health sector reforms aiming to improve consumer choice, market signals, efficiency and responsiveness rather than any specific political impetus. Four new Regional Health Authorities aimed to be quasi-markets, receiving funding from central government to purchase health services for the population of their region from contracted health providers. With a limited number of community-based health centres and health care networks already in existence, many Māori saw the new contractual regime as a significant opportunity to gain greater Māori control and management over health (Cheyne, O'Brien & Belgrave 2008; Durie 1998). The number of Māori health providers increased from 20 in 1993 to 160 by 1995 (Chant 2006); by 2009 there were 240. This included 50 Māori health providers offering first-contact primary health care services, as well as a smaller number providing secondary care services, such as mental health within hospitals (Cunningham & Durie 1999; Minister and Associate Minister of

Health 2006). Not only are these services wider in scope than those provided by First Nations communities but they can also be accessed by *all* Māori, rather than being restricted to those with a specific legal status. However, even accounting for the inadequate and fragmented funding evident in Canada, Lavoie (2004) argues that the IHTP's more stable, single contract funding and closer relationship between the purchaser and provider outperforms the competitive and proposal-driven funding available to Māori providers.

When it comes to the impact they have had on health outcomes, the Ministry of Health (MOH 2004b) notes that Māori providers generally appear to be serving their intended populations and being responsive to their needs, although more recent data suggests their performance is rather mixed (MOH 2009). In 2001/2 more Māori patients were using Māori providers (58.9%) than other community government non-profit organisations (19.4%) or private General Practitioners (GPs, 11.8%). Importantly, over 77% of patients using Māori providers in 2001/2 lived in households from high deprivation. However, in many cases it is difficult to say Māori access overall has improved any more than the general population, with significant declines in the use of emergency departments and an increase in the proportion of Māori men seeing a GP in the previous 12 months between 1996/7 and 2006/7 are seen in the total population. A major *decline* in Māori men going to the GP between 1996/7 and 2002/3 also suggests that changes to primary health care (including improved subsidies) occurring after 2002, rather than the emergence of Māori providers during the 1990s, encouraged more doctor's visits. This helps explain why unmet need for GP services in the previous 12 months declined faster amongst the total population than amongst Māori between 2002/3 and 2006/7 (MOH 2008). Furthermore, although 13.7% of Māori adults had seen a health care worker (mostly a doctor) from a Māori health provider in the last 12 months in 2002/3, *only 5%* said they had wanted or needed but were not able to see a Māori provider in the last 12 months. The most common barriers were 'couldn't get an appointment soon enough or at a suitable time or it was after hours' (33.3%) and 'had no transport to get there' (31.5%) (MOH 2004a).

Figure 1 shows Māori rates of life expectancy and infant mortality are improving, although more slowly than in Canada. These gains are unlikely to be associated with the establishment of Māori health providers, given they focus mostly only on preventative health or health promotion. However, although Māori rates of diabetes prevalence are higher than for the general New Zealand population, Figure 1 shows that they appear to have remained stable since 1996, while total population rates have increased dramatically (Ministry of Social Development - MSD 2009). Diabetes is linked to obesity and Figure 1 shows that increases in adult prevalence of obesity have also slowed amongst Māori but not amongst the total population since 2002/3 (MOH 2004a). It is thus possible that the prevention and promotion messages offered by Māori health

providers may be effective when it comes to chronic diseases, such as diabetes; certainly the gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous rates of diabetes and obesity is much lower in New Zealand than Canada. Yet, as with the total population, the proportion of Māori (reporting 'excellent' or 'very good' health, showed no significant change between 1996/7 and 2006/7 (MOH 2008).

In summary, there is no overwhelming evidence that the development of Indigenous-specific services through the IHTP as part of a broader policy of self-government has improved First Nations on-reserve health outcomes any more than the contractual, mainstream approach to health policy taken in New Zealand. Figure 1 indicates that the gaps between the Indigenous and total population are larger in Canada than New Zealand on five of seven indicators, while the reverse is true twice. Closer analysis reveals that Māori do better than First Nations regarding specific health issues (diabetes, obesity, tuberculosis and suicide) and self-rated perceptions of general health. This finding might result from comparing a largely rural, on-reserve First Nations population with a highly urbanised Māori one, with healthcare is more accessible in urban settings (Loppie Reading & Wein 2009). Yet, when it comes to the long-term indicators of life expectancy and infant mortality, First Nations fare better than Māori. This may possibly stem from the earlier implementation of the IHTP and, given Māori do better on a range of indicators, they may eventually 'catch up' to their First Nations counterparts. However, the next section suggests that policies other than those focused specifically on Indigenous health might provide a better explanation for these differences in long-term outcomes.

Policies Affecting Health Access and Affordability

Indigenous health is shaped not only by particular Indigenous health policies implemented, but also by structural barriers evident within a country's broader health system. In the mid-1980s Canada and New Zealand shared a similarly 'universal' approach to health, although the former was funded through a public health insurance system and was largely a provincial rather than federal jurisdiction, while the latter was funded through general taxation and was a responsibility of central government. These institutional factors shape the differing prevalence of access and affordability barriers to health in each country, as Figure 2 shows using data from Commonwealth Fund Health Surveys from 1998 and 2008. Canada performs poorly compared to New Zealand when it comes to access/coverage issues, while New Zealand does worse regarding the cost of health services. Both have a negative impact on health outcomes (Blakely et al. 2005; Chung and Muntaner 2006; Davis et al. 1994; Macinko, Shi & Starfield 2003). The developments in Indigenous health policy outlined above have thus been mediated by shifts in these health barriers as a result of both regressive and progressive reform (Cheyne O'Brien & Belgrave 2008; Rice & Prince 2000).

Canada: Continuing Access Problems

Given the insurance-based system in Canada, coverage rather than access has been the main focus of policy attention and jurisdictional debate. Provincial governments have primary responsibility for the organisation and delivery of health care services but in the 1970s agreed to ensure health insurance plans covered all 'medically necessary' services provided by hospitals and physicians for least 95% of the population (Rice & Prince 2000). To discourage provinces from allowing physicians and hospitals to charge user fees, the federal government introduced the 1984 Canada Health Act (CHA). It effectively outlawed extra-billing and co-payments, virtually eliminating these practices in the early to mid-1990s. Some provinces created de facto user fees by reducing the range of insured services, but Canada's free and universal health insurance system is largely intact and maintains strong public support (Rice & Prince 2000; Romanow 2002).

After a decade of economic turbulence, the Canadian Assistance Plan, a conditional cost-sharing arrangement for income assistance and social services, was replaced with the Canada Health and Social Transfer in 1995. This saw federal transfers to provinces and territories for health, education and social welfare cut by 25%, leading to highly publicised hospital closures, stress on non-emergency scheduling and provider dissatisfaction, as well as limits on patients' access to higher-cost specialty services (Rice & Prince 2000). Trend data shows a substantial loss of public confidence in Canada with the health system between 1988 and 1998 (Donelan et al. 1999).

The new transfer arrangements also provided no mechanism for natural increases to health spending due to expenditure growth or economic change, making it a highly politicised issue (Baker & Tippin 1999). This is especially so for First Nations; although many reserve communities have primary health care/promotion services, they rely on hospital and specialist care available in their home province as would any other resident. Rationalisation and centralisation of health delivery and administration in many provinces during the 1990s, as well as the funding silos created by jurisdictional debates about responsibility for Aboriginal peoples off-reserve, enhanced barriers to the supply and distribution of health care, even if access to hospital care and prescription drugs improved markedly (Romanow 2002). As noted already, waiting lists and lack of doctor/nurse availability remained significant barriers for First Nation adults on-reserve in 2002/3 but those relating to cost were less so, with only 13.2% naming this as an issue (Loppie Reading & Wein 2009). Figure 2 shows that cost-associated access issues for the total population changed little between 1998 and 2007 and were certainly less problematic than in New Zealand.[5]

With no natural increases to the federal contribution to health, provinces have also cut back on the number and level of services available under the CHA. For dental care, rehabilitation, prescription drugs and other items not covered by the public insurance

system, individuals may take out private insurance or pay for their own costs; these accounted for 12% and 15% of total health expenditure respectively in the mid-2000s (Cumming, Stillman & Poland 2008; Romanow 2002). The federal government's special responsibility for Registered Indians and Inuit means the Non-Insured Health Benefits (NIHB) program functions like an insurance plan for Aboriginal peoples for these non-CHA health benefits, making them available free of charge, regardless of residency or income level. First Nations on-reserve are thus protected to some degree from these costs (Lavoie 2004; Health Canada 2007). However, 'not covered by NIHB' (20%) was a significant barrier to their health access in 2001/2 (Loppie, Reading & Wein 2009).

	Canada		New Zealand	
Access	**1998**	**2007**	**1998**	**2007**
Somewhat/very difficult to get care on nights, weekends, holidays without going to an emergency room	-	66%	-	**48%**
Able to get a same-day appointment	-	22%	-	**53%**
Wait six days or more to get an appointment	-	30%	-	**4%**
Affordability				
No bills for medical services not covered by insurance	**27%**	**21%**	12%	12%
Had serious trouble paying or unable to pay medical bills in past year	**5%**	**4%**	15%	8%
Had medical problem but did not visit doctor because of cost**	**2%**	**4%**	25%	19%

Fig. 2. Health care access and affordability in Canada and New Zealand, 1998 and 2007

The primary care focus of the IHTP and other Aboriginal-focused programs has also been in tension with Canada's health system central and dominant focus on hospitals and medical treatments (Romanow 2002). Since the 2000s, there has been a greater emphasis on timely and effective access (rather than just universal coverage) through improved primary health care, with the 2003 First Ministers' Accord on Health Care aiming to have 50% of residents with access to an appropriate health care provider, 24 hrs a day, 7 days week by 2011. Most efforts focus on improving support for the family physician as the primary care provider (HCC 2005b), but a separate

'Aboriginal' funding envelope was established to help integrate and better coordinate services and resources and improve linkages between primary health care services and social services (Health Canada 2010). These changes sound positive but are very recent. Figure 2 illustrates that in 2007 access remained a significant issue in Canada generally, especially in remote areas.

New Zealand: Improving Affordability

In 1938, New Zealand gained the world's first universal health care system. By the early 1990s, the level of universality had significantly diminished and was further reduced by significant structural reforms, which dramatically reduced public funding and made access more difficult. The 1998 Commonwealth Fund survey recorded the public dissatisfaction with these reforms (Donelan et al. 1999).

However, it was the diminishing affordability of healthcare that caused greatest concern in the 1990s. Traditionally, hospital care was free, while private providers were heavily subsidised to offer primary health care. By the mid-1980s, these subsidies covered less than 10% of the usual adult fee and spiralling health costs led to significant increases in user-charges (Cheyne, O'Brien & Belgrave 2008). Hospital charges were rescinded after public protest but other user-fees and co-payments remained and Community Services and High Use Health Cards, introduced to subsidise low income households and frequent users of primary health services, were heavily under-utilised (Cumming, Stillman & Poland 2009; Davis et al. 1994; Donelan et al. 1999). This created the cost-related access issues highlighted in Figure 2.

Cost was certainly a barrier for Māori, with almost a third in 2001 not filling a prescription or seeing a doctor when they were sick, compared to only 13% of European/Pākehā New Zealanders respectively (Baxter 2002). Māori adults were also twice as likely as non-Māori to have gone without needed care in the past year because of the cost. This is not surprising given in 2001/2 over 60% of Māori patients lived in one of the three most deprived socio-economic deciles, suggesting that primary health care costs were an issue for the majority of Māori. By contrast, there was little disparity between Māori and non-Māori regarding access to emergency care and to specialist accident-related treatment once a referral has been made. In these situations care is dictated by protocol and no regard is made to other factors, such as ability to pay (Jansen & Smith 2006).

Growing evidence of cost as a major barrier to health led to universal subsidies for children under six in 1997, although some practices continued to charge fees. In 2001, the Primary Health Care Strategy further aimed to improve access to primary health care and reduce inequalities. Influenced by an extended family, holistic model developed by Māori health providers, this has placed a significant emphasis on population-based initiatives provided through community-based Primary Health Organisations (PHOs). Developing more rapidly than government anticipated, 91% of the population were enrolled by October 2004, including over three-quarters of Māori and almost 80% of those living in the most deprived areas. Although almost the entire population is now eligible for subsidised primary health care services of some kind, in reality most still pay significant user charges; indeed, in 2005, 17% of health care funding came from this source (Cheyne, O'Brien & Belgrave 2008; Cumming, Stillman & Poland 2009; MOH 2006).

Figure 2 indicates that recent improvements have made healthcare more affordable, even if cost remains a much bigger issue than in Canada. Unmet need due to cost declined significantly and at a faster rate for Māori children (83%) than all New Zealand children (80%) between 1996/7 and 2006/7, although improvement on the same indicator for Māori adults was lower (62%) than for the total population (71%) (Donelan et al. 1999; Schoen et al. 2007). Despite both Māori adults and children being significantly more likely than the total population to report their last visit to the GP was free, 'cost' also remained the top reason for Māori for unmet need for GP services in 2006/7 (MOH 2008). Because Māori health providers are integrated into a mainstream contractual regime and primary health care network, it is difficult to tell whether these improvements are associated with one policy over another. But the focus on primary health has likely helped New Zealand maintain its comparative advantage over Canada regarding health access, as Figure 2 illustrates.

This section has highlighted not only that structural barriers in both the Canadian and New Zealand health systems have significantly shaped the ability of Indigenous peoples to access healthcare, but that these were enhanced by regressive neoliberal reforms in the 1990s. This supports Coburn's (2000) contention that choices made about the health system are linked to the fate of the broader welfare state, which was undermined by neoliberalism. As such, it is extremely difficult to distinguish the impact of the IHTP or Māori providers without considering other important policy changes happening over the same period that reduced/enhanced health access and affordability.

This section has also stressed the importance of governmental recognition of health as a social right to health outcomes: cost is not a significant access issue in Canada, where the CHA largely outlawed user-charges, and this may be one factor shaping the better long-term outcomes of First Nations on-reserve compared to Māori (see Figure 1). However, increased subsidies available through a renewed emphasis on primary healthcare in New Zealand appear to be making a difference, even if Māori still consider cost their biggest access barrier. These findings support the general conclusions emerging from the Commonwealth Fund surveys over some years: universal coverage and access matter; a strong primary care orientation is linked to better access; and financial barriers undermine care (Schoen et al. 2007; Schoen & Osborn 2008).

However, affordability is not the most significant barrier in Canada, where the insurance-based health system, debates about jurisdictional responsibility/funding

and the geographical scale of the country continue to hinder access to health services. Subsidies alone cannot solve these problems of coordination and outreach, particularly for First Nations on-reserve. The SSCSAST (2009) recommended the development of Aboriginal-led regional health authorities funded and supported by federal and provincial funds but there is no evidence that this has been implemented. Although the reinvestment in primary health underway may in time overcome access barriers in Canada, a reluctance to address some of the broader, recognitive issues emerging from colonialism (including the differing legal entitlements and jurisdictional responsibilities regarding Aboriginal peoples), as well as the institutional factors shaping the Canadian health system, could also limit its success in a context where recognition and redistribution are intimately tied.

Policies Affecting Income Inequality and Poverty

Although health access is linked to socio-economic status, evidence suggests that low income also makes an individual less likely to eat nutritious food, exercise, live in a healthy environment and have control over your circumstances. This can lead to poor mental health and increased vulnerability to infection, diabetes, high blood pressure, depression and suicide (Loppie Reading & Wein 2009; Robson 2008). Indeed, the SSCSAST (2009, A1) indicates that fully 50% of the health of the general population can be explained by socio-economic factors, concluding that: "Poverty eradication is the most important determinant of health, because it is through income that other determinants of health are purchased". Controlling for the various dimensions of socio-economic status does not entirely explain their poorer circumstances of Indigenous peoples, but the evidence suggests it *is* an extremely important variable (Blakely et al. 2005; HCC 2005a). Loppie Reading & Wein (2009) argue this is because colonisation, systemic racism and discrimination have denied Aboriginal peoples access to resources and conditions necessary to maximise their socio-economic status.

As such, shifts away from the post-war full employment policies adopted in Canada and New Zealand have had a detrimental impact on First Nations and Māori (Humpage & Craig 2008; Rice & Prince 2000). Neoliberal deregulation of the labour market, privatisation and a tightening of income assistance provisions were all part of the broader political-economic context in which the IHTP and Māori provider developed. They are also associated with broader socio-economic trends in unemployment, income inequality and poverty in both countries, as represented in Figure 3, which are negatively correlated with poor health (Chung & Muntaner 2006; Coburn 2000; Lynch 2000; Macinko, Shi & Starfield 2003; Wilkinson & Pickett 2009). This context is thus crucial to understanding the apparently limited impact of the Indigenous health policies in Canada and New Zealand.

Canada: Incremental Change, Slow Growth in Inequalities

Although Canada first experienced recession in the early 1980s, it was not until the 1990s that significant program cutbacks, downsizing of public sector employees and deregulation began. Provincial labour market deregulation and a shift away from an emphasis on structural unemployment and job creation saw expenditures on active labour market programming drop in real terms and as a proportion of total social expenditures during the 1990s (Boychuk 2004). There was also a growth in part-time or casual work that seldom pays well, but Canada differs from New Zealand in that it saw little change in union density and coverage by collective bargaining between 1980 and 1994 (Navarro, Schmitt & Astudillo 2004). This is one reason incomes have remained significantly higher than in New Zealand (Organisation of Economic Cooperation and Development - OECD 2009).

Figure 3 indicates that unemployment was more stable in Canada than in New Zealand and remained relatively high through the 1990s and into the early 2000s. It also shows that First Nations on-reserve, who were disproportionately located in the blue collar, agricultural and public service sectors hard hit by the reforms, were more sensitive to the economic cycle than Canadians generally, with their unemployment both increasing (to a peak of 33.3% in 1986) and decreasing at faster rates, leaving the First Nations on-reserve unemployment rate around double that of the Canadian population, as it had been in the 1970s (Bernier 1997; Gee & Prus 2000; OECD 2009). Notably, however, unemployment declined more slowly amongst First Nations living on-reserve (28.8% to 24.9%) than off-reserve (24.2% to 14%) over the same period and rates on-reserve remained higher than for First Nations living in other rural areas, suggesting that this phenomenon is not entirely explained by location (AFN 2009; Department of Indian and Northern Development - DIAND 1997).

Given high rates of unemployment, First Nations on-reserve were disproportionately affected when the federal unemployment insurance, established in the 1930s as a contributory program paying a percentage of a worker's previous wages, was replaced in 1996 with Employment Insurance (AFN 2009). Eligibility tightening meant that while 83% of the unemployed were covered during the 1990 recession, only about half that number received assistance in 2008, with the biggest drop in coverage occurring between 1990 and 1997 (Boychuk 2004). This, along with the replacement of the universal Family Allowance and old-age pension by income-tested versions in the 1990s, meant more people were forced to rely on provincial social assistance, particularly after the introduction of the 1995 Canada Health and Social Transfer with its block grants and limited funding growth (Rice & Prince 2000). The replacement rates of such assistance vary substantially, are well below poverty lines and, due to eligibility tightening, diminished from around 19% in 1980s to 12% in 2007 in Canada overall (Baker & Tippin 1999; OECD 2009). Importantly, this decline was partially offset

until 1998 by the expansion of the child tax benefit system (especially for sole parent families) (Frenette, Green, & Milligan 2009).

Prior to recession in the early 1980s, the proportion of First Nations on-reserve receiving income from government transfers had been slowly decreasing, but it jumped dramatically from 37.6% in 1980 to 46% in 1985 and then recovered slightly (to 42.7% by 1990) as the economy improved (AFN 2009). Given both this enhanced economic context and cut backs in social assistance, it comes as no surprise that government transfers as a proportion of total income amongst the total First Nations population dropped from 28.6% in 1995 to 21.8% in 2000, a much greater decrease than seen in the non-Aboriginal population (13.8% to 10.9%) over the same period. Importantly, there was little difference between those living on- and off-reserve (AFN 2009).

Figure 3 illustrates that these work and income policy changes, which were relatively moderate and only introduced after some years of economic downturn in Canada, had a relatively mild effect on income inequality for the total population until the early 2000s: indeed, income inequality *decreased* through to the mid-1990s, despite a strong increase in underlying market income inequality during the economic downturn, as the result of the redistributive tax and transfer policies introduced after 1990. After the mid-1990s, with social assistance becoming less redistributive and tax surcharges on high-income earners reduced, the tax and transfer system could no longer undo the upward trend in underlying market inequality, leading to income inequality slightly above the OECD average in the mid-2000s (Frenette, Green, & Milligan 2009; OECD 2009).

Despite evidence of a significant wage gap between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal peoples in the early 1990s (Bernier 1997; Gee & Prus 2008), there is limited data suggesting this did not radically worsen in this decade (Mueller 2004). Notably, however, there was greater disparity in the distribution of wages *within* the Aboriginal group than among Canadian workers as a whole, even after allowing for demographic differences. In particular, wage dispersion was higher amongst Aboriginal men, those with less education, service sector workers, those reporting exclusively Aboriginal origins rather than mixed origins and those living on-reserve (Bernier 1997; Mueller 2004). Certainly median income increased much more slowly for First Nations on-reserve than off-reserve and the total population between 1995 and 2005 (AFN 2009). Given the poorer health outcomes associated with income inequality, these inter- and intra-group differences help explain the lack of progress made in improving on-reserve health (Wilkinson & Pickett 2009).

When it comes to poverty, Figure 3 also continued to decrease until the mid-1990s (to a low of 9.5%) before increasing to 12% in the mid-2000s. Although higher than the OECD median, poverty was thus a little lower in the mid-2000s than thirty years before. Closer analysis, however, reveals a significant majority (89%) of all households

with children where a single parent is not working and a third (32%) of those with a working parent live in poverty (OECD 2009). In that First Nations on-reserve are disproportionately unemployed and have double the number of single parents than the total population (10.7% in 2006), this lack of material resources may provide some explanation for their poorer health outcomes. However, it is notable that the number of First Nations categorised as having a low income diminished for both unattached individuals and families and at a faster rate than for the non-Aboriginal population between 2000 and 2005. Interestingly, those living rurally saw the largest drop (52.5% down to 43.7%) for individuals and the second largest decline for families (AFN 2009).

Indeed, when it comes to incidence of low income, urban residents are worse off than on-reserve counterparts. This is despite the fact that Cooke, Beavon & McHardy's (2004) Human Development Index (HDI), which combines the key indicators of life expectancy, educational attainment and income, shows improvements have usually been more substantial in the off-reserve First Nations population than on-reserve (AFN 2009).

New Zealand: Rapid Change and Increasing Inequality

Rapid liberalisation of foreign trade, the removal of industry subsidies and import tariffs and the privatisation of major public utilities also saw unemployment rise in New Zealand during the late 1980s and early 1990s. Occupational segregation meant that these shifts disproportionately affected the blue-collar and government sector industries where Māori were over-represented. Māori rates of unemployment were similar to the total population in the 1970s and early 1980s (for example, 5% in 1976) (Blakely et al. 2005; Robson 2008), but 1987 and 1989, one-fifth of the Māori working-age population was made redundant. Māori unemployment rates peaked at 25.4% for Māori in 1992 while European/Pākehā unemployment never rose above 7.9% throughout the recession period (Poata-Smith 2004). Figure 3 shows that, like First Nations on-reserve, Māori are more sensitive to the economic cycle than non-Māori.

For those who still had jobs, average wages decreased and there was growing insecurity as the notion of a 'family wage' to all (male) workers, which had been institutionalised in New Zealand's system of centralised bargaining, was abandoned and the 1991 Employment Contracts Act introduced individual contracts and decimated New Zealand's labour unions (Baker & Tippin 1999). A substantial flattening of the tax system also hit low income earners the hardest (Blakely et al. 2005). Not surprisingly, the income position of households including a Māori adult relative to all households dropped rapidly from 91% in 1988 to 79% in 1992 (Poata-Smith 2004).

Māori and non-Māori inequalities also widened in regards to education and housing during this period, where user-charges and market rentals were introduced. The proportion of Māori receiving a government benefit rose rapidly (to 33% in 2001, compared to only 15% of non-Māori), but income assistance benefits was slashed in 1991

and eligibility further tightened through the 1990s (Blakely et al. 2005). Replacement rates in New Zealand, while remaining far more generous than in Canada, diminished from 31% in the 1980s to 25% in 2007 (OECD 2009). In combination, these reforms had a significant negative impact on New Zealand's median income, which fell for all groups from the late 1980s to 1994, with the exception of the top 10% of income earners. Although median incomes have grown steadily since, they did not return to their 1988 level until 2001 (Perry 2009a).

In addition to poor income growth, Figure 3 shows that income inequality increased rapidly in New Zealand, indeed to a greater extent than any other country in the OECD from the mid-1980s to the mid-1990s, but particularly in the late 1980s (OECD 2009; Poata-Smith 2004). As in Canada, this affected Indigenous communities unevenly. Poata-Smith (2004) argues that Māori tribal corporations, business interests and professionals benefited from the reduction in corporate and personal taxation levels that was achieved through large cuts in welfare expenditure, deregulation of the labour market and the commercialisation of health, housing and education. Certainly, the proportion of Māori households in the income band with less than 80% of the median equivalent disposable income increased significantly between 1986 and 1991, while the proportion with income greater than 150% of the median income *increased* slightly between 1982 and 1996 (especially after 1991). The employment outcomes of the 28% of Māori identifying 'mixed' ethnic origins are closer to those of non-Māori than those indicating 'Māori' as their only ethnic group. This is because the latter tend to be, on average, less educated, older, have lower incomes, represented in more vulnerable occupations and less geographically mobile (Chapple 2000). All of these factors make it likely that the health of 'mixed Māori' will be better than that of 'sole Māori'.

Figure 3 indicates that New Zealand's poverty rates also increased rapidly, from 6.2% (well below the OECD median) in the mid-1980s to 10.8% in the mid-2000s (just above the OECD median). However, there is less poverty (48%) in households with children where a single parent is not working than in Canada (possibly due to New Zealand's higher replacement rates), while those where one parent is working it is about the same (30%). The number of Māori families living in hardship (based on a range of living standards measures) also declined at a faster rate (40% to 32% between 2004 and 2008) than for European/Pākehā (16% to 14%). Given that hardship rates for sole parent beneficiary families remained steady, this decline is attributed to income and childcare subsidies available to low- and middle-income working families from 2004, indicating the importance of policies aiming to provide a decent income for all to Indigenous health (Perry 2009b).

	Canada	First Nations on-reserve trends (compared to non-Aboriginal population)	New Zealand	Māori trends (compared to non-Māori)
Unemployment rate, adults aged 15-64	Decreased 1985-1990 (-2.5%) Increased 1990-1995 (-2.5%) Decreased 1995-2007 (-2.7 to -0.8%)	Increased much faster mid-1970s to early 1990s Decreased faster early 1990s Decreased similarly from mid-1990s to mid-2000s	Increased rapidly 1985-1990 (+7.8%) Decreased slowly 1990-2000 (-1.5 to -0.3%) Decreased 2000-2007 (-2.5%)	Increased faster late 1980s to early 1990s Decreased faster mid-1990s to mid-1990s Increased much faster late 1990s to 2000 Decreased faster in 2000s
Income inequality (gini coefficient)	Decreased slowly mid-1970s to mid-1990s(-0.012) Increased mid-1990s to mid-2000s (+0.038)	Median income increased slower 1995-2005	Increased rapidly mid-1980s to 2000 (+0.068) Decreased slowly 2000 to mid-2000s (-0.004)	Median income decreased faster late 1980s to early 1990s, increased faster mid-1990s and increased slower mid-1990s to mid-2000s
Poverty (50% of median income)	Decreased rapidly mid-1970s to mid-1980s Decreased slowly mid-1980s to mid-1990s (-1.229) Increased mid-1990s to mid-2000 (+2.245)	Proportion on low income decreased faster 2000-2005	Increased rapidly mid-1980s to mid-1990s (+4.600) Decreased slowly since mid-2000s	Proportion living in hardship declined faster 2004-2008

Fig. 3. Socio-economic trends in Canada and New Zealand[6]

These findings demonstrated that economic recession and the neoliberal policies which responded to this in the 1980s and 1990s affected both First Nations and Māori disproportionately when compared to the Canadian and New Zealand total

populations. But Cooke et al. (2007) indicate that these changes affected Māori *more* than their Canadian counterparts. The gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples in both countries decreased by almost the same number of HDI points between 1990/1 and 2000/1 and income gaps between Māori and non-Māori are considerably smaller than between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal Canadians. But Māori did not make any real improvement in income over time, while Aboriginal peoples did. This is the case even though real median incomes for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations fell in both countries between 1990 and 1995.

It is possible that being more highly urbanised and thus integrated into the mainstream labour market meant Māori were more vulnerable to (both positive and negative) economic shifts than First Nations on-reserve. The latter not only receive a greater proportion of their income from government transfers but have a wider range of other income sources, including gaming or extraction royalties and revenue from taxation, as well as being exempt from personal income tax and eligible for subsidised housing (DIAND 1997; SSCSAST 2009). Certainly, the gains made in HDI were steadier (even if lower) for on-reserve First Nations compared to those living off-reserve between 1981 and 2001 (Cooke, Beavon & McHardy 2004). However, the more rapid and radical implementation of neoliberal, anti-redistributive reforms in New Zealand is a more compelling explanation for this difference, as it is for the rapid growth in income inequality and poverty seen there more generally (Baker and Tippin 1999; Poata-Smith 2004). For instance, New Zealand's ranking based on net national income per capita (per head in US$) saw it drop from 7th out of 25 OECD countries in 1971 to 25th out of 31 countries in 2008 (on $21,775). In contrast, Canada dropped only from fourth to fifth ($33,571 in 2008) over the same period (OECD 2009).

Blakely et al. (2005) offer the uneven impact of economic reform as a likely explanation for the diverging Māori/non-Māori mortality trends in the 1980s and 1990s after three decades of convergence between the 1950s and 1970s, as well as a significant worsening of other Māori health indicators like cancer mortality and cardiovascular rates (Robson 2008). There is also evidence of a relationship between wage inequality and infant mortality (Macinko, Shi and Starfield 2003), suggesting that this broader political-economic context is an important factor in explaining poorer performance of Māori regarding the long-term health indicators depicted in Figure 1. Certainly labour market and welfare reforms mediated the implementation of the new Indigenous health policy introduced in Canada and New Zealand, making it difficult to place the blame for a lack of improvement upon Indigenous communities themselves.

Conclusion

In focusing on the role of policy in influencing Indigenous health outcomes in Canada and New Zealand, this paper has argued that although historical policies of colonisation apparently have an enduring, generally negative impact on the health of First Nations on-reserve and Māori in New Zealand, there is no clear evidence that self-determination policies are the answer to improving Indigenous health outcomes. This is possibly because such policies as implemented in Canada do not offer the level of self-determination desired, contain many structural and funding inadequacies and have failed to overcome some of colonial legacies identified in the first section.

However, while acknowledging that health is shaped by a complex range of determinants, this paper has demonstrated that other types of policy *have* had a significant impact on variables we know affect health outcomes. Indigenous citizens were disproportionately and negatively affected when health access/affordability and work/income policies became significantly less redistributive in the 1980s and 1990s in Canada and New Zealand. But there are important variations: Canada's continuing universal health coverage and less rapid and aggressive work/income reforms may help to explain why First Nations on-reserve have better long-term outcomes than Māori. Primary health care reforms in New Zealand, which have revived health as a social right and are deliberately redistributive, also appear to be having some effect on Māori health outcomes. They offer a modern example of 'universal' subsidies that have prioritised Māori as a targeted population groups and acknowledged the importance of Māori social structures without returning to the assimilatory universal policies promoted during the post-war period (Humpage & Craig 2008). New Zealand's income and childcare subsidies for low- and middle-income workers, which are thought to be reducing income inequality and poverty (Perry 2009b), are also a sign that redistributive policies not specifically targeting Indigenous peoples are important to Indigenous wellbeing.

Socio-economic status does *not* account for the entire gap between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples and it has been noted that those identifying solely with a First Nations or Māori identity tend to have worse outcomes than those with 'mixed' origins. This suggests that issues of recognition and identity are still important. But in highlighting significant differences within Canada's and New Zealand's Indigenous populations, this paper suggests that policies of self-determination targeting only one sub-group of Indigenous peoples (such as on-reserve or tribal communities) may be insufficient to improve health outcomes. In Canada, for instance, policies of self-government in urban areas are complex and fraught due to the legacies of the Indian Act and the federal government's fiduciary duties that focus on the on-reserve population (Browne, McDonald & Elliott 2009; Graham & Peters 2002). There is great debate as to whether 'status blind' services are the answer but there are some examples in the Yukon, Northwest Territories and Nunavut, where health services are accessible to all residents regardless of their membership in one or other ethnic community (Romanow 2002). These should be watched closely to see if this 'universal' approach improves Indigenous health outcomes.

Fraser (2003) also notes that affirmative remedies, when applied to maldistribution,

often provoke a backlash of misrecognition. This is certainly true in New Zealand where improving Māori outcomes through the primary health strategy has been far less controversial than policies of recognition, such as guaranteed Māori representation on District Health Boards (Humpage 2006). Given considerable evidence of a link between universal policies and social solidarity (Esping-Andersen 1996), a broader policy focus also provides the room for strategic alliances around redistributive issues. This paper's empirical evidence indicates such alliances may be necessary to wage any significant challenge to neoliberalism and, ultimately, for Indigenous health to be radically improved. It is argued Fraser's (2003) 'two-dimensional' conception of justice offers a possible theoretical basis for this political project.

(Endnotes)

1   See Alfred & Corntassel 2005; Fleras & Spoonley 1999.

2   Through gaming revenue, for example. See Cornell & Kalt 2006.

3   See Health Council of Canada - HCC 2005a; Kirmayer et al. 2007; Labonte 2009; Loppie Reading & Wein 2009.

4   * The 'Canada' and 'New Zealand' columns depict figures for the total population of each country and the 'First Nations' column refers to those living on-reserve unless otherwise specified. The bolded figures represent the largest gap between non-Indigenous and total population figures of the two countries for each indicator. Upwards arrows represent an improvement on that particular indicator in the last two decades, the downwards arrows represent a worsening of outcomes and sideways arrows indicate stable outcomes.

* * First Nations with Registered Indian Status (living on and off-reserve)

*** Figures from 2000-04.

**** Non-Māori rather than the total New Zealand population.

Canadian rates are self-reported for adults over age 18, New Zealand rates are actual for those aged over 15.

Canadian rates from 1999, New Zealand rates from 2002.

New Zealand from 2000-02.

Canada rate from 2001, First Nations rate from 2002, both New Zealand rates from 2006/7. Sources: AFN/FNIGC 2007; Cooke et al. 2007; Crengle 2009; First Nations Centre 2003; HCC 2005a; Kirmayer et al. 2007; Labonte et al. 2009; Ministry of Health 2004a; 2004b; 2006; 2008; Public Health Agency of Canada 2009.

5   *Bolded figures indicate the best outcome of the two countries.* *In 1998, the question was 'did not get needed care because of cost'. Sources: Donelan et al. 1999; Schoen et al. 2007.

6   AFN 2009; MSD 2009; OECD 2009; Perry 2009a; 2009b.

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Towards An Indigenous Grounded Analysis (IGA) Policy Framework as Participatory Constitutional Governance

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Engaging politically with the principles of Indigeneity is neither an option nor expediency. The emergence of Indigenous peoples as prime-time players on the world's political stage attests to the timeliness and relevance in advancing participatory governance. By engaging with the politics and principles of Indigeneity as challenge, resistance, and transformation, this paper theorises the necessity and benefits of an Indigenous grounded analysis (IGA) as policymaking framework. The paper argues that Indigenising policymaking by mainstreaming Indigeneity not only reflects moves toward participatory governance, but also reinforces a commitment to Indigenous models of self-determining autonomy. To put these arguments to the test, the politics of mainstreaming Indigeneity in Aotearoa New Zealand are analysed and assessed within the framework of an emergent Maori-centred policymaking framework. The political implications of an Indigeneity-policy nexus are then applied to the realities of Canada's Indigenous/Aboriginal peoples. Just as a gender- based analysis (GBA) framework is shown to be critical in mainstreaming policymaking along gender lines, so too should the mainstreaming of Indigeneity (or Aboriginality) secure an agenda-setting priority for living together 'postcolonially'. The paper concludes by situating the concept of a rights-based Indigenous grounded analysis (IGA) framework within the broader context of debates over 'Indigenous self-determining autonomy' vs. 'state-determination' as competing constitutional governances.

Indigeneity Agenda as a Policy Paradox

Conflicting narratives contest the politics of Indigeneity[1]. A prevailing narrative is that of poverty and powerlessness. Indigenous peoples[2] worldwide remain structurally excluded and culturally marginalised because of pervasive (neo-) colonialism[3] (Maybury-Lewis 2002; Maaka & Andersen 2006). The systemic discrimination that dominates and controls through inaction, silence, and indifference toward difference generates both misery and marginalisation at individual or group levels (Battiste 2009). Even in seemingly progressive settler societies like Canada and New Zealand, Indigenous peoples continue to endure punishing levels of poverty and disempowerments whose sources (and solutions) are systemic and foundational rather than attitudinal and incidental (Maaka & Fleras 2005). Nevertheless, formal initiatives to abolish systemic barriers and neo-colonialist mindsets by incorporating an Indigenous centred policymaking agenda are rarely theorised or tried.

A sharply different narrative prevails as well. Indigenous peoples are striding across the world's political stage by capitalising on the principles and politics of Indigeneity as catalyst for empowerment and engagement (Cadena & Starn 2007; Pyatt 2007). In a relatively short period of time, Indigenous peoples have managed to achieve all or parts of the following advances: shed the most egregious dimensions of colonialism; recover and articulate their voices; challenge political and public attitudes; secure international support in defence of their claims; enlist international law to prove violations; and propose a specific agenda of Indigenous peoples rights (Xanthaki 2008). As proof, consider the near universal adoption in 2007 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples – not only in transforming the framing of Indigenous peoples from 'victims' to 'actors', but also in reframing the debate from one of 'claims' to that of 'rights' (Gilbert 2006; Barelli 2009) while establishing minimum standards for protection and advancement of these rights (Lightfoot 2008) The politicisation of Indigenous peoples *as peoples with rights* rather than minorities with needs is not without consequences. Indigenous people's politics have catapulted to the forefront in exposing structural tensions between competing constitutional governances, namely, *state determination* versus *Indigenous self determining autonomy*.

Of particular challenge are bridging devices for linking these contested constitutional governances. Inasmuch as Indigenous peoples see themselves as sovereign in their own right, yet sharing sovereignty with society at large, a proposed mainstreaming Indigeneity along Indigenous policymaking lines is both timely and relevant. In contrast to earlier meanings that conflated mainstreaming with one-size-fits-all policy programs, references at present invoke an Indigenous–centred engagement that contests the paradigmatic rules that inform conventional policymaking instead of simply the conventions that follow from these rules. This principled approach toward a more participatory governance acknowledges the need to incorporate Indigenous aspirations and realities into the design, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation of all policies; encourages policymakers to adopt an Indigenous perspective; and promotes the involvement of Indigenous stakeholders in policymaking so that Indigenous peoples' needs and aspirations can migrate from the margins to the centre (see also Hanson 2007; Poole 2008). The centrality of Indigeneity politics in advancing participatory policymaking governance is critical. Without an Indigeneity-driven catalyst to challenge, resist, and transform, there is no foreseeable disruption to those neo-colonial foundational principles whose governance logic continues to impoverish and disempower (Turner & Simpson 2008; Ladner & Dick 2008).

While commitment to mainstreaming Indigeneity by Indigenising policymaking is timely and overdue, reality is not nearly so accommodating. To date, as Will Kymlicka (2009) and others (Council of Europe, 2008) have noted, support is mounting for the principle of gender mainstreaming to ensure policies are proactively evaluated through a gender lens. By contrast, rather than proactively mainstreaming Indigeneity for policymaking purposes, Indigenous perspectives are often activated reactively for 'cooling out' those troublesome politics that threaten to unsettle the constitutional order. Insofar as there appears to be a dearth of initiatives for analysing the politics of Indigenous peoples' policymaking (Chesterton 2008), this paper proposes the necessity and feasibility of an Indigenous-grounded analysis (IGA) as a policymaking framework to offset Eurocentric information-processing biases, while spearheading a move toward an Indigenous self-determining autonomy as a participatory governance framework. The paper also contends that IGA policymaking governance must go beyond design or content. Equally critical is a focus on incorporating multiple Indigenous stakeholders in shaping policy outcomes (Chataway 2004).

In short, three lines of argument are pursued. First, an IGA policy framework is proposed to ensure policymaking is refracted through the prism of an Indigeneity lens; second, an IGA policymaking framework is shown to reflect and reinforce the principles of participatory governance; and third, the logic behind an IGA policy framework bridges the structural tension between state determination and Indigenous models of self determining autonomy as competing constitutional governances. To put these arguments to the test, the politics of Indigeneity in Aotearoa New Zealand are explored to demonstrate advances in constructing a Maori-centred policymaking milieu. An Indigenous-grounded analysis (IGA) framework as policymaking paradigm for Canada's Indigenous peoples is then proposed based on the precedent-setting principles of a gender based analysis (GBA) equivalent. Lastly, the debate over *state determination* versus *Indigenous self determining autonomy* as competing constitutional governance models illustrates the mediating value of mainstreaming Indigeneity within an IGA policymaking framework.

Policymaking Governance 'From Below'

The field of international relations is witnessing a growing trend toward the concept of participatory governance. According to the principle and practices of participatory governance, a more inclusive and democratic form of governance materialises when nongovernmental actors are empowered by the State to make decisions over matters of direct concern to them (Sorensen & Triantafillou 2009; Edwards 2008). Rather than seeing policymaking as acts exclusive to publicly elected rulers over subjects according to preset rules and regulations, a participatory governance model focuses on those cooperative processes involving a plurality of relevant public authorities and private stakeholders. Society is redefined from an object of governance that represents a burden to the government, as Sorensen and Triantafillou (2009) argue, to one of *process* for improving the quality of democratic governance, in large part through the involvement of various interests as knowledgeable and resourceful contributors. In other words, viewed from an engaged governance perspective, policymaking goes beyond political consultation across different domains. More accurately, a participatory governance model involves a constructive engagement and collaborative interaction among a wide variety of both public and private (non-governmental) actors in constructing a more vibrant democratic dynamic (Tommel & Verdun 2009; also Evans et al 2009; O'Flynn 2009).

Clearly, then, policy making itself is a contested concept. To one side are those who see policy as an authoritative problem solving narrative (Colebatch 2005). Policymaking is conceptualised as an artefact involving loosely defined policy makers who exercise their authority through a decision-making model based on a circular process involving issue identification, problem definition, analysis, instrument selection, and consultation, comparison of alternatives, implementation, and evaluation of impact (Howard 2005). A second narrative is grounded in the experiential dimension of overlap, interplay, ambiguity, and conflict. In seeking to democratise policymaking as a general description and normative model, policy is reconceptualised as a process involving a continuous interplay between varied interests and multiple frames of meaning, both inside and outside government circles, with differing perspectives on the identification of the issue, competitive and contestable sources of policy advice, appropriate responses and which voices will prevail, and ambiguous outcomes (Howard 2005). Of particular note is the theme of participation. Non-inner circle stakeholders are recognised as active and equal participants (not just paid advisers to the 'real' authorities) in contesting the insiders' framing of a situation (see also Colebatch 2010).

The meaningful participation of civil society for collaborative policymaking purposes is commendable. But reality has proven a lot trickier. Indigenous peoples continue to be excluded from the policymaking process, including the design, implementation, and evaluation of policies and programs that directly impact on their lives and life chances (UN Workshop 2005). They and their communities are often adversely affected by government policies and programs because of top-down policymaking approaches that gloss over their distinctive visions, ways of life, needs and experiences, and aspirations. Even policies and programs that are specifically targeted toward Indigenous communities may have the effect of intensifying patterns of powerlessness and poverty, eroding any progress toward sustainable development, and further destabilising the social and cultural integrity of first peoples' communities. The consequences of a 'we know what is best for you' policymaking mentality are all too obvious in perpetuating the injustices of a (neo)colonial constitutional order – as aptly described by Rodolfo Stavenhagen:

> The historical inequities and inequalities that led to the dispossession of their human rights and dignity; the genocides, the massacres, the conquests and colonisation, the enslavement and the enforced labour, the land grabs and removals and displacement, the kidnapping of men, women, and children, the incarceration, the policies of assimilation, the racism and the denial of their humanity, the criminalisation of their protests and resistance. (2009 2)

These injustices are so deeply embedded in the organisation and functioning of modern societies that their effects continue to systemically bias people's lives and life chances. And yet, despite reforms to remove the most egregious abuses, a Eurocentric constitutional order is likely to persist without an inclusive Indigenous policymaking paradigm that incorporates ('mainstreams') the experiential knowledge and inherent rights of Indigenous peoples.

A critique of conventional policymaking is predicated on simple yet powerful premise. Neither policy nor policy making are neutral or value free. Rather they are socially constructed conventions infused with dominant values, Eurocentric ideals, institutionalised biases, and vested interests. So firmly embedded are racialised notions about what is normal, desirable, or acceptable with respect to policymaking (from design and underlying assumptions to priorities and process) that policymakers are rarely aware of the systemic consequences that privilege some, disempower others (Wallis and Fleras 2008). Even evidence-based policymaking may prove systemically biasing, especially when an uncritical commitment to 'objectivity' bolsters white Eurocentricity as the norm, while discrediting the legitimacy of Indigenous people's knowledge and ways of knowing (also Kowal 2008). In challenging the myth of value neutral policy[4] the Kungarakany and First Australian scholar, Steve Larkin, bristles with indignation when referring to the

> systematic and racialised denial of Indigenous sovereignty in evidence-based processes of thinking about/doing things differently, and how things might be different from the way they are-how Indigenous issues are problematised and subsequently converted into discrete programs. White policy-makers and researchers need to become vigilant to how

their whiteness shapes the production of research knowledge and their interpretation of what gets to count as evidence when considering Indigenous health policy. (2007 178)

The conclusion seems inescapable; in that settler/Eurocentric values continue to inform policy assumptions and processes (see Peters & Walker 2005), the principles of an Indigenous-centred policymaking framework in advancing postcolonial constitutional governance are both necessary and overdue. This shift in policymaking focus from top-down to 'from below' is clearly consistent with related United Nations conventions. The promotion of collaborative policy frameworks for democratising participation reflects a human rights approach to policymaking (see also UN Workshop 2005). A participatory governance model also acknowledges the centrality of Indigeneity to successful policymaking, including the involvement of Indigenous peoples as partners in shaping both the process and outcomes. Not surprisingly, the UN Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues has long promoted the participatory policymaking principles of free prior and informed consent in all policy matters of concern to Indigenous communities. Articles 18 and 19 of the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) confirm this broader embrace of an Indigeneity agenda by reinforcing the priority of free prior and informed consent for a participatory policymaking governance.

> **Article 18** Indigenous peoples have the right to participate in decision-making in matters which would affect their rights, through representatives chosen by themselves in accordance with their own procedures, as well as to maintain and develop their own Indigenous decision-making institutions. UNDRIP Sept 13, 2007

> **Article 19** States shall consult and cooperate in good faith with the Indigenous peoples concerned through their own representative institutions in order to obtain their free prior and informed consent before adopting and implementing legislative or administrative measures that may affect them. UNDRIP Sept 13, 2007

In short, the world's Indigenous peoples may be among the poorest and most vulnerable sectors of society. They are also in the vanguard of re-constitutionalising their relational status in society through struggles to preserve their communities, improve their socioeconomic status, retain or regain their rights and resources, and rebuild their nationhood along Indigeneity lines (Maaka & Andersen 2006; Anderson and Barnett 2006). In response to surges in Indigenous peoples politics to challenge, resist, and transform, the politics of policymaking in Aotearoa New Zealand or Canada have shifted accordingly, at least in theory if not always in practice. Rather than rejecting Indigenous claims to land and nationhood as once the case, what has emerged instead are protocols for negotiating Indigenous rights on grounds that acknowledging these rights is less of a 'cost' and more of a capacity building 'benefit' for 'relations repair' (Coates & McHugh 1998). Equally noticeable is a gradual shift

from 'top-down' governance mentality to one more consistent with the principles and practices of participatory governance. The implications of this 'bottom-up' turn are reflected in a growing commitment to partner with Indigenous communities in the hopes of constructively engaging Indigenous peoples as co-participants. A commitment to participatory governance also portends the making of a postcolonial constitutional order for mediating the structural tensions between state determination and Indigenous models of self determining autonomy as competing constitutional governances.

Indigeneity as Policy Agenda in Aotearoa New Zealand

Participatory governance models in Aotearoa New Zealand are driven by the politics of Indigeneity (Fleras & Spoonley 1999; Durie 2005; Smith 2007; O'Sullivan 2008). Indigeneity politics have proven pivotal in securing a Maori-centred perspective not only at the political level but also in the design and implementation of policy and programs. To be sure, the New Zealand state has been slow at times in acknowledging the primacy of Maori Indigeneity in accelerating a bi-national governance arrangement (Fleras 2009). Government legislation to reassert Crown ownership of the foreshore and seabed by removing the Maori Land Court' right to investigate Maori customary title over such areas reinforced the ingrained colonialism in New Zealand (Submissions 2005) - despite the politicisation of Article 2 Treaty rights (Maori version) that guaranteed Maori rights to self determining autonomy ('te tino rangatiratanga') over treasured resources, including involvement/consultation involving Crown policies and decision making process (van Meijl 2009). Much of the reticence for not moving too quickly reflects a political unwillingness to provoke public anger over perceived Maori privilege in violating the meritocratic principle of equality and fairness (Durie 2004).

The Crown however, has proven progressive at other times. However much maligned by critics, Maori policy development is increasingly informed by a commitment to Indigeneity (tino rangatiratanga) as a principled and participatory approach to re-constitutionalising Maori-Crown governance. According to Linda Tuhiwai Smith in Cadena and Starn the benefits of participatory governance are mutually reinforcing:

> What Maori communities have learned is that engagement in these processes can influence some of what happens and more about how it happens. They have also learned that their own good ideas are actually needed by policy because policy makers do not have all the answers themselves and actually struggle with many aspects of implementation. In regards to Maori, many policy makers tended to have very little idea about who Maori people were and hence worked off their own stereotypes, where and how they lived, and what challenges they faced on a daily basis. Many policy makers would have little ideas as to the level of disadvantage experienced by many Maori people in New Zealand society. (2007 348)

Four policy making catalysts underpin a participatory governance model. In

mainstreaming Maori Indigeneity as policymaking lens, they include: (a) an advisory and advocacy body with policymaking influence to review Maori affairs legislation (Te Puni Kokiri); (b) sectoral reforms including a participatory health governance framework; (c) a Maori presence in Parliament (including seven guaranteed seats, Maori lists in a Mixed Member Proportional systems, and emergence of a Maori Party); and (d) a commission of inquiry (Waitangi Tribunal) for 'righting historical wrongs' over Crown breaches to Treaty principles.[5]

Te Puni Kokiri (TPK)

TPK or the Ministry of Maori Development was established in 1992 under the Ministry of Maori Development Act 1991. Its primary objectives were two-fold: (a) to improve Maori socioeconomic development; (b) to monitor and liaise with other government departments to ensure adequate levels of services for Maori. With mainstreaming as the basis for government policy, the direct delivery of programs to Maori was rerouted through mainstream agencies rather than through specific government department like the Maori Affairs Department (Levy 1999). As an integrated policy Ministry that advocates on behalf of Maori and Maori 'iwi' (regional tribes) and 'hapu' (local tribes), TPK serves as liaison with other government agencies for improving Maori outcomes through more responsive mainstream institutions and services. For example, its Maori Health Strategy (*He Korowai Oranga)* provides a framework for the public sector to take responsibility for the part it plays in supporting the status of *whanau* ('family') health. In addition, its mandate as instrument of Maori development strategically positions TPK to bolster the prospect of Maori succeeding as Maori by aspiring to a sustainable level of success as individuals, in organisations, and as collectivities. The current *Realising Maori Potential* program is predicated on the premise that significant Maori potential exists at individual and community levels, thus better positioning Maori to build upon and leverage off their collective resources, knowledge, skills and leadership capabilities (TPK 2008).

TPK also represents a principal advisor on Crown relationship with Maori hapu and iwi, in part by advising government on policy affecting Maori well being and development, in part by monitoring policy and legislation to harness collective Maori talents to produce a stronger New Zealand, in part by partnering Maori investment to advance Maori potential. In other words, with Maori in charge, a new governance model has emerged. Instead of *delivering* government policies as was the case in the past, TPK is in the business of *designing* policy advice to the Minister of Maori Affairs. As a case in point, TPK has developed guidelines for Ministers and officials to fly the national Maori flag (On December 14, 2009, Cabinet recognised the national Maori (Tino Rangatiratanga) flag as a complement to the New Zealand flag on buildings and other sites of national significance on Waitangi Day (February 6th). In bolstering its policymaking mandate by broadening its scope and reach, TPK also maintains interactive links with Maori iwi, hapu, and whanau ('extended family') through a network of ten regional offices.

WOHIA- Participatory Heath Governance

The establishment of Whanau Ora Health Impact Assessment tool (WOHIA) reflects the emergence of Maori-centred policy framework (Ministry of Health 2007). In contrast to the past when policy makers lacked the requisite tools to identify policy impacts on Maori health, much less to incorporate these trajectories into the policy making process, a commitment to WOHIA provides a culturally sensitive methodology ('tool') for identifying the potential health impact of government policies and sectoral programs. WOHIA operates on the premise that public policies of benefit to the general population can generate unintended negative effects by inadvertently intensifying disparities on Maori health and wellbeing (Public Health Advisory Committee 2007). In taking steps to indigenize Maori health outcomes, WOHIA empowers policy makers with a checklist of questions pertaining to screening (what needs doing), scoping (identify key issues pertaining to health determinants), appraisal, and evaluation.

WOHIA's commitment to participatory governance is unmistakable. Mindful that health impacts should be an explicit consideration in the design, implementation, and evaluation of all public policies, WOHIA encourages the input from a range of stakeholders, on grounds that health is largely determined by decisions across many sectors. In addition to intersectoral collaboration and community involvement, Maori participation is actively solicited along each of these policymaking levels to ensure (a) health needs as identified by Maori including a spiritual dimension and cultural focus and (b) involvement of Maori stakeholders in attending to their health priorities, alongside a corresponding course of action *for advancing Maori specific outcomes and indicators rather than upholding generic ideals* (Durie et al 2002; Durie 1998, 2004, 2008).

Maori Parliamentary Seats and the Maori Party

Maori constitute one of the few peoples in the world with a guaranteed Parliamentary presence (Geddis 2007; Joseph 2008). The establishment of four separate Maori electorates in 1867 originated for a variety of reasons, ranging from the calculating to the expedient. The arrangement was intended to last five years or until the Maori land Court converted communal Maori land tenure into individual freehold, thus entitling Maori to enfranchisement under standard property owning qualifications (Joseph 2008). The political quo remained largely intact until the introduction of Mixed Member Proportional in 1996. Under MMP, the number of dedicated Maori seats was allowed to rise to seven (based an influx of Maori voters to the Maori roll rather than the General roll). As well, a significant number of Maori have appeared as party list members whose placement is based on the proportion of popular vote captured by each political party. The end result is a formidable Maori presence in Parliament.

In the 2008 elections, a total of 22 seats in a 121 strong Parliament were held by self-identified Maori, thus accounting for about 19 percent of the total in contrast to their proportion (around 15 %) of the total population.

A Maori Party has sat in Parliament since the exodus of Labour's Maori MPs in 2005. Controversy over a Labour government ruling that pre-empted Maori from exercising the right to claim ownership of the seabeds and foreshore resulted in a split from the Labour ranks. As a party for, about, and by Maori, the goal of the Maori Party is "to achieve self determination for whanau, hapu, and iwi within their own land, to bolster a strong, united, and independent voice, and live according to kaupapa and tikanga handed down by ancestors "(Maori Party 2008). In the 2005 election, the Maori Party won four of the seven Labour-locked Maori seats, including 2.19 percent of the national vote. In 2008, the Maori Party increased its popular vote to 2.39 percent, in addition to capturing another seat from Labour, thus anchoring an independent and powerful Maori voice in Parliament (Winiata 2007). With the support of the Maori Party, the National Party formed the government, and then promptly rewarded the co-leader of its coalition partner with two cabinet positions, including the Minister of Maori Affairs portfolio (Pita Sharples) and Minister for Community and Voluntary Sector (Tania Turia).

Waitangi Tribunal: Treaty Principles for Policymaking

A restitution process is currently in place to compensate Maori peoples for historical wrongs. In securing a basis for resolving long standing Maori grievances in a principled way, the Labour government established the Waitangi Tribunal in 1975 as a Commission of Inquiry to (a) make recommendations on claims to past and present breaches to Treaty principles (b) consider which Crown actions disagreed with Treaty principles and (c) determine the "meaning and effect" of the Treaty by negotiating the differences between the English and Maori language versions. Somewhat akin to a 'truth and reconciliation' forum in function (Waitangi Tribunal 2006), this permanent commission of inquiry registers Maori claims or grievances over Crown breaches to the Treaty of Waitangi, processes them through a public forum that tests these claims for legitimacy and validity, publishes reports on the accuracy of the claims, and proposes solutions for righting Crown wrongs. Admittedly, its recommendations are neither binding (except in rare cases) nor do they have any legal standing in ruling on points of law over the return of land. Still, these recommendations provide input in mainstreaming the government's Maori policy and Treaty settlements in ways scarcely conceivable even a generation ago.

In addition to ruling on specific Maori claims, the Tribunal is charged with the responsibility of formulating the principles for living together differently. The Tribunal's mandate rests in looking beyond strict legalities or literal interpretations. Its mission lies in a reading 'between the lines' of the Treaty, so to speak, in hopes of harmonising the creative tension between the English version (with its *kawanatanga* ('governorship') commitment to state determination) and Maori versions (with their *tino rangatiratanga* ('chiefly') focus on Indigenous self determining autonomy) (Maaka and Fleras 2008). Differences in Maori and English texts when applied to a Treaty reading of specific circumstances have generated four Treaty principles for navigating the policy domain:

- *The Overarching (Reciprocity-Exchange) Principle.* According to the overarching principle, Maori ceded de jure sovereignty over the land ('kawanatanga') in exchange for reciprocal Crown guarantees of Maori self determining autonomy (de facto sovereignty or tino rangatiratanga') over land, resources, and 'things Maori'.
- *The Principle of Partnership:* According to the partnership principles, Maori tribes and the Crown (or more generally, Pakeha) must be seen as equal partners - that is, co-signatories to a political covenant - whose partnership is constructed around the sharing of power, resources, and privileges.
- *The Principle of Active Protection* The Crown has a duty to actively protect by way of positive action Maori rangatiratanga (self determining autonomy) rights as set out in Article Two.
- *The Principle of Autonomy* Reference to self determining autonomy by way of tino rangatiratanga secures the ground for Maori control over domestic affairs though political arrangements that sharply curtail state jurisdiction while solidifying Maori control over land, identity, and political voice.

Summary: The evidence seems inescapable, albeit subject to debate and resistance. Thanks to the politics of Maori Indigeneity, New Zealand is cresting the wave of a transformational tsunami from within – at least in theory if not always in practice. Participatory constitutional governance is taking shape along several fronts: To one side are those Treaty principles that secure the mainstreaming of Maori Indigeneity as policymaking lens. To the other side is the emergence of numerous stakeholders in Indigenising the policymaking process, including a powerful Maori dynamic in Parliament, the policy advisory platform of TPK, and the Waitangi Tribunal in crafting principles to live by. To still another side is the emergence of a participatory governance commitment with the potential to resolve the tension between state determination and Maori models of self determining autonomy as competing constitutional orders. Of course, no is boasting that New Zealand has discarded those Eurocentric foundational principles that continue to inform and secure a neo-colonial constitutional order. Nevertheless, a post colonising process is in progress (albeit a far from finished project) that promises to fundamentally realign the constitutionality of Maori-Crown governance (Johnson 2008).

Indigenising Aboriginal Policymaking in Canada

to reveal the inescapable reality that Canada and especially the United States could not exist in their present form if it wasn't for the harshly successful application of some of the most expansive, methodical, and enduring operations of ethnic cleansing the world has ever seen…This transformation of a vast, pluralistic Indian Country into a Europeanised adjunct of so called Western civilisation was realised not only through outright killing or displacing Indigenous North American peoples, but also in subjecting their Aboriginal territories to alien laws, alien economics, and alien languages. (Anthony Hall 1993)

Are the politics of Indigeneity situation specific or able to be generalised? Can the Aotearoan insights of New Zealand be applied to Canada's 'policyscape'(Helin 2007; Quesnel 2008)? How feasible is an Indigenous Maori perspective for policymaking in a Canada that lacks comparable power brokers within policymaking circles? Consisting of the different tribes of varying and fluid sizes, Maori constitute about 16 percent of New Zealand's population of 4 million, with the vast majority (about 83 percent) living in larger urban centres without necessarily abrogating linkages with their rural-tribal connections. Unlike Aboriginal peoples in Canada, Maori neither entered into land-for-benefits treaties (like the numbered treaties in Canada) nor experienced the realities of an imposed reserve regime or a centralised registration system. These differences complicate the process of making comparisons; after all, what works in one jurisdiction may flop in another.

Yet differences are not the same as incompatibilities. Like Aboriginal peoples in Canada, the status of Maori in general reflect similar patterns of poverty and powerlessness, largely because of the institutional and systemic biases that inform a neo-colonial constitutional order (Long & Dickason 2000; Belanger 2008). Moreover, Canada like New Zealand is also in a position to endorse an Indigenous-grounded analysis framework because of (a) Indigeneity politics, (b) a Crown duty to consult, (c) recognition of Aboriginal and Treaty rights in Section 35 of the Constitution Act, and (d) a precedent that already exists within government circles. In that the existence of a gender based analysis (GBA) framework provides a template for an Indigeneity grounded analysis (IGA) framework as a principled prism for policymaking, there is room for optimism in mainstreaming Indigeneity as basis for participatory policymaking governance.

Gender Based Analysis (GBA) as Policy Making Agenda

In 1995 the Government of Canada responded to external challenges by fostering a policymaking commitment to gender equality. GBA emerged as an action plan that compelled federal departments and agencies to conduct an impact assessment involving policies and legislation (where appropriate) of relevance to women (NWAC 2007). A GBA refers to those systematic procedures to detect and correct systemic biases across the full range of government policies and programs ('mainstreaming'), thus ensuring

that women have a key role in designing and coordinating meaningful and inclusive participation in line with the principles of democratic and participatory governance (Osborne et al 2008). By acknowledging significant differences between and within men and women - in effect recognising that policy cannot be divorced from the social context - GBA proposes to examine existing and proposed policies to ensure they are having an intended effect and producing fair results (Annual Report, Immigration, 2008). Insofar as GBA is proactively applied along all points of the policy making process rather than a reactive add-on after the fact, it focuses on outcomes and outlooks as well as concepts and language to justify putting gender back into the big picture. In brief, by assessing the potentially different impact of proposed policies on women and men, then responding with options and strategies, GBA provides gender-sensitive tool for policy development.

Health Canada (2000) formally incorporated the principles of GBA across the board. A GBA framework in health sought to understand and correct how policy and programs biases within the health care system impacted on the health of women (and men). With implementation of a dual-track GBA (one centred on women, the other on gender differences) to improve health impacts for women and men, Health Canada embarked on a principled approach for developing policies, programs, and legislation; conducting research and data collection; and day to day planning and operations in the hopes of identifying those conditions, inequities, and experiences that affect women's health status and their access to, and interaction with, the health system.

For example, consider the case of gendered clinical trials. Prior to approval of a new drug in Canada, manufacturers must scientifically prove its safety through clinical trials. Yet, historically, clinical trials tended to incorporate only men, with results uncritically applied to women. Women were excluded in part to avoid risks, in part because of research complications related to reproductive biology. This omission (or methodological bias) not only put women at risk by virtue of generalising male-only findings to women. A gender bias was also exposed in the approval of new drugs through the uncritical incorporation of male bodies as the tacitly assumed norm for measuring health research and treatment options. To offset any gendered ('systemic') bias against women's unique experiences and biological uniqueness, Health Canada (2000) now insists on the inclusion of both genders in clinical trials (unless the drug is intended for one gender only), in the process securing both a better science and safer treatment.

The Permanent Forum on Indigenous Issues endorses incorporating the concerns, experiences, and participation of Indigenous women in creating inclusive policymaking governance. But Aboriginal groups have shown a lukewarm reaction to GBA as currently formulated. Aboriginal women have argued that, by ignoring the legacy and impact of colonialism, a GBA framework fails to address their needs or the realities of Canada's Indigenous peoples. This omission not only omits how gender impacts

on Indigenous identities (and vice versa), but also glosses over those policymaking frameworks that reflect, reinforce, and advance existing neo-colonial structures (AWHHRG 2007). Promoted instead is a cultural relevant GBA that acknowledges the legacy and impact of (neo) colonialism on Aboriginal women:

> In Canada, Aboriginal women and girls experience extreme marginalisation an suffer from inequalities related to their social, economic, cultural, political, and civil rights that breed violence, such as post colonial structural inequalities, family violence, racialised and sexualised violence, gendered violence, poverty, lack of access to adequate housing, including the lack of access to matrimonial property rights, lack of access to justice, low education and employment rates, low health status, and little or no political participation. (NWAC 20074)

According to the Native Women's Association of Canada (2007), the tenets of CRGBA are Aboriginal rather than gender specific per se. They include: to identify the unique needs, perspectives, and rights of Aboriginal women, to ensure protection and advancement of their collective and individual human rights to gender equality, and to impress on central authorities the necessity of a culturally relevant GBA in all socioeconomic and political policy development. The emergence of a CRGBA may prove the catalyst in constructing participatory policymaking governance along Aboriginal peoples' lines.

Towards an Indigenous Grounded Analysis (IGA) Policymaking Framework

Pressure is mounting to dislodge the primacy of Eurocentric policy models as grounds for framing Aboriginal peoples–Canada relations. Just as a GBA model represents a principled way for neutralising the gendered basis of policymaking, so too should central authorities discard the Eurocentric policymaking conventions by endorsing an Indigenous grounded analysis (IGA) model for Indigenising policymaking along similar lines (Health Canada 2000).[6] A more flexible and principled approach is advocated that emphasizes negotiation over litigation, engagement over entitlement, relationships over rights, interdependence over opposition, co-operation over competition, reconciliation over restitution, and power-sharing over power conflict (Maaka and Fleras 2005). Several innovative routes have evolved for improving Indigenous peoples–state relations, including indigenisation of policy and administration, devolution of power, and decentralisation of service delivery structures. Of particular salience to participatory policymaking governance are the politics of Aboriginality – including the core rubrics of partnership, power sharing, and meaningful participation.

The rationale underlying an IGA policymaking framework is anchored in the bedrock principle of a duty to consult and accommodate. The UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples stipulates the necessity for free, prior and informed consent of Indigenous stakeholders when introducing or implementing legislative,

policy, and administrative measures that involve any development affecting traditional lands and resources or that impact on the health and wellbeing of Indigenous communities (also UN Workshop 2005). As well, both the Federal and provincial governments in Canada are under obligation, that is, they have a legal and constitutional duty, to consult and accommodate in a timely manner and in good faith cases where Aboriginal rights and title have not yet been extinguished. The legal duty to consult arises from Section 35(1) of the 1982 Constitution Act whose protective clause not only guarantees Aboriginal rights, but also seeks to reconcile Aboriginal societies with the sovereignty of the Crown as competing constitutional governances.

A commitment to the IGA principles of participatory governance provides a possible resolution. To ensure that Crown decisions do not constitute a unilateral exercise in absolute authority but are informed by Aboriginal priorities, realities, and experiences, a duty to consult and accommodate constitutes an enforceable legal principle for facilitating a reconciliation (relations repair) between Aboriginal people and the Crown. The courts have also ruled that both First Nations and Métis communities are reciprocally obliged to participate in the consultation process to secure mutually satisfying solutions. Government funds have been allocated specifically for this purpose. In Saskatchewan, for example, a $2 million Consultation Participation Fund exists to facilitate both First Nations and Métis participation in the consultations (Morellato 2008; Saskatchewan Ministry of Municipal Affairs 2007; Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations 2006).

The principle of a duty to consult and accommodate is taking practical effect. Consider the recent decision by the Walpole Island First Nations to pass its own Consultation and Accommodation Protocol in hopes of incorporating culture, environmental respect, and certainty into all government policymaking and industry development across its territory (Press Release October 27, 2009). The territory of WIFN encompasses Sarnia and related areas that sit downstream and downwind of the pollutants from Chemical Valley– widely regarded as one of the most industrialised and toxic risk zones across Canada. The Protocol lays out what WIFN expects from government policy decisions that impact on their homeland while clarifying the practical steps that companies must take if they intend to conduct business with them. The preamble makes this abundantly clear:

> Purpose and Application: The Protocol sets out Walpole Island First Nation's (WIFN's) rules, under its laws and its understanding of respectful application of Canadian law, for the process and principles for consultation and accommodation between WIFN, the Crown and Proponents, about any Activity that is proposed to occur in WIFN's Traditional Territory or that might cause an Impact to the Environment or Health therein or WIFN rights. WIFN expects the Crown and Proponents to respect this Protocol in all such interactions with WIFN.

In defending the legitimacy of this duty to consult and accommodate, the Protocol touts its value for assisting the government and industry do the right thing by respecting WIFN rights and land, in addition to advancing positive relation-building by mainstreaming Indigenous law and custom with those of non Aboriginal neighbours.

To date, many of the moves toward participatory governance entail a bureaucratic/managerial exercise in offloading government responsibility to Indigenous communities, with minimal transfer of power or authority (Posluns 2007). Nevertheless, the potential is significant. Indigenous-grounded policies not only work toward alleviating alienation and marginality; they also enhance the participation of Indigenous peoples in the policy process, thus providing firsthand knowledge of the complexities associated with policymaking (see also Karim 2009). Non Aboriginal Canadians are also better informed. While countless articles have documented the impact of colonialism and public policy on Indigenous peoples, few have explored the impact and implications of 'Aboriginality' (or Indigeneity) on public discourse and policy development in Canada and abroad – including debates that question colonial interpretations of Canadian history, challenge conventional notions of truth or wisdom (or Eurocentric intellectual imperialism (Asante et al 2008); insist on adjustments in settler thought and ways of thinking; bring Aboriginal perspectives to bear on cultural institutions, political governance and policy decision making, and evolving constitutional orders, and promote the virtues and benefits of collaboration and co management (Timpson 2009). The benefits of an IGA policymaking framework can be summarised as follows:

- Acknowledges the value of democratising the full participation of Indigenous peoples in decision making in matters of concern to them.
- Recognizes the legitimacy of and equal weight to Indigenous people's knowledge and values, experiences and aspirations.
- Promotes the following first principles as a prism for Indigenising policymaking, that is: *Indigenous difference, Indigenous rights, Indigenous sovereignty; Indigenous belonging, and Indigenous spirituality (including traditional knowledge).*[7]
- Concedes that a 'one-size-fits-all' policymaking approach may exert an unintentionally negative impact on those whose difference and differences must be taken seriously.
- Admits that in a deeply divided society with competing rights and contested entitlements, difference is as important as commonalities, resulting in equal (the same) treatment as a matter of course, but treatment as equals (differently) when required.
- Provides a channel for Indigenous peoples to identify their concerns and priorities in the formulation and implementation of policies, programs, and legislation.

- Establishes grounds for better understanding the challenges and complexities in redefining Indigenous peoples-state relations.
- Results in more effective interventions and initiatives by improving the capacity of government structures to coordinate, monitor, support, and make policy through constructive engagement (Working Group 2005; Maaka and Fleras 2005).
- Contributes to the attainment of greater equity and cooperation through meaningful consultation, constructive engagement, and collaborative involvement.
- Assesses the differential and systemic impacts of policy, programs, and legislation that when evenly and equally applied generates an exclusionary effect.
- Confirms the status of Indigenous peoples as 'nations within' who are sovereign yet sharing sovereignty with a corresponding right to self determining autonomy over land, identity, and political voice.

Contesting Constitutional Governances: Indigenous vs. State Models of Determination

Indigenous peoples are gradually breaking free of colonial structures and Eurocentric strictures (Xanthaki 2008; Cadena & Starn 2007). In Aotearoa New Zealand the articulation of Treaty principles secures a Maori-centred framework for national governance, while in Canada, the Courts have articulated a series of enforceable legal principles that protect and promote Aboriginal and treaty rights (Morrelato 2008). The politics of Indigeneity/Aboriginality in challenging settler constitutional governance has also proven critical in mainstreaming an Indigenous policy making perspective (see also Marscheke et al 2008). Moreover, an IGA framework enhances policymaking by assisting policymakers to engage collaboratively and constructively through the prism of Indigeneity-tinted spectacles. The politics of mainstreaming an IGA policymaking framework however, are likely to encounter resistance and resentment. The potential for social friction is activated when conflicting constitutional orders clash over competing models of determination: state vs. self (Maaka & Fleras 2005; 2008; Ladner 2009). State-centred models define self determination in ways that prioritize state interests over those of Indigenous peoples. Not unexpectedly, too much of what passes for state determination endorses policies, laws, and agendas inconsistent with the post colonising realities of the 21st century. By contrast, Indigenous models of self-determining autonomy challenge this arrangement by proposing an alternative governance model. Indigenous peoples demand the broadest interpretation of self-determination on the grounds that all other rights flow from it. Predictably, central authorities want to limit this discursive framework for precisely the same reason, namely, a fear that

too expansive recognition of self determining autonomy rights may prove politically corrosive (Charters 2005).

State Determination Governance Models: Top-Down Policymaking

Models of state determination are not what they claim to be. Internal contradictions pervade the logic of state determination, including incongruities between modernity ('changing Indigenous peoples to reduce inequality) and the culture of Indigenous peoples (maintaining 'difference' to improve equality) (Kowal 2008). A statist policy agenda promotes the self-sufficiency of Indigenous peoples, but only within the parochial confines of an existing institutional framework. Such a policy agenda cannot allow any self determining arrangement to either challenge the principles of territorial integrity or to contest the state's final authority as the supreme sovereignty over the land. In criticising a state-determined constitutional order for its unwarranted assumptions, Kiera L Ladner (citing Macklem 1993) writes:

> Aboriginal peoples in Canada are currently imagined in law to be Canadian subjects, or Canadian citizens. Parliament is imagined to possess the ultimate law-making authority over all its citizens. A fundamental assumption underpinning the law governing Native people is that Parliament has the authority to pass laws governing Native people without their consent. (2009 290)

Central authorities prefer to micro-manage the policymaking discourse along those socio-economic dimensions that typically compress Indigenous people's rights into state-defined programs (Humpage 2004; Cornell 2005). Sham consultations and cosmetic reform are established as well for reducing social and economic disparities - if only to paper over those colonial paradoxes with potentially subversive overtones (Wootten 2004). Tossed into the 'too hard' basket are any meaningful efforts that grapple with the complex task of balancing the often incompatible goals of socioeconomic equality with recognition of Indigenous people's status as the 'nations within' (Fleras and Elliott 1992). Not surprisingly, as Stephen Cornell (and others Altman 2009) conclude, state determination discourses - from 'capacity building' to 'closing the gaps' - tend to lump the politicised goals of Indigenous peoples with the integrative agenda of immigrant populations. But as the literature on voluntary vs. involuntary minorities makes abundantly clear, there is a world of difference between those migrants who voluntarily want to 'get in' through removal of discriminatory barriers versus those forcibly incorporated peoples who want to 'get out' by way of innovative governance arrangements that acknowledges their Indigenous rights as 'nations within' (Fleras 2010).

The policymaking logic of state determination is consistent with colonial constitutional governance. For the state, a one-size-fits-all policymaking approach is thought to ensure bureaucratic control, managerial efficiency, or administrative convenience (Cornell 2005). However well intentioned or beneficial these initiatives, the state project of determination is deeply flawed conceptually and empirically by virtue of relying on state solutions (including social indicators that reflects dominant social norms) to solve deeply entrenched (often state created) problems (Altman 2009). Indigenous peoples concerns and aspirations are either ignored or suppressed to ensure the illusion of political tranquillity. Or, alternatively, they are refracted though the prism of a Eurocentric policymaking lens, thus negating how Indigenous peoples rights constitute a sui generis class of political rights in their own right. Their voices and philosophical perspectives are dismissed as well, despite distinctive ways of understanding and responding to reality (Maaka and Andersen 2006). And while this dismissal is costly (Does making Indigenous peoples more equal make them less Indigenous? (also Kowal 2008)), its opposite – inclusiveness - can also prove contradictory. Without an Indigenous grounded policymaking framework, Indigenous people's demands for self determining model autonomy must align along a policymaking framework that reinforces those very colonialist discourses under attack (Turner 2006).

Indigenous Models of Self Determining Autonomy:
Participatory Policymaking as Postcolonial Constitutional Governance

Opposing state-centric models of 'determination' are Indigenous models of self-determining autonomy. Despite rhetoric and adjustments, Indigenous peoples experiences and realities continue to be defined and distorted by their forcible confinement within the neoliberal universalism of state determination governance (Giroux 2008). According to this model, the state continues to govern on grounds of problems and needs rather than of relations and rights, while insisting on monopolising the outer limits of what counts as differences, what differences count (Johnson 1994). Proposed instead of a state determination model is a postcolonial commitment to Indigenous models of self determining autonomy, including a participatory policy-making governance that embraces (1) recognition of Indigenous peoples as possessing distinctive ways of looking at the world; (2) responsiveness to Indigenous difference and distinctiveness via bilateral policymaking; (3) an acknowledgement that they alone possess the right to decide for themselves what is best; and (4) endorsement of their status as sovereign in their own right, yet sharing in the sovereign of society at large (Fleras 2000). The challenge is unassailable. Indigenous peoples rights as original occupants and sovereign political communities conveys a corresponding right to shape the policymaking context of which they are part, as well as the right to control land and resources that sets them apart (Cornell 2005).

The mainstreaming of Indigenous self determining autonomy models appears to be paying dividends in advancing participatory governance. The policymaking dimensions of Indigenous models self-determining autonomy go beyond a commitment to moving over and making space. The focus is on challenging those foundational principles

that initially created the problem in the first place, first, by resisting the centralising tendencies of top-down/'one-size-fits-all' policymaking model, second, by advancing the principle of mainstreaming Indigeneity for Indigenising policymaking as grounds for new constitutional governance. Such a transformative commitment stands in contrast to Eurocentric policy notions, understood as formal initiatives that are initiated and imposed from above in the 'best interests' of those defined as problem people or special interests (Poole 2008). To the contrary, policymaking must be rethought in a different register than that of problem or interest, but in terms of a peoples who are actively redefining the landscape of both politics and policymaking.

In short, the policymaking models associated with the governance principle of Indigenous self determining autonomy transcend a simple de-colonisation in which the incumbents change places while the rules of the game remain intact. Little can be gained by simply changing the conventions referring to the rules, yet leaving untouched the rules that inform the conventions. Advocated instead of a 'governance as usual' syndrome is a fundamental rule-realigning change that acknowledges the centrality of mainstreaming Indigeneity by indigenising policymaking along the lines of an IGA framework. For in the final analysis, such a commitment reflects, reinforces, and advances a participatory governance model which, in turn, underscores the legitimacy of Indigenous constitutional governance alongside that of a state-centred constitutional order. At the core of this transformational process are the politics of power. In that the politics of power focus on Indigenising the policymaking principles of a yet to emerge post-colonial constitutional governance, no one should underestimate the potency of mainstreaming Indigeneity in advancing an Indigenous-centred approach for living together differently.

(Endnotes)

1　Definitions of Indigeneity are intensely political and sharply contested (Shaw 2008; Roach & Egan 2008; Adebanwi 2009; Merlan 2009). Indigeneity can take on different meanings, largely because Indigeneity as a concept may be difficult to pin down across a bewildering range of contexts and concept. For example, does Indigeneity refer to those peoples who first occupied the land (first occupancy) or to those last peoples prior to European contact and colonisation (prior occupancy) (Waldron 2002). Others (Green 2009) argue that the addition of the suffix 'eity' to Indigenous puts Indigeneity into the same ranks as equally vacant and essentially empty abstractions like nationality. Nevertheless, regardless of the terminology, the principle and politics that accompany politicised Indigenous peoples are important for legal purposes, self identification, and understanding social marginalisation (Marschke et al 2008). In general, Indigeneity refers to the state of being Indigenous. More specifically, it can refer to the distinct historical, cultural and political realities of Indigenous peoples, in part because of their unique experiences and relations with European settlers, in part because of their unique relationship to their homelands and their lands as sources of identity, belonging, and subsistence (Turner and Simpson 2007). References to Indigeneity as a relational identity can also embrace the idea of politicising the status of original occupancy as a basis for challenge and change as well as recognition, rewards, and relationships (Maaka and Fleras 2005; Merlan 2007). Any references to Indigeneity as marginalisation, Indigeneity

as identification, and Indigeneity as resistance reflect dynamic and evolving processes that vary over time and across space (Marschke et al 2008).

2　This paper uses the term Indigenous peoples as a widely accepted and universal category. Having acquired international legitimacy with the United Nations passing of the International Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, the terms Indigenous and Indigeneity now have a life of their own. Notwithstanding dictionary definitions, the term Aboriginal peoples is used when referring to Canada's Indigenous peoples (as with Indigenous, Aboriginal is a loaded term as well, since the prefix 'ab' implies 'taking away' from or 'negation' of original peoples. The Greek term, autochthonous (meaning springing from the earth) peoples may be preferable, but there is difficulty envisioning narratives that embrace the politics of autochthoneity as discourse and practice, despite an explicit recognition of Indigenous peoples attachment and continuity to land (Xanthaki 2008).

3　Colonialism possesses a physical and ideological dimension (Turner and Simpson 2007). It can refer to the expansion of one society into the territory of another. Also included those set of ideas and ideals that are used to justify this expansion and the fundamentally exploitative relationship that exists because of it. Neo colonialism refers to how the foundational structures and systemic biases that inform a contemporary constitutional order constitute the basis for new forms of colonialism. Post colonialism refers process by which the most egregious violations of colonialism are eliminated; including the exclusion of the colonised from positions of power, but it does not refer to the end of (neo)colonialism. More accurately, post colonialism involves challenges to the existing patterns of (neo) colonialism that continue to privilege Eurocentric notions of identity and belonging based on illegal possession of land and unsurrendered sovereignties. In that the politics of Indigeneity is an ongoing and unfinished project rather than a fait accompli, it may be more useful to employ the term post colonising to convey the contingent and continuing nature of the process over time and across space (Moreton-Robinson 2007; Kowal 2008).

4　Policy making continues to be informed by a modernist approach with its connotation of rationality, planned intervention, binaries of right and wrong, and assumptions of progress and perceptions of linear improvement as demonstrated by measurable performance indicators (Waters 2007; Altman 2009). This positivist commitment would appear to be inconsistent with the postcolonial domain of Indigeneity.

5　A political covenant between Maori and the Crown signed in 1840 by representatives of the Crown and nearly 500 Maori chiefs, the Treaty of Waitangi continues to define, inform, and guide Maori-Crown relations, despite the passage of time and shift in power. To be sure, no consensus prevails regarding its importance or scope, except that (a) the Crown has a duty to consult with Maori when required, (b) the Crown is responsible for righting historical wrongs, and (c) Crown actions cannot be inconsistent with Treaty principles (Palmer 2006). However, there is growing consensus that Treaty principles embraced a vision of dual sovereignty (perhaps not as the Crown had originally intended in 1840 but in complying with contemporary post-colonising realities): a 'hard' sovereignty involving British governorship (kawanatanga) and the 'soft' sovereignty of Maori ownership of land and resources (Maaka and Fleras 2008). Admittedly, Treaty provisions are unenforceable unless explicitly incorporated into national statute or local law. Nevertheless, the Treaty is widely acknowledged as a constitutional blueprint and foundational document that not

only codifies pre-existing Indigenous Maori rights, but also secures those principles to live by (James 2004).

6   National research funding agencies in Canada are now recognising the importance and effectiveness of including Indigenous communities in developing research questions and moving beyond research results into transformative practices. For example, the Aboriginal Capacity and Developmental Research Environments (Evans et al 2009).

7   By Indigenising the policymaking paradigm, Native Studies scholar, Peter Kulchyski (2007) proposes the following progressive changes for transcending the current policy paralysis: (a) taking Aboriginal rights seriously (b) removing colonial power structures (c) providing a base for ongoing financial support (d) sharing the land (e) encouraging urban communities, and (f) developing culturally responsive social programs. Others argue for the need to articulate Indigeneity as an alternative worldview (Alfred 2005) while sensitising core Indigenous values (relationship, responsibility, reciprocity, and redistribution) to wider audiences and policy circles (Harris & Wasilewski 2004).

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Fur Trade Colonialism:
Traders and Cree at Hudson Bay, 1713-67

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Why has the historic Hudson's Bay Company (HBC) been considered "a non-colonial company" by Canadian historians? Surely those inescapably colonial dyads of insiders/ outsiders, rulers/subjects, and Europeans/Natives, suggest otherwise; and, as such, we should try comparing it to other colonial forms to better understand its historical presence. This paper introduces the concept of fur trade colonialism as something that is separate to settler colonialism. As is well known in the Canadian historiographical canon, guns, germs and geopolitical upheavals characterised the Indian interior in this early period (1713-1763); but what about the 'settlements' that hugged the Bay itself? These 'settlements', I argue, were not only the sites of contact, but the sites of a perpetual colonial encounter – a shared space, in which natives and sojourning HBC men came to live under the slight rule of Bayside governors, who tempered their own moral judgement with the policies laid out by the Company's London Committee. This paper brings these settlements under the microscope to analyse the means by which – if at all – the "home guard" natives (mostly Cree Nation) of the settlements were colonised by the Hudson's Bay Company.

From the ship decks of the eighteenth-century merchant-marine, to the gendered order of pre-industrial households, and even to the occupational categories of modern Japanese companies, historians of "fur trade society" have searched far and wide for the appropriate model to describe the Hudson's Bay Company[1]. Yet there has been an overall reluctance to view the fur trade within the comparative scope of colonial studies: the HBC prior to 1811, interested as it was only in trade and not settlement, is considered "a non-colonial company" (Brown 22); the immediate Hudson Bay region, in the early period, considered hardly as exciting as the Great Lakes or *pays d'en haut*[2]. This paper argues that this assumption requires revision by suggesting a remodelling of the way Canadian history is conceptualised. This requires an understanding of *colonialism* (where newcomers depend, directly or indirectly, upon the labour of native people or the networks they created) and *settler colonialism* (where, ultimately, only the

land of native people is important) as separate, albeit at times overlapping processes in the Canadian past[3]. Concerning itself with an early period – shortly after the HBC received its Royal Charter in 1670 but well before any white settlers made their way onto the prairies – this paper, indebted to the numerous interpretations before it, tries to sketch out what *fur trade colonialism* looked like at the Bay.

Trading companies instigated a specific type of colonial scenario by deploying their white male employees into foreign regions, amongst foreign subjects, for the purposes of resource exploitation and profit. This ties in well with Franz Fanon's provocative suggestion in *The Wretched of the Earth*, that the "history of colonization" is little more than a history of "looting, raping and starving to death [...] the history of despoliation" (15). In a similar vein, Albert Memmi in *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, gives his definition of a colony as "a place where one earns more and spends less" (4). While it is fair to say that both Memmi and Fanon had colonial Africa primarily in mind, their sentiments are applicable to HBC men in Rupert's Land in the late-seventeenth and eighteenth centuries, as well as countless other 'companies of the sea' before it.

Sudipta Sen explores the idea that a colonialism of trade could exist before and within Empire. By analysing the modalities of the East India Company-state, Sen examines how "the contingencies of trade and war translate[d] into the notion of a long term dependency" (2002 2). For Sen, the concept of the colonial:

> follows not necessarily the linear chronology of military conquest and expansion, but along the terms of a certain regime of political reasoning inherent in the mercantilist commercial drive, a whole ensemble of articulations, measures, and policies both eristic and faithful to a certain vision of power and authority (what Foucault might call a *dispositif*) whose directions are marked at both ends: the parliamentary process in England as well as the quotidian administrative routines of the first phase of rule in the Indian interior. (2)

Although the HBC reproduced many of these characteristics, it never quite reached the level of conquest and expansionism 'achieved' by the East India Company in the same period. By contrast, in Rupert's Land, the fur trade colonialism practiced by the HBC produced specific indirect effects which resonated throughout the interior, in a process artfully explored in the writings of Arthur J. Ray and Donald Freeman, among others (Dickason; Lewis; Ray 1974; Ray and Freeman); but its more obvious manifestations were in the 'settlements' established around the Bay. These settlements were not only the sites of contact, but the sites of a perpetual colonial encounter – a shared space, in which natives and HBC men came to live under the slight rule of Bayside governors, who tempered their own moral judgement with the policies laid out by the Company's London Committee. This paper analyses how the "home guard" natives (mostly Cree Nation) of the settlements were colonised by the Hudson's Bay Company while simultaneously examining the explicitly *colonial* underpinnings of the HBC.

Once the violence of the establishment period had subsided, with the French eviction from the Bay secured by the terms of the Treaty of Utrecht in 1713, HBC posts "came to be seen less as forts and more as places of business and residence — in short, as house and home" (Brown 18). In 1713, the HBC operated out of four posts (variously referred to as factories, forts and houses): Moose, Albany, York, and Eastmain. In the next fifty years it established four others: Churchill, Henley, Severn and Richmond. It is likely that all of these posts were secured by treating with the closest natives available, though there is little evidence regarding these transactions apart from official instructions[4]. Each one of these posts hugged the Bay and were attached to rivers that spilled deep inland, except for Henley House, which was established in 1743 one hundred miles upstream from Albany Fort. Generally, each was governed by a chief factor, and contained a small semi-official class and a much larger servant class. In the absence of consistent bookkeeping, it is estimated that the total number of officers and servants employed by the HBC at the beginning of this period was no more than one hundred men, growing to about two hundred in the 1760s (Robson, 82; Williams, 243-55)[5]. Agriculture was attempted in the immediate acreage surrounding the posts, which were referred to as 'plantations' or 'settlements' by the employees (Rich 1949; Robson; Umfreville; Brown 18-9), but these were of a much different ilk to the larger, more permanent and exclusivist 'settlements' that were sprouting up elsewhere in North America.

Post settlements were not just home to the white sojourners sponsored by the HBC, but became home also to several families of Cree that lived in the Bay's vicinity before 1670, along with members from many trading nations. These citizens of the settlements usually equalled or surpassed the number of Company employees, and were eventually called 'the home guard'. Their numbers ranged anywhere from two families up to "150 to 200 men, women and children," on top of a redundant community of "widows, orphans and helpless people," and a growing mixed-descent population, at each settlement (Williams 192; Brown 19). Historians describe the relationship between the HBC and the home guard as one of "mutual dependency" (Van Kirk 3; Francis and Morantz 25), a description that is validated by the observations of ex-Company factor James Isham in 1743: "it's to be observ'd that those Indians that hunts at Seasons for the forts, can not do without the assistance of the English, any more than the English without them" (Rich 78).

From early on, the London Committee made clear to its Bayside factors that there was to be no interaction of any sort with native women (Rich 1948, 40-1; Rich 1957 102, 145). This was a policy that proved impossible to enforce. As Jennifer Brown points out, Rupert's Land, in the eyes of Company men, was a place of strange sexual mores,

a world of polygyny, promiscuity and partner-sharing (Brown 58-70). To the native inhabitants, the Bay must have been far stranger. It had become the site of several all-male clusters, not mobile but permanently affixed to the rivers, and governed by strict disciplinary protocol regarding the acceptable conduct of internal and external relations. Although quite different to the intense racial and sexual distinctions that typified frontier relations between coloniser and colonised in other times and places of North America and Empire, the early manifestations of colonial intimacy on the Bay between home guard women and HBC men are no less critical in assessing colonial contact[6]. As Ann Laura Stoler argues, "colonial differences and their sexual and affective entailments must pervade a far broader set of cultural and political practices than those captured by colonialism's most direct encounters" (2001 864).

In 1980, the publication of Jennifer Brown's *Strangers in Blood* and Sylvia Van Kirk's *"Many Tender Ties"* redirected fur trade historiography by identifying, in differing ways, how these encounters were pursued within a dysfunctional social code established by the Company for the settlements (Brown 6-22, 52-70; Van Kirk 28-52). Post factors had the power to ignore the policies from London demanding celibacy, and were the most likely of Company employees to generate sustained relationships— "fur trade marriages" *a la façon du pays* — with native women. Brown, wary of the shortfalls in the available documents, offers a very modest figure of "at least fifteen instances" of sexual relationships between HBC officers and native women before 1770, and we may assume there were several more (Brown 52). These unions might have served important functions other than of a sexual nature, potentially cementing important alliances with trading captains (Brown 62-5; Van Kirk 29-30). Indeed many, perhaps the majority, of the 'wives' or 'bedfellows' of the factors came from women who were initially outsiders to home guard society, deposited by groups of visiting traders during their transaction. As Isham testified: marriage to a "King's" daughter was "a great help in Engaging them to trade" (quoted in Van Kirk 1980 29). Of course, Isham was speaking on behalf of the upper rungs of HBC society, who had a much greater capacity to enter in such marriages in the first place. "In the mid-eighteenth century," writes Van Kirk, "it seems that officers on the Bay were enforcing official policy to the extent that the privilege of having an Indian wife became a function of rank" (45). Officers may have been allowed a degree of leniency in their interactions with native women, but servants were strictly forbidden — at least on record — to mix with native women.

Servant-native encounters were by no means unknown, however: "not allowed, but winked at," recalled ex-factor Andrew Graham (quoted in Van Kirk 41). Under the lax conditions of night-time supervision, a servant might easily escape his abode to sneak into the tent of a home guard woman; if caught, as ex-Company surgeon Richard White told the Select Committee into HBC affairs in 1749, he risked "forfeiting all his Wages [...] further to be punished by the Company's Servants to be put in Irons,

and whipped, for that Offence" (Great Britain, House of Commons 219). Necessarily, these encounters were highly secretive, about which we know very little in comparison with the more public fur trade 'marriages' of the post factors. Graham summed up the whole situation in his *Observations*:

> No European women are allowed to be brought to Hudson's Bay, and no person is allowed to have any correspondence with the natives without the Chief [factor's] orders, not even to go into an Indian tent. And the natives are not permitted to come within the Forts but when their business requires [...] However the Factors for the most part at proper times allow an officer to take in an Indian lady to his apartment, but by no means or any account whatever to harbour her within the Fort at night. However the Factors keeps a bedfellow within the Fort at all times. (Williams 248)

The "Indian ladies" of the settlements who tested the limits of London's restrictions and became "bedfellows" still managed to retain considerable freedom, and we should regard them as actors with considerable agency in this historical period; they had both privileged access to white HBC society and the capacity to return and live amongst the other home guards or rejoin their old trading bands. This was a dual agency, or hybridity, that was shortly extended to the mixed-descent children raised on the settlement, who had become "pretty Numerous" by the 1730s, according to Isham (Rich 79). Whereas the progenies of miscegenetic encounters were regrettable economic and moral burdens in the opinion of the London Committee (Davies 292n), by the Bay they were considered "fine children," and were "always looked upon at the Factories as descendents of our countrymen" (Rich 79; Williams 145). Brought up with excessive indulgence, these children were taught the skills not, or not just, of the fur trade itself, but rather of the form of fur trade colonialism that had manifested into clusters at Hudson's Bay; in other words, they were prepared for a life in the settlement. They could find employment with the Company similar to an apprentice might, but they could also work amongst the home guard as outfitters and hunters for the settlement. Even more so than their mothers, fur trade children had privileged access to the imposed structures of the colonisers as well as the adapted structures of the colonised.

Yet the nature by which the home guard population were 'colonised' by the HBC in this period was, at least on the surface, rather unobtrusive—and this is one reason why historians have refused to stretch the colonialism paradigm over the top of a few social clusters that formed around the Bay. From 1670 right up to the nineteenth century, it was never the intention of the London Committee to deploy missionaries or educators, 'civilisers', to the region. One illustrative case of the Committee's resolve in maintaining their preservationist native policy is their reaction to an attempt in 1724 to teach a native boy at Albany Fort how to read and write, and elementary Christianity. "[An] order was sent to the governor to take the boy's books from him, and turn him out of the factory, with an express prohibition against any Indians being instructed for

the future," in the words of Joseph Robson, ex-employee and critic of the HBC; "This was the source of much affliction to the poor boy, who died soon after" (Robson 76).[7]

The 'Indian Boy scandal' reaffirmed to Company officials that a policy of 'benign neglect' was to remain the order of the day.[8] At least on record, it was a policy that seems to have been mostly upheld by Company officials, and extended equally to the trading natives of the interior and the home guard population. As the surgeon White testified, "he had never heard of any Attempts made by the Factors to civilize these People; nor it an easy Matter to be attained, since it would be necessary in that case to bring them up to Labour from their Youth" (Great Britain, House of Commons 219). Although HBC historian E. E. Rich (1958) once considered the fur trade itself as "in a way a civilising mission", and deploying a racial discourse now quite repugnant, boasted how "the ordinary trading habits of western peoples on an uncivilised race has as deep and lasting effect as the more self-conscious changes in habits and cultures advocated by priests and educationalists" (493), his was not a point of view shared by the Company's mid-eighteenth century critics in England. By their judgement, the company was *not colonial enough*, as illustrated by the hysterical lament of Robson:

> The Company [...] as traders, have violated their indispensible duty as men and Christians; have even sacrificed their own servants to their fear, and lest the natives should be instructed and reformed, have hitherto neglected the sending over a clergy-man to keep up a sense of religion at any of their factories. (Robson 76)[9]

This 'benign neglect' that Robson found so abhorrent should be seen as part of a larger requirement of malleable policy to push the trade into perpetuity. It was in the best interests of the trading company to be a preservationist one, reliant as it was upon an intricate framework of trappers, middle-men and trading captains that spread for miles in every direction from the Bay; and they certainly did not want to tinker too much with the home guard, with whom they had to transact as well as live.

Yet while we might be encouraged to see the HBC as unobtrusive into the home guard world, we should not consider this the same as insignificant. The home guard, rather by accident, found themselves in a rather strange relationship with the Company. It was a form of unspoken subservience, even a slight kind of subjection. By their very allowance of settlements of home guard to grow around the posts, under a system of pooled resources and mutual dependence, the HBC had concocted a unique social formation by the Bay. In contrast with the indirect engagement of middle-men to harness the native trading system of the interior, the settlement structure involved the *direct* engagement of the home guard. Lest one consider this distinction between indirect and direct engagement inauthentic, we need only look to a passage from James Isham's *Observations*, in which he attempted to calculate the population of the surrounding region. "I compute," he wrote, "there is comes Yearly to all the English setlements in these parts, or *belonging* to the Hudson's Bay company a'bout 1200

Indians" – that is, Isham considered the Company as the *owners* of home guard labour and *visited* by the traders (Rich 1949 91-2, my emphasis). Andrew Graham's observation of the difference between various trading bands and the home guard is equally illuminating. During his stint at the Bay, it became obvious that the changes to the home guard lifestyle were not necessarily beneficial ones:

> [W]hat we call the home-guard Indians [...] who are become dependent on the English, and retained by them to procure provisions, and perform other services [...] although [becoming] extremely debilitated and depraved from their ancestors, yet the language has gone no alteration. (Williams 191)

The use of the term 'retained', like Isham's 'belonging', suggests something more than a relationship on mutual grounds. This quote reveals the shortcomings of a policy as simple as 'benign neglect', while also serving as a reminder of how the system of mutual dependence actually functioned. Graham, in essence, is describing the relationship between loyal subjects and a welfare state.

As entities living under the Company's watch, the home guard might even have fallen under one of the state-like clauses in their Royal Charter, becoming native subjects of the company-state in law. The special privileges gave the Company authority to make laws and "execute Justice accordingly," with the coverage of their jurisdiction extending beyond officers and servants to include "all persons [...] that shall live under them" (Hudson's Bay Company 12-3, 17-8). Legal historian Brian Slattery insists this was simple mimicry of the East India Company's chartered rights, and "exclud[ed] local peoples living under their own rulers and laws" (Slattery 159). This observation is problematic as Slattery does not distinguish between home guard and the more autonomous First Nations of Rupert's Land. The question arising from this is: what laws truly operated within the settlements? That the HBC's legal regime was never properly codified makes it difficult to account for all of these laws and rules, but what we can assume from the record is a great deal of convergence between Cree-dominated native traditions and the London Committee's policies – in other words, the legal regime that was put into place was neither native nor English, but *colonial*. That the upper hand was decisively reserved for the orders of the Company's Bayside governors affirms that HBC men, not home guard captains, had come to dominate this pairing.

The Henley House incident of 1755 is a case in point. Henley House was, in fact, merely a house, without a home guard population of its own. This did not stop three men from the Albany home guard (Woudbee and his two sons, Shanap and Snuff the Blanket the younger) to make the voyage south to request provisions from the post. William Lamb, the factor, who was keeping two bedfellows inside the post (who happened to be Woudbee's daughter and Shanap's wife), turned the men away upon their arrival. Outraged they left, but returned to shoot and kill Lamb and his four servants (Bishop 36-41). When Woudbee, Shanap and Snuff were eventually apprehended, a

confession was coerced from them, and so were brought before a makeshift HBC court to "be hanged until they are dead, dead, dead for so barbarously murdering the men at Henly and robbing the Companys Factory House" (Albany Post Journal, 12 June 1755, quoted by Baker 63; Nigol 176-8). Although Lamb's refusal to share provisions was at variance with the established system of "mutual dependence" in the settlements, Company justice got the last word. Thus, the power to extend their own rule of law over the settlements, a privilege granted by the Crown, remained available for officials to invoke whenever they, — and not the home guard —considered it appropriate.

A close look at the micro-societies which formed around the HBC posts in this period reveals a unique pattern of amalgamation. These secular settlements combined a company of transient men (Memmi's "colonisers", who came, casually manipulated their surroundings, profited, perhaps managed to secure some sexual favours, and left) with an adapted, settled and conglomerated lifestyle with Cree foundations, the most privileged members of which including the fur trade wives and their mixed-descent offspring. These were like little towns overseen by a select governing class, who subjected the white servant class to a strict regime of discipline, whilst incorporating the home guard into a welfare state. The factors could not subject their natives to any despotism, nor did they really want to; but their inherent governmentality and disposition to rule still showed itself in exceptional moments. As Henley House revealed, the home guard could fall within HBC jurisdiction just like the subjects of any colonial legal regime.

Regardless of whether the concept "fur trade colonialism" is adopted by others, or is instead considered an unnecessary addition to the historiographical clutter, it should be absolutely necessary to acknowledge that there was a real colonial presence in Rupert's Land by the late seventeenth century: a complex of ritualised power relationships (governing insiders, outsiders, and all those who fell in between), the nature of the Company's early occupation, along with all of its intricacies and intimacies, certainly suggest as much. Of course, compared to the English East India Company-state, the HBC was small-scale: there were no civilising missions, there were no wars of conquest, and by 1763 the combined population of the posts and settlements was no greater than 1000. But each was programmed in the same way — an explicitly *colonial* way — and this requires further investigation.

(Endnotes)

1   Hereafter cited as HBC. Various conceptualisations of the HBC can be found in: Baker 46 59; Brown 32-5; Burley 1-2; Driscoll 83; Nigol 154-5; Smandych and Linden 29-33.

2   For the historic *pays d'en haut*, see White, and Brandao.

3   For a theoretical exploration of why such distinctions need to be made, see: Veracini.

4   "Gillam's Treaty" at Rupert's River in 1668 was the first of these, later to be confirmed by Governor Charles Bayly on his arrival in 1671. It remained official HBC policy to pursue

treaties up to the 1680s, though no receipts of these were kept. See: Rich 1948, 36, 46, 79-81; Rich 1958, 62-3, 102, 109-10, 130, 145.

5   For further detail, see: Brown 27; Burley 5; Rich 1958, 183-4.

6   For example, see: Ghosh, Godbeer, and Wolfe.

7   See also: Rich 1958, 492-3; Francis and Morantz, 91.

8   The term 'benign neglect' in the context of HBC policy first appears in: Francis and Morantz 91.

9   For similar arguments, see: Dobbs, and Umfreville.

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Plains Métis: Contours of an Identity

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This article pursues two lines of argument in its search for an understanding of the genesis and contours of a Plains Métis identity. First, it argues that one should view the genesis of the Plains Métis as part of a wider pattern of native ethnogeneses on the North American Great Plains. Second, it also argues that Plains Métis are unique in their manifestation of this larger Plains native identity formation because they define their culture and ground their identity in an avowed fusion of both Native and largely French-Canadian traits due to their intrinsic and long-term links to the Montreal-centred fur trade social and economic networks. No other Plains tribes however mixed and hybrid in their origins and cultures, do this. The Plains Métis are thus both part of a larger trend of Native ethnogenesis in the interior and unique in that they come to ground their nascent identity as being a product of Métissage, a melding of both native and Europeans heritages.

In the past four decades, people of Plains Métis descent and their histories have been a source of ongoing academic and political discussion. These debates are fuelled by several factors. The first was the 1970 centennial of Manitoba's admission into Canada as a province. Marking this occasion inevitably led to discussions of Métis-driven political and military events immediately preceding Manitoba's creation.[1] A second factor was the Canadian Constitution Act of 1982, in which Métis people were legally recognised and their aboriginal rights affirmed. This was done, however, without a clear definition of who exactly was to be included in the classification "Métis." To this day, the courts are working out who is legally considered part of "the people."[2] Third, the year 1985 marked the one hundredth anniversary of the Battle of Batoche, in present-day central Saskatchewan, where people calling themselves Métis again organised to resist what they considered the unjust territorial aggressions by the Canadian state. Batoche ended with their military defeat and the subsequent capture, trial, and hanging of their leader, Louis Riel.[3] These landmark dates and events fuelled scholarly debates and notable publications, including Jacqueline Peterson and Jennifer Brown's

1985 book, *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Métis in North America* (Peterson & Brown 1985). Interest in Métis identities and histories continue to be propelled by contemporary political and legal events. These include the 125th anniversary of the creation of Manitoba in 1995; the 2003 Supreme Court of Canada *Powley* decision, which recognised the traditional harvesting rights of Métis from Sault Sainte-Marie, a community with clear historic links to the fur trade but not the bison hunting plains Métis and the political and military events of 1870 and 1885; and, most recently, the year 2010 marks the 125th anniversary of the Battle of Batoche and hanging of Riel, sparking new commemorations, debates, and discussion.[4]

The need to better understand Plains Métis genesis and history is further galvanised by concerns that contemporary judicial proceedings may be impacting the interpretation of historical realities. *R. v. Powley*, for example, was both a great victory and is a great danger. As jurist Jean Teillet has noted, *Powley* advanced the definition of the Métis as a rights-bearing group as long as they can show that they are "a group of people living together in a stable and continuous community in the same geographic area." Many scholars believe that this distorts the lived reality and historical experience of Métis peoples' mobility,[5] especially those residing in the plains interior.[6] Recent scholarly research on Métis history, therefore, attempts to resist the narrower definition of the Métis and their communities, and instead seeks to shift the focus of analyses back in time and across a larger geographic context (Devine 2004).

This paper pursues two lines of argument in its search for an understanding of the genesis and contours of a Plains Métis identity. First, it argues that one should view the genesis of the Plains Métis as part of a wider pattern of native ethnogeneses on the North American Great Plains. Second, it also argues that Plains Métis are unique in their manifestation of this larger Plains native identity formation. Authors such as Colin Calloway (2003) have argued that many examples of native ethnogenesis were occurring in the North American continental interior in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. In this period, the Apache, Comanche, Assiniboine, and Gros Ventre, to cite a few, all experienced significant structural and membership changes that dramatically altered their self-conception. To better understand the Plains Métis genesis and historical experience, one has to incorporate them into this broader native Plains experience. However, one must also seek to map out and explain the Plains Métis' social and cultural characteristics that differ from other native groups. Stated simply, the Plains Métis are unique within this broader pattern of Plains native identity formation because they define their culture and ground their identity in an avowed fusion of both Native and largely French-Canadian traits due to their intrinsic and long-term links to the Montreal-centred fur trade social and economic networks. No other Plains tribes however mixed and hybrid in their origins and cultures, do this. The Plains Métis are thus both part of a larger trend of Native ethnogenesis in the interior

and unique in that they come to ground their nascent identity as being a product of *Métissage*, a melding of both native and Europeans heritages.

Standard interpretations of the rise of Plains Métis nationalism emphasise the exacerbation of the fur trade wars between the North West Company and the Hudson Bay Company and attempts to establish an agrarian colony on the eastern edge of the northern Great Plain as the chief catalysts.[7] Plains Métis nationalism, these views suggest, initially germinated in a context of rapid socioeconomic change and increasingly problematic relations with other interested groups.[8] In 1812, at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers on the eastern edge of the northern Great Plains,[9] Lord Selkirk, a key shareholder in the Hudson Bay Company (HBC), founded an agrarian colony for displaced Highland Scots. This supposedly altruistic initiative was strongly opposed by the rival, Montreal-based North West Company (NWC), for this colony threatened to cut NWC supply lines and crucial trading routes to the fur-rich district of Athabasca. This colonisation project soon brought to a head the two rival fur trade companies' struggle for commercial hegemony in the Northwest, one that had been escalating in intensity since the turn of the nineteenth century (Bumsted 1999). The creation of the Red River colony was also viewed with alarm by the local Métis inhabitants because it was situated in a favoured bison hunting and wintering site. Many Métis lived in the area at least part of the year, both to produce pemmican and work seasonally for the NWC. Tensions between the Red River colonists and Métis eventually led to a bloody confrontation in 1816, known as the "Seven Oaks Massacre," or, more neutrally, "la bataille de la grenouillere" (The Battle of the Frog Pond). The Métis and their contemporaries saw this event as the catalyst for the formation of a national identity.[10] The Plains Métis became an entity that articulated corporate interests distinct from those of the Hudson's Bay Company and perhaps also from those of their old ally, the North West Company (which merged with the HBC in 1821). Boundaries were drawn not only between these Métis and their French-Canadian or Scottish allies and kin, but also between them other bison hunters like the Blackfoot or Sioux. Distinctions were occasionally even drawn between themselves and their close native kin, the Cree and Saulteaux.[11]

These changing circumstances forced a community of mixed-descent people linked to the fur trade economy to realise common interests beyond the individual, the family, and the clan. From "métis," they became "the Métis." The term moved from a statement of ancestry to one of corporate identity around which to mobilise and fight for common interests. From being simply métis, or half-breeds (as they were commonly called in the English language), they became the Métis members of what they called "La Nation." Loyalty was thus transferred to a large "imagined" community around which seemingly clear boundaries were traced. Plains Métis nationalism, like all nationalist or ethnic groupings, was a socially constructed concept created by and in reaction to

economic and political circumstances. Plains Métis identity crystallised the moment that interests shared by an extended linked group were perceived to be under threat.

The standard interpretation presented above is not incorrect. However, beyond simply the clash of rival trading companies and an early attempt at a settler colony, there existed deeper structural reasons for the rise of the Plains Métis. Interestingly, this newly conceived organisation and identity, articulated along nationalist lines, was not the embodiment of reactionary outdated forces seeking to resist the winds of change and modernisation, as some have portrayed it.[12] The rise of Plains Métis nationalism, like the rise of all native nationalisms on the Great Plains, was a proactive creation that attempted to control and adapt to rapidly changing social and economic conditions brought on by the increasing integration of the region to merchant capital economies.[13] Although the events at Red River in those watershed years of 1816–1817 caught many by surprise—the Métis and their demands seemingly came out of nowhere—this nationalistic manifestation had its roots in the changing social and economic circumstances playing out throughout the Great Plains and its profound influence on a variety of peoples.

Traditional, geographically circumscribed community studies, or ethnically based (often called "tribal") studies cannot provide the larger framework of analysis necessary to understand the rise of Plains Métis or any other Plains Native corporate identities. Neither approach can hope to capture the inter- and intra-group dynamics of largely mobile populations, for mobility was the key spatial expression of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Métis, typical for inhabitants of the interior North American Plains. This vast expanse and the histories it helped shape, of all the native peoples who came to occupy and move within it, is, therefore, the prism through which to better perceive the rise of a Métis corporate identity. Such a large-scale ecological zone approach is especially necessary for the Métis, as their hunting, freighting, and trading territory encompassed and overlapped with several other peoples' habitats.

This, however, begs the question about the nature of Plains Métis social organisation and kinship networks, or the overall sense of identity of a restless people who, nevertheless, because of the very nature of their economy and the possibility of hostile encounters, needed internal cohesion and sustained inter- and intra-social and kinship links. In other words, to what degree did the Métis resemble other Plains tribes[14] in terms of economic activities and social formation, and in what key ways did they differ? Only by examining other native populations pursuing similar economic activities in roughly the same environment can we determine how unique Métis ethnogenesis was. Certainly, for example, the Métis were not unusual in their hybridity. The Plains hosted many composite and reconstituted bands and tribes in the aftermath of the devastating epidemics and wars of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries. Many bands were composed of members born to other bands, and sometimes these "outsiders" or their

"mixed" descendants threatened to be the majority.[15] Yet, the groups still identified themselves by their own terms for Comanche or Apache or Cree. What was unique for the Métis was that this hybridity was seen as the basis of their collective identity. Was this hybridity-as-identity one of the means used by the emergent Métis Nation to optimise its chances of success in the Plains environment?

According to environmental historian Dan Flores, almost three-dozen Native American peoples adopted a horse-propelled bison hunting culture that has come to define "Indianness" for white America and most of the world.[16] This partial or even complete move out of parkland areas onto the plains/prairie bison range and towards a more focused exploitation of the herds was a long-term trend among native tribes. Both archaeological and historical sources indicate that North American Indians tended to abandon horticultural pursuits once they moved onto the bison-rich plains. The introduction of the horse allowed for greater specialisation because it vastly increased the lethality of the bison hunters. The bison meat, pemmican, and robe trade was more lucrative than the traditional mixed economy of, say, the Comanche in the western foothills and the Ojibwa in the Great Lakes region prior to their move onto the plains. Calloway has contended that during the course of the eighteenth century, Arapahos, Gros Ventres, Assiniboines, Blackfeet, Comanches, Kiowas, Cheyennes, and Lakotas and others embraced the new technology of the horse and staked out their places on the Great Plains. The future, it seemed, belonged to those who remade themselves on horseback and built new lives on the buffalo-rich grasslands. The Great Plains region of North America was, at times, a corridor for long-distance population movement, at other times the home of distinctive local groups, but always a zone of mixed and moving cultures. As historian Ted Binnema has stated:

> The exceptional bison habitat of the northwestern plains greatly influences the region's human history. Most significantly, the northwestern plains attracted indigenous societies from all directions. Throughout the bison era the region was one of eager immigrants but reluctant emigrants. Wherever they came from, and whatever subsistence strategies they may have used before, all migrant communities in the region quickly came to rely heavily upon the bison. (2001 35)

This trend was precipitated by the arrival, after 1680, of feral horses, growing markets for plains produce, and guns. The arrival of the horse and gun revolutionised patterns of human interaction on the northwestern Plains between 1700 and 1770. The fortunes of every indigenous group throughout the Great Plains quickly became tied to access to horses and guns. The environmentally favoured tract between the Red Deer River and the Missouri River became a contested area between tribes and their coalitions for access to the vast bison herds found there Binnema 87).

Yet, guns and horses were not the only factors coming into play in Plains Métis' and other tribes' paths to ethnomorphosis or ethnogenesis. Diseases and repeated waves

of epidemics wreaked havoc in native communities throughout the Americas. Certain tribes completely disappeared after being struck by particularly virulent epidemics. Others, relatively spared, found themselves in a position of power with favoured access to guns, horses, and a suddenly clear path to the bison herds. Calloway has noted that during the great smallpox pandemic of 1779–83, which stretched from South America to the Saskatchewan River, estimates suggest as many 30,000 Indian deaths occurred on the Canadian Plains. The impact of smallpox was not uniform, but with insufficient time between epidemics to allow for recovery the disease sent populations spiralling downward in many areas. On average, some sort of epidemic occurred every 5.7 years in the northern Plains in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries.

In this fairly fluid situation, French-Canadian voyageurs and their mixed-descent children and kin suddenly found themselves in a position of increased relative strength, especially in the Plains provisioning trade. Perhaps with greater inherited immunity and certainly with easier access to the trading posts, where food, medicines, and eventually inoculations could be acquired, the mixed-descent populations were not as decimated. The Plains Métis faced fewer physical and social disruptions caused by illness and disease, and the disappearance of entire bands and even tribes lessened competition for the bison herds. Although they may not have had a clear corporate sense of self in the second half of the eighteenth century, as a series of inter-related clans and families the Plains Métis were in a favoured economic and social position that could only help set the stage for the ascription of nationhood.[17]

The Plains Métis, Apache, Comanche, Assiniboine, and Gros Ventre all adopted an economy that was centred on the bison, which they exploited for a variety of purposes, especially as food and for trade. Southern tribes also became involved in the horse trade. However, tribes that occupied what is now the Canadian Plains never possessed the large horses and mule herds of the southern tribes. Harsh winters and a need to feed these animals through it, along with the consequent high mortality rates, precluded this possibility. To augment their bison hunts, Plains Métis looked to auxiliary activities, such as direct wage labour for trading concerns, including freighting with canoes, York Boats, or Red River carts. Not only did the Métis become adept at using these conveyances, they quickly learned to fabricate their own carts and boats at Red River and in border parkland areas where sufficient timber existed. Because carts pulled by one or two horses could carry many more bison-derived products than a horse travois, this imported and locally adapted technology allowed Plains Métis to become extremely efficient in the provisioning market despite possessing fewer horses than southern tribes. In fact, to the surrounding tribes, the Plains Métis and their Red River carts were indissolubly linked.[18] Therefore, the Plains Métis awakening in 1816 occurred in the context of a slow shift to a bison-centred economy embraced by many Plains tribes.[19] The growing demand for pemmican by the expanding peltry trading

concerns further precipitated matters. Ethnogenesis on the Plains was, perhaps, the catalyst for effective mobilisation around a coveted economic niche.

Although several tribes on the interior North American Plains became involved in the economy with its bison, horse, and gun equation, it is the Comanche's expanding dominion in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries over a vast area of the southern Plains, stretching from the Wind River area of Wyoming to the Staked Plains of Texas and New Mexico, that offers the most intriguing parallels to the Plains Métis' evolution (Kavanagh 86-87). Before entering the Euro-American historical consciousness as the horse-mounted rulers of the southern Plains, Comanche were members of the eastern Shoshone people who hunted bison on foot along the mid-northwestern margins of the Plains. When horse technology opened unforeseen hunting possibilities on the bison-rich Plains, some Shoshone opted to re-enter the grasslands from which they had previously been pushed (Hamalainen 2007 492-93). Formally generalist hunter-gatherers, Calloway has demonstrated that the Comanche:

> restructured their economy around horses and buffalo. In time, they transformed themselves into pastoralist, herding livestock as well as hunting buffalo. […] In the view of environmental historian Dan Flores, Comanche "exploited the available thermodynamic energy streaming from their Sun god more totally and directly than any one else ever had." In doing so, "They were digging themselves into a narrow ecological groove, but so long as the herds lasted it was a potent groove indeed. And the herds were enormous." At its height the Comanche domain embraced 240,000 square miles of southern plains territory that supported 7 or 8 million buffalo and 2 million wild mustangs. (284)

Like the Métis, the bison-hunting and trading Comanche managed to maintain their strength in numbers, and did so in the face of Spanish invasion, warfare, and demographic pressures brought on by repeated devastating epidemics. As historian Gary Clayton Anderson has stated, historically such pressures forced plains dwellers into larger groups to seek a more elaborate social and political order, a process that led to, and was assisted by, ethnogenesis. In other words, "[B]ands altered themselves culturally to forge unity with other groups, abandoning languages, social practices, and even economic processes to meet the needs of the new order." Anderson has also stated that the best example of ethnogenesis was the Comanche. By 1780, they had created the most powerful native society in the southwest by integrating into their society vast numbers of disparate peoples. "Over time," Anderson has written, "incorporated people came to think themselves as of long-standing and immutable heritage" (3-4).

Comanche villages often rang with the sounds of many languages. Like the Iroquois in the seventeenth-century northeast, the Comanche in the eighteenth-century southwest appear to have been one of America's true melting pots.[20] As the Comanche moved, absorbed other peoples, and restructured themselves in response

to new situations and opportunities, Spanish officials struggled to deal with a people who were evolving into a new nation (Calloway 277-80). Many outsiders, even those who were occasionally the object of Comanche raiding parties, wished to "become Comanche." This hybrid Comanche society was ethnically mixed, with strong representation from Spanish, Apache, Pueblos, Genizaro, Pawnee, Indian apostate, and, later, white American communities. Clearly, to simultaneously operate a successful labour-intensive Plains economy and defend their society from outsiders, the Comanche had to incorporate large numbers of people, especially in periods after substantial losses from epidemics. Comanche villages had a cosmopolitan ambiance that could seldom be found elsewhere in America, except, perhaps, in the more northern mixed-descent fur trade communities and posts. This unique multi-ethnic composition gave the Comanche an advantage in organizing their economy, for it provided them with extensive knowledge about markets, geography, products, stock raising, and so on, something that few other societies in the region possessed (Anderson 216).

At their zenith, the Comanche were the main axis of a complex and multifaceted commercial network that spanned a vast territory, linking together numerous groups and embracing a vast hinterland. A great variety of both durable and non-durable commodities passed through their hands: guns, gun powder, ammunition, knives, axes, bridles, textiles, horses, mules, slaves, salt bison products, deerskins, tobacco, corn, beans, squash, fruit, and other agricultural products. The Comanche, especially the western Comanche, were consummate traders who controlled an extensive commercial network on the southern Plains. More than this, they also operated a trade centre that greatly resembled the other well-known major centres of native North America, such as the Mandan, Hidatsa, and Arikara market communities (Hamalainen 2007 495). One of the most compelling factors supporting the view that the western Comanche ran a major trade centre was their massive surplus production. Although they were famous for their skilfully tanned hides and vast production of bison dried meat and pemmican, horses were clearly their primary export product. By the late 1770s and 1780s, they possessed two-and-one-half to three horses per capita. This number attests to the existence of a substantial surplus economy, for hunting and transportation on the Plains required only one horse per person. Given the high labour costs associated with maintaining large herds, it is unlikely that they would acquire more horses than needed for hunting and transportation without strong reasons to do so, such as trade (Hamalainen 2007 495). The livestock (horses and mules) trade made some Indians, especially the Comanche, extraordinarily wealthy, but the new economy also required profound and often difficult adjustments. The southern Plains tribes balanced a trade economy—demanding large numbers of surplus horses—with a subsistence economy—demanding large numbers of bison. This balancing act created a perennial dilemma—they had to maintain much larger domestic herds than specialised bison

hunters would have found optimal. An average early nineteenth-century Comanche or Kiowa family owned thirty-five horses and mules, five or six times as many as basic hunting and transportation needs required (Hamalainen 2003 839). In fact, the greatest threats faced by pastoral native societies were ecological. The very strategies that had made possible the extraordinary florescence of the southern Plains horse culture also precipitated its collapse. Intense horse herding, growing domestic horse herds, and large-scale trade proved too demanding on the grassland ecology, triggering a steep decline in bison numbers. Large domestic herds competed with bison for limited riverine resources, depriving the bison of their means of winter survival and possibly transmitting deadly bovine diseases such as anthrax. Making matters worse, when the Comanche opened their hunting territories in the 1820s to foreign groups in exchange for trading privileges, the Cheyenne and Arapaho embarked on intensive production of buffalo robes to fuel their trade with Americans. By the 1850s, following a deep drought and the opening of several heavily trafficked overland trails across the central Plains, the herds were vanishing all across the western Plains below the Platte River, causing periodic famines.[21] By the 1860s, the disappearance of their economic base, loss of their land base, hunger, disease, and military pressures forced the Comanche onto reserves and into new realities.[22] The vast territory of Comancheria was no more.

Historian, Diane Payment has noted that people of mixed American Indian and European ancestry in North America number in the millions and reside in all parts of the continent. Unknown numbers have passed into the Euro-Canadian and -American communities; others identify as Indians, on or off reserves (Payment 681). She has also asserted that only in certain historical circumstances, which arose in the Great Lakes and northern Plains area, did people of mixed ancestry maintain distinct communities and personal identities that were neither Indian nor white. More specifically, one could argue that only at the confluence of the Assiniboine and Red Rivers at the very edge of the Great Plains was this sense of community and kin- or clan-based solidarity transformed into a larger and more abstract sense of nationality. A sense of national solidarity and shared social and economic interests spread through the northern Plains, carried in the minds of Métis voyageurs, peddlers, freighters, and, especially, bison hunters. Other mixed-blood communities originating in the fur trade in this vast Plains region on both sides of the international border adhered, for a time, to this vision of a unifying corporate identity in the course of the nineteenth century.

The origins of the Plains Métis Nation, of course, are in the Montreal-based fur trade system and its continual westward expansion. During the French regime, the Montreal-based fur trade became firmly established in the Great Lakes, and its traders and explorers extended French knowledge of the Plains to the foothills of the Rockies. Native tribes in the Great Lakes and beyond regarded adoption and marriage as a good means of establishing solid trading alliances. By 1763, with France's cession of Canada

to Britain, Ojibwa-French unions were the established pattern (Payment 681). With the founding of the North West Company between 1779 and 1784—an alliance of several prominent traders, some French but mostly Scottish, augmented with greater lines of credit and logistical capabilities—the Montreal trade expanded into areas of the Plains formerly occupied by Cree and Assiniboine. These two tribes experienced high mortality rates in the wake of the smallpox pandemic of 1779–83.

In the wake of the western fur trade emerged a group of men, originally French-Canadian voyageurs, who, having completed their term of services, decided to remain in the interior with their native families. They and their children, as freemen or *hommes libres*, became involved in seasonal employment, trapping, and, as the population spread onto the Plains, trade provisioning.[23] These families, extended kin groups, and clans can be seen as the forbears to the distinctive Métis identity on the Plains, especially as they moved into buffalo hunting and pemmican manufacturing in the Red River area and beyond. These are the ancestors of the Plains Métis who, by the second decade of the nineteenth century, would experience ethnogenesis and identify themselves, and be identified by their contemporaries, as a distinct group.[24]

In the same years, the Plains Métis sphere of influence began extending into present-day Wisconsin, North and South Dakota, Minnesota, Montana, and the three Canadian Prairie provinces. Partly as a consequence of the 1837–38 smallpox epidemics, the southern and western Plains were opened up to Métis hunters and their Ojibwa and Saulteaux kin and allies. Up to two-thirds of the western Assiniboine and Blackfoot people perished in these epidemics (Albers 2001 654). The more southerly Dakota Sioux fared little better. New possibilities in the Northwest and the Dakotas incited the Métis to move further away from the Red River colony and extend wide-ranging social and economic activities to an ever-greater area. Around 1840, the Métis of the northern Plains began establishing wintering camps in sheltered wooded areas, such as the Wood Mountains, the Qu'Appelle Valley, and the Saskatchewan River Valley,[25] continuing a slow shift westwards and southwards in search of the bison herds. They also gathered around the fur trade posts of the American Fur Company at Pembina and Saint Paul.[26]

The Plains Métis took on many occupations in the nineteenth century, as voyageurs, freighters of merchandise, and employees at trade posts. Because they usually spoke several languages, their role as interpreters was invaluable, and their knowledge of the land brought them employment as scouts and guides. However, what the Plains Métis nation came to be most closely associated with was the bison hunt and its attendant provisioning and robe production. The Plains Métis, like most of the mounted Plains tribes, discovered that the hunt was a rational and adaptive response to life in a restrictive economy. Before 1860, the buffalo hunt was a viable business and the main source of food and other products, and Métis served as provisioners of pemmican for fur trade posts, for men involved in the movements of merchandise and furs along the interior trade routes, and for the Red River settlement.[27]

The Métis bison hunts, while of crucial importance, were linked to complementary activities that could include small-scale farming, fishing, freighting, and independent trading. Spring meant the major buffalo hunt, followed by other activities, such as maple sugaring. In the summer, besides harvesting wild hay for their hunting and draft animals, some Métis planted grain crops, such as wheat and oats, or, more commonly, a potato patch, and harvested wild rice and roots. Recurring droughts, floods, and locust swarms, however, hampered agriculture in the Red River colony and throughout the Plains-parkland region (Payment 2001 667). In the fall, the second bison hunt took place, accompanied by fishing and trapping. Winter was a time to hunt, trap, and cut firewood.

It is difficult to overestimate the importance of the hunt to the Plains Métis. As early as 1820, over five hundred hunters were involved in the annual hunt departing from Red River. By the early 1840s, over a thousand Red River carts and fifteen hundred people were typically committed to the summer hunts.[28] The Métis hunt, as with most large native bison hunts, was a highly structured expedition, with its own rules and regulations, enforcers, and hunt captains. It was also very much a commercial operation. The Plains Métis were but the last of a long line of peoples slowly shifting to a mobile, bison-centred economy. And, for some families and clans, this increased specialisation meant relocation further west to follow the herds, increased wintering away from the Red River colony, and gradual lessening of gardening practices. Pemmican and other bison products gave these Métis bison-hunting families the leverage necessary to obtain flour, potatoes, and luxury items such as tea and sugar in quantities sufficient to meet their needs at the various trading posts or at Red River.

As with the Comanche, this bison-centred way of life produced specific social mores within the Métis population and led them to expand. By 1821,[29] the Plains Métis were rapidly becoming one of the most powerful entities in the Northwest. They had larger families, greater affluence, and more resistance to epidemics and disease. They were powerful enough to exert influence over a territory that encompassed the "traditional" Indian territories of the Sioux, Assiniboine, Dakotas, and Cree, and they had economic, social, and family ties with some of these groups. By the very nature of their society—with its emphasis on a bison economy, but also on fishing, the harvesting of other natural resources, freighting, and trading—they needed access to a vast territory and reasonably friendly relations with other *in situ* populations. Marriage ties were one means to this end.[30]

The Métis society that emerged on the Plains in the early nineteenth century reflected the cultural traits of both its Native and European ancestors. Plains Ojibwa, Plains Cree, and French-Canadian customs and beliefs blended in various degrees, and

new social groups emerged.[31] The extended family, which included parents, children, grandparents, and a network of relatives (blood relatives, relatives through marriage, and cousins to the third degree) from both sides, was an important feature of Métis society. A few intermarried extended families often formed their own communities in favoured wintering sites. Métis society was essentially patriarchal, much like its Plains Cree, Plains Ojibwas, and European antecedents. Certainly prior to 1870, it was not at all uncommon for Métis men to have several wives, either of Métis origin or from Saulteaux or other tribes, usually serially but also, on occasion, concurrently (St-Onge 2004 14-15). The adoption of children from a spouse's previous marriage was an additional general practice (Payment 663).

Although relatively affluent trading elites, along with a class of people somewhat more focused on agrarian activities at Red River, a Plains Métis majority remained focused on bison-related activities and maintained a largely egalitarian ethos. According to Payment, this meant the sharing of resources, non-accumulation of material goods, and a social status based on ability rather than wealth. Unlike non-native habitants of Red River who admired the farmers and traders, most Métis held adept bison hunters in highest regard.[32] Métis settlement on the Plains reflected a migratory lifestyle. Although many had a home base in the Red River colony up till the 1840s, most Métis travelled regularly to hunting and trading camps to the south and northwest. After the greater opening of the Plains following the epidemics of the late 1830s, Métis families and kin groups started to shift their centre of gravity southward or westward to be closer to their sources of procurement for pemmican and robes. Red River became but one possible market destination among others, such as the numerous HBC posts—Fort Carlton or Fort Edmonton, for example—on the supply routes or at the establishments of rival traders located at Pembina or St. Paul in American territory.[33]

Throughout these years, Métis men and women married within their group, but also outside of it. Métis men frequently married Cree or Saulteaux women, but also brought back to Métis settlements women from more distant tribes.[34] In the existing historiography, Métis women are largely seen as marrying within the Métis group or marrying arriving traders and fur trade employees. This has been regarded as a means of integrating outsider white men with privileged access to coveted trade goods. However, recent studies show that Métis women also married men who were considered Saulteaux or Cree. By these means, as a national entity the Métis managed to build a vast, diffuse, and far-flung web of kinship and attendant reciprocal obligations throughout the northern Plains region that allowed them to hunt, barter, trade, work, and reside in relative safety and familiar social environments. Prior to the mid-nineteenth century, the Comanche held sway over a vast area of the southwestern Plains called Comancheria. On the northern Plains, the Métis acquired a presence and influence over an immense area with a combination of sheer numbers, mounted armed might, vast multiethnic kin webs, and both business and personnel links to an astounding number of western native tribes.

It is a truism to note that cultures and concepts of national identity change as circumstances dictate. By the last quarter of the nineteenth century, the vast Plains bison herds verged on extinction. In the face of that unfathomable ecological catastrophe, the Plains Métis Nation, as it had emerged and constructed itself, was forced once more to transform itself or face dissolution as a corporate and socio-political entity. In one sense, the rise of "hard" identities, with choices such as the taking of half-breed scrip or the adhesion to treaty and its increasingly enforced reserve residency requirements, forced some former bison-hunting families to rethink their official, if not their lived, identities as either Métis or Indians.[35] However, continued trading and freighting activities linked to the seasonal fur trade, other wage labour, and trapping, hunting, and guiding pursuits allowed for a distinct Métis community and identity to persist well past the turn of the nineteenth century, if perhaps in a less obviously flamboyant form. Some parkland and more northerly communities that had never been fully involved in the Plains bison economy came to identify with this ever-evolving Métis identity and their descendants rightly ascribe to themselves a present-day "Métis" identity—ethnogenesis is, after all, an ongoing, open-ended process Others, in those transitional years, joined with their kin on reserves and took on an "Indian" identity or simply merged with the more powerful incoming settler populations.[36] Nations and their constituent members are never static entities. It is a testament to the resiliency of a Métis corporate national identity formed close to two hundred years ago that it endures, and, in fact, flourishes, however transformed, to present times.

When looking at the multiple and multi-faceted processes of ethnogenesis on the North American Plains region prior to 1870, one must keep firmly in mind that ethnic identities were fluid, relational, and situational. Unlike hats, a person could and did wear several identities at once (Colley 1992 6). Although there were recognisable cultural, social, and economic nations called Apache, Blackfoot, Comanche, and Métis operating on the Plains in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, their boundaries were porous. Through kinship, ancestry, marriage, adoption, friendship, or, especially on the southern plains, captivity, people could and did pass from one place to another and from ethnic identity to another. With an ever-accelerating pace of change brought on by new technologies, horses, epidemics, warfare, and new economic opportunities, individuals and groups were continually positioning and repositioning themselves, figuratively and physically, on the Plains. A Saulteaux man born of a Métis mother could spend a good number of years engaged largely in the Lake Manitoba fisheries with his Saulteaux kin, only to marry back into his maternal kin Métis community and spend an equal number of years as a bison-hunting Métis out on the plains. Depending

on where he lived and with whom, he could lay claim to both identities—and perhaps others—without qualm (St-Onge 2006 9-10).

This said; a Plains Métis corporate identity nevertheless existed during the greater part of the nineteenth century. As illustrated above, one has to look beyond community and "tribal" studies to understand that Métis ethnogenesis was part of a wider pattern of emergent nationalism that was occurring in the North American interior. This greater vista also allows us to see that the rise of "La Nation" was not merely a product of the fur trade. Obviously the trade influenced the shape taken on by this new identity, as a great many of the paternal ancestors of the Plains Métis bison hunters were French Canadian Catholic voyageurs from the Montreal area coming into the Great Lakes and Plains areas with their own clear sense of self. This steady influx helped shape the contours of the new identity and ensured that the emergent national identity was not simply a morphed native one, as was the case for the Comanche, however mixed their population. The steady presence over many generations of French-Canadian personnel in the Northwest fur trade meant that the Métis family, kin networks, and clans built themselves around French Canadian as opposed to native clusters of men who had chosen to remain in the interior. These freemen were the anchors that allowed for a new identity grounded in a hybrid "Métis" sense of self to emerge.[37]

Yet this Métis ethnogenesis occurred in a specific time-space continuum. It occurred at the eastern edge of the northern Great Plains in the opening decades of the nineteenth century. These were watershed years for inhabitants residing at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine Rivers. Although a mixed-descent population had resided in this area for some time prior to the founding of the Red River colony, it is only in these years that they experienced three-way pressures and possibilities. First, with the growing violence of the fur trade wars and arrival of Selkirk's colonists, the *in situ* population felt its economic base threatened. Second, great opportunities for an improved livelihood were arising with the acquisition of sufficient horses, the perfection of a gun and cart technology, and the ever-growing demand for bison products from the extended fur trade networks. Third, the opening years of the nineteenth century were also a time when the bison-rich plains were experiencing abrupt native depopulation due to recurring and devastating epidemics. After the 1779–83 epidemics, Métis families and extended kin groups were moving onto the plains and into a position of relative strength, as tribes such as the Plains Cree could no longer mount an effective defence of their hunting territories. It did not take much for the Métis and their Saulteaux allies to realise that a concerted, coordinated effort (i.e., the large armed and wheeled bison hunt) would allow them to efficiently exploit the Plains potential. Certainly after the 1837–38 epidemics that decimated the Assiniboine, Blackfoot, and Sioux, the now-mobilised corporate Plains Métis were in a position to penetrate deeply, with relative impunity, into the Dakotas and far western Plains in search of the immense bison

herds. Battles such as at Grand Coteau in 1851 against the Sioux, with its clear-cut victory for the Red River Plains Métis, simply added to their sense of being lords of the Plains. There was a clear advantage to being Métis in the nineteenth century on the northern Plains.

Like the Comanche more than any other Plains tribe, for close to a century the Métis were able not only to create social and political relationships with other Indian groups to defend themselves and their economic interests, but, as the decades went by, to turn the Plains into a centre of production. For the Comanche, established industries, such as dried meat and pemmican production, along with processing and hide tanning, were linked to horse breeding and trading and the maintenance of far-flung commercial links (Anderson 4). The Métis bison hunts, and attendant pemmican and robe production for commodity and consumption, were linked to trading and freighting activities. This allowed both groups, among other native nations, to maintain economic and political autonomy for decades in a region buffeted by outside forces. As Anderson has stated of the southwest plains:

> The political economy of the southern plains and even to some extent the greater Southwest was a native institution that avoided dependency for two hundred and fifty years, breaking down only after 1830 with the arrival of substantial numbers of Americans. It offered a bulwark for native ethnogenesis and cultural reinvention, facilitating survival in the changed world that European invasion helped produce. New economic opportunities offered the chance for straggling bands to reinvent themselves or to join other more successful groups. […] This view of the Southwest as an emerging ethnic "stew" is quite different from that presented by previous historians … a history of people determined to survive and quite willing to reinvent culture or to join other stronger groups if necessary to do so. […] The final stage emerged as the Comanche entered the plains region and linked Caddos and Wichitas with Pueblo Indians and their various ethnic associates, forming a sophisticated and successful native political economy. (Anderson 6)

What rings true for the Comanche on the southern Plains rings true for the Métis on the northern Plains. From the early 1800s to at least 1870, the Plains Métis were a strong presence on the northern interior landscape both economically and militarily. While the Plains Métis were far from unusual in their hybridity or their ethnogenesis—there were many mixed or reconstituted bands emerging into new entities on the Plains—they were unusual because they used this hybridity, linked to their French-Canadian ancestry, as the basis for their collective identity and the core of their post-1816 ethnogenesis. [38]

(Endnotes)

1   George F.G. Stanley, *The Birth of Western Canada: A History of the Riel Rebellions*. Toronto: Univ. of Toronto Press, 1960); and George F.G. Stanley, *Manitoba 1870: A Metis Achievement* (Winnipeg, MB: Univ. of Winnipeg, 1972).

2   Constitution Act (1982), Part II, Rights of Aboriginal Peoples of Canada.

3   Stanley, The *Birth of Western Canada. 1885 and After: Native Society in Transition*. Ed James Waldram and F. Laurie Barron. Regina, SK: Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1986); and Hartwell Bowsfield, *Louis Riel—Selected Readings*. Toronto: Copp, Clark, Pitman, 1988.

4   On the Powley decision of 2003, see "Powley Case: Fulfilling Canada's Promise." http://www.metisnation.org/harvesting/Powley_Case/legal01.html (April 2010); and Gwen Reimer and Jean-Philippe Chartrand, "Documenting Historic Métis in Ontario," *Ethnohistory*. 51:3 (2004). For examples of the commemoration efforts made for Batoche 2010, see http://www.mn-s.ca/index.php?id=batoche.

5   The history of mankind, Stephen J. Greenblatt mused in 2004, should be understood as characterised by mobility, a constitutive rather than disruptive force in culture. The reality, he argued, "for most of the past as once again for the future, is more about nomads than natives." Stephen J. Greenblatt, "Cultural Mobility," 2004. www.fas.harvard.edu/curriculum-review/essays_pdf/Stephen_J_Greenblatt.pdf (accessed 18 October 2007).

6   Michel Hogue, "Between Race and Nation: The Plains Metis and the Canada-United States Border." PhD diss., Univ. of Wisconsin, 2007.

7   Marcel Giraud, *Le Métis Canadien: Son rôle dans l'histoire des provinces de l'Ouest*. Paris: Institut d'ethnologie, 1945), section 4. J.M. Bumsted, *The Fur Trade Wars: The Founding of Western Canada*, Winnipeg: Great Plains Publication, 1999. See chapters 5 to 8.

8   Thomas Hylland Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 2nd ed, *Anthropology, Culture and Society*, ed. Katy Gardner, Thomas Hylland Eriksen, and Jon P. Mitchell, London: Pluto Press, 2002: 112–117.

9   The present-day site of the city of Winnipeg, Manitoba.

10 Auguste-Henri de Tremaudan, *Histoire de la Nation Métisse dans l'Ouest Canadien* Montreal: A. Levesque, 1936.

11 Peguis and his Saulteaux band were more conciliatory towards Lord Selkirk and his attempts to create a colony at the confluence of the Red and Assiniboine rivers. Perhaps this was due to the Saulteaux being relative newcomers to the area, and perhaps also because they were less directly tied to the NWC-inspired fur trade economy than the Métis. Laura Peers, *The Ojibwa of Western Canada, 1780 to 1870*. Winnipeg, MB: Univ. of Manitoba Press, 1994.

12 Marcel Giraud, *Le Métis Canadien: Son rôle dans l'histoire des Provinces de l'Ouest* Paris: Institut d'ethnologie, 1945.

13 Eriksen, *Ethnicity and Nationalism*, 10. As Marshall Sahlins has argued in his critique of world-systems theorists and their views of hinterland societies, cultural change, externally induced yet indigenously orchestrated, has been going on for millennia. Marshall Sahlins, *Islands of History*. (Chicago: Univ. of Chicago Press, 1985).

14 Except for, perhaps, the Métis and their use of the French term "La Nation," both the terms tribe and nation are European impositions on native phenomena. They are used interchangeably here. Obviously, Plains peoples like the Cree, Comanche, or Blackfoot had their own terms for describing their emerging corporate identities.

15 Robert Alexander Innes, "Multicultural Bands on the Northern Plains and the Notion of 'Tribal Histories'." in *Finding a Way to the Heart: Feminist Writings on Aboriginal and Women's History in Canada*. Ed. Jarvis Brownlie and Valerie Korinek (Toronto: Univ. of Toronto

Press, 2010); Patricia C. Albers, "Changing Patterns of Ethnicity in the Northeastern Plains, 1780–1870." *History, Power, and Identity: Ethnogenesis in the Americas, 1492–1992*. Ed. Jonathan D. Hill (Iowa City, IA: Univ. of Iowa Press, 1996): 90-118.

16 Dan Flores, *The Natural West: Environmental History in the Great Plains and Rocky Mountains* (Norman, OK: Univ. of Oklahoma Press, 2001): 466.

17 A early example of this web of cooperating kin groups emerging out of the Montreal fur trade were the Great Lakes fur trade clans. See Susan Sleeper-Smith, *Indian Women and French Men: Rethinking Cultural Encounter in the Western Great Lakes* (Amherst, MA: Univ. of Massachusetts Press, 2001).

18 James McKillip, "A Métis Métier: Transportation in Rupert's Land" (Master's Thesis, Univ. of Ottawa, 2005).

19 Binnema, *Common and Contested Grounds: A Human and Environmental History of the Northwestern Plains.*, 17–36.

20 Although perhaps the most striking example of the incorporation of diverse groups of Indians into an emerging identity, the Comanche were not the first plains dwellers to adopt such a strategy. Earlier on, the Jumanos, and then the Apache, made similar use of acculturation to maintain their demographic and socio-economic strengths. Calloway, *One Vast Winter Count*. 277–80.

21 Ibid., 841.

22 Kavanagh, "Comanche," 896–99.

23 John E. Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis," in *From Rupert's Land to Canada*, ed. Gerhard J. Ens, Theodore Binnema, and R.C. Macleod (Edmonton, AB: Univ. of Alberta, 2001). See also Heather Devine, "Les Desjarlais: The Development and Dispersion of a Proto-Métis Hunting Band, 1785–1870." *From Rupert's Land to Canada*. Ed. Ens, Binnema, & Macleod.

24 Of course, as has been argued elsewhere, identities in the nineteenth century were much more fluid and situational than after 1870 and the advent of the treaty process and scrip distribution. Nicole St-Onge, "Uncertain Margins: Métis and Saulteaux Identities in St-Paul des Saulteaux, Red River 1821–1870." *Manitoba History.*. 53 (2006): 2–10.

25 All were microclimates offering some protection from harsh winters, including sufficient heating wood and fodder for their horses and oxen.

26 Payment, "Plains Métis," 661–62. Between 1817 and 1837, the AFC hired over one thousand men as fur trade employees, principally French-Canadian voyageurs, out of Montreal. St-Onge, "The Persistence of Travel and Trade."

27 The extensive canoe and boat traffic operating in support of the fur trade created a very large demand for foodstuffs, particularly pemmican. With upwards of two thousand men employed in the business of paddling canoes, rowing boats, and portaging cargo, the demand for pemmican was enormous. A daily ration consisted of from five to eight pounds of pemmican per man per day, meaning that the fur trade workers were consuming in excess of a million pounds of pemmican each year. McKillip, "A Métis Métier," 88.

28 On the 1840 hunt, according to eyewitness Alexander Ross, there were estimated to be 1700 Red River carts operated by 500 men, 600 women, and 680 children. Carts could carry, on average, 900-pound loads. McKillip, "A Métis Metier," 88–107.

29 The year 1821 marked the amalgamation of the great rival companies in the Northwest, the London-based Hudson's Bay Company and the Montreal-based North West Company. The new concern kept the name Hudson's Bay Company, and its charter gave it exclusive commercial rights to the vast territory comprising the Hudson's Bay hydraulic basin. The new concern quickly consolidated its northern shipping route through the Bay and largely abandoned the centuries-old, east-west voyageur routes. Comparatively few French-Canadian voyageurs were hired out of Montreal for work in the Northwest after this date, thus ending an era.

30 For a discussion of the Plains Métis' historic links to their Saulteaux allies consult, St- , "Uncertain Margins," 2–10.

31 As Payment has stated, a second historical group of Métis, of native and largely Scottish origins, also emerged at Red River. These were the descendents of the HBC "Bay" men and their native wives. Scholars have generally emphasised the distinctions between French Métis and Scottish "Half-Breeds," but there was quite a bit of movement between these two populations. Prominent Métis bison-hunting families had last names such as Grant or Mckay, but appeared to identify fully with the more bison-economy-oriented Plains Métis. See Payment, "Plains Métis," 663.

32 Ibid. One should be careful not to read in these egalitarian principles some sort of pan-native ideology. Tribes such as the Blackfoot had, after their successful transition to a bison-hunting and horse-herding economy, very marked social stratification. According to Hamalainen, this polarisation became even more pronounced after 1830, when American merchants entered the Upper Missouri and the demand shifted from provisions to bison robes. Because preparing marketable robes was extremely laborious, it placed greater demands for female labour, and only a man with several wives could procure significant number of robes to trade. The concentration of wealth, status, and power could be astounding. Hamalainen, "The Rise and Fall of Plains Indian Horse Cultures," 845.

33 It is likely that some Métis families very early on chose to remain on the Plains to trade and hunt, and only sporadically came to Red River for visiting and trading purposes.

34 Gail Morin, *Metis Families: A Genealogical Compendium*, 6 vols. (Pawtucket, RI: Quitin Publications, 2001).

35 Melanie Niemi-Bohun, "Colonial Categories and Familial Responses to Treaty and Métis Scrip Policy: The 'Edmonton and District Stragglers,' 1870–88," *Canadian Historical Review* 90, 1 (March 2009): 71–98.

36 St-Onge, *Saint-Laurent, Manitoba*.

37 Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis."

38 This blending of cultures can be seen in Plains Métis artistic, cultural, and linguistic expressions. For examples of these, consult the Gabriel Dumont Institute's virtual museum, http://www.metismuseum.com/main.php

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Resistance and Transformation: Negotiating Political Rhetorics in First Nations Literatures

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This article explores the reappropriation of the English and French languages within First Nations contemporary literatures, specifically how literary texts enable the retelling and reclaiming of Indigenous Peoples' histories and rights for sovereign governance. Notwithstanding the ongoing challenges Indigenous people face, including that of demystifying the political rhetorics through which colonialism continues to model assumptions and discursive expectations throughout Canada, what is produced, ultimately, in these literatures, is a "strategic space" of positive resistance and transformational power. This is a liminal zone in which new forms of critical thought and modes of collaborative learning may emerge. Indeed, in the active re-shaping of this already-encoded relation between imperial powers and indigenous societies, I ask, how can one engage in the discourse of humanism alongside any struggle for humanity, without ultimately participating in – in the sense of being complicit in – the very discourse that up until the 1960's defined 'Indians' in terms of the non-human, as mere wards of the State? Drawing from the works of Tomson Highway, Lee Maracle and Joséphine Bacon, this article examines how, by means of the productive violence of reappropriation, these literary "performances" generate upsetting and comical interventions that demystify, as well as denounce, the ongoing forms of exploitation within Canada. Such processes are crucial for establishing discourses of reconciliation and practices of negotiation towards equity and sovereignty.

The 1895 Annual Report of the Department of Indian Affairs identified language as a key component of assimilation and stated that:

> To a certain stage in an Indian's advancement there exists but little doubt that he should be kept in communities; but as soon as that stage is reached, and it should be at an early period, he should be brought to compete with his fellow whites; but in order that this may be done effectually he must be taught the English language. So long as he keeps his native tongue, so long will he remain a community apart. (23)

Drawing from the works of Tomson Highway (Cree), Lee Maracle (Salish) and Joséphine Bacon (Innu), this article explores the reappropriation of the English and French languages within First Nations contemporary literatures and specifically examines how literary texts enable the retelling and reclaiming of Indigenous Peoples' histories and rights for sovereign governance.[1] Notwithstanding the ongoing challenges Indigenous people face, including that of demystifying the political rhetorics through which colonialism continues to model assumptions and discursive expectations throughout Canada, what is produced, ultimately, in these literatures, is a strategic space of positive resistance and transformational power. This is a liminal zone in which new forms of critical thought and modes of collaborative learning may emerge, generating a possible dialogue beyond cultural and linguistic divides. Ultimately, by means of the productive violence of reappropriation, these literary performances generate upsetting and comical interventions that demystify, as well as denounce, the ongoing forms of exploitation within Canada. Such processes are crucial for establishing discourses of reconciliation and practices of negotiation towards equity and sovereignty.

Native and First Nations literatures are emerging as a space of empowerment and agency. They are operative in the sense of 'writing back' against practices of assimilation and colonial abuse. It can also be argued however, that these texts revitalise communal knowledge by 'writing home'; an act which affirms, rather than merely restores, a sense of collective memory. Language becomes the decolonising tool towards rewriting "the existence and presence of Aboriginal Peoples into North American society, as well as their celebration and cultural affirmation" – which are, according to Jeannette Armstrong, necessary paths towards healing (1998 241). It is through literature that an audience may recognise innovations and allusions and be revitalised by communal knowledge. This strategy calls for the creation of a discourse within a liminal space. Cree artist and writer Neal McLeod describes the process as "not so much returning to some idealised location of interpretation: rather, it is a hermeneutical act, perhaps an act of faith. It is the attempt to link two disparate narrative locations, and to find a place, a place of speaking and narrating:" through stories, "to anchor ourselves in the world." (33) Reappropriation, then, is not only about resisting past and present forms of colonisation; it is also about restoring traditional knowledge and attempting to harmonise it with present-day societal preoccupations. It enables the creation of a space in which the ghosts of Canada's past may be exposed and dealt with, and in which collective knowledge, local activism and pedagogical approaches underline the importance of interconnectedness. In effect, writers and scholars, both Native and non-Native, are working towards a new methodology which combines critical pedagogy with collaborative research. This questions previously existing institutional discourses that have compartmentalised these literatures, and hence categorised and further entrenched, falsely, their authors as "Indians," in the Vizenorian sense – a vacuous

term synonymous with closure, vanishing, absence and one built on nostalgia and melancholy. A critical way of thinking is unfolding in regards to the study of Native and First Nations literatures, in its relation to Canada and the United States, and its presence and/or absence in the fields of Canadian and American literatures. In the words of Jeannette Armstrong, "it is [now] about collaboration as an organisational system" (1999 7).

Tomson Highway: Empowerment through Performance

Tomson Highway's work is characterised by language reappropriation but his strategy of suggestive silence, one which exposes the complex and still-tabooed issues of racism and sexual abuse, place these themes at the centre of his discursive stage. In *Kiss of the Fur Queen*, Highway depicts the mental torment and shock of Jeremiah Okimasis when he witnesses his younger brother, Gabriel, being sexually abused at the residential school. The various systems of domination, in Highway's works, converge with, and within, the English language. As Maria Campbell has said of her own writing process: "When I was writing I always found that English manipulated me. Once I understood my own rhythms, the language of my people, the history of storytelling, then I was able to manipulate the language. And once I started to be able to manipulate English, I felt that was personal liberation" (1992 10). Highway works from inside the perceived language of domination, undermining its ideological structures and giving voice to that which has been unspeakable and repressed. It is during a school vacation that Jeremiah and Gabriel eventually speak of the abuse they endure during their time at residential school. It is significant that this recounting is in English and this has a twofold purpose. In one sense it is only by speaking in the language of the coloniser, that the seriousness of their secret can be exposed. However, by speaking in a tongue foreign to that of their parents they are also protecting their parents from this violent knowledge:

Jeremiah's words, in English, were as cold as drops from a melting block of ice.

"Even if we told them, they would side with Father Lafleur."

Selecting one of the three Native languages that she knew – English would remain, for life, beyond her reach and that of her husband's – Mariesis turned to Jeremiah. "What are you saying, my sons?"

If moments can be counted as minutes can, or hours or days or years, one thousand of them trickled by before Jeremiah was absolutely sure Gabriel's silence would remain until the day they died. And then he said, his voice flat, "*Maw keegway.*" Nothing. (92)

The choice made by the brothers to speak in English about their abuse recalls the difficulty found in the attempt to translate alien concepts. On the other hand, this

choice is suggestive of using English – the violator's language – also as a distancing tool. The momentary happiness that the brothers experience at being back home, within a safe environment, cannot be tarnished, at least for the time being, by that other world to which they know they must eventually return.

The very problem of articulating their trauma is manifest in Jeremiah's inability to reconnect with his suppressed artist sensibilities. Jeremiah's art is viewed "as a responsibility, a duty; you can't run away from it" (259). Within Highway's text the responsibility of the artist is to give voice to silence and to expose the harsh reality story of what has happened, without necessarily saying how it happened. Jeremiah will only come full circle once he accepts the reality of rape, not only to his brother, but his own. This act and his complicit silence for the payment of a chocolate bar weighs heavy upon his conscience:

> […] he remembers the holy man inside him, the lining of his rectum being torn, the pumping and pumping and pumping, cigar breath billowing somewhere above his cold shaved head. […] Back in bed, it was too dark to see what kind of chocolate bar it was. Sweet Mary? Coffee Crisp? Mr. Big? (287)

Ultimately, it is through the final theatrical performance, that Jeremiah is set free. By writing a play that recalls their years at the residential school, and one which is directed and performed by Gabriel, the two brothers are able to give voice to the repressed and in doing so, 'expose the poison.' The final scene unveils "the cannibal spirit shedding his costume at death, revealing a priest's cassock." (285) It is through the act of performance and telling which enables the "padlocked doors" (285) of memory to be opened. In performing the unspeakable both brothers manipulate the dominant English language in order to expose and critique the systemic and racist acts of sexual violation to which they were subjected to. It is significant to the politics of this novel that this performance can be interpreted by both the coloniser and the colonised and it is this interpretive platform which gives the brother's performance, and concomitantly Highway's novel, its critical, transformative edge.

Such acts of personal, artistic, and linguistic – and, ultimately, collective – performance underline a discourse of continuity and resistance, rather than a discourse of victimisation and statutory grief. Atikamekw poet Charles Coocoo refers to this process as an "intellectual desintoxication," and the creation of a "communal path towards healing […] away from that frontier of despair." (2007) Nevertheless, although texts such as Highway's *Kiss of the Fur Queen* can be considered pedagogically imperative through their examination and contestation of past wrongs, it is also necessary to underline the importance of the text's function on an individual level. The individual should not be effaced in the attempt to view Indigenous texts as an amorphous, or collective banner to action.

Highway's short story "Hearts and Flowers," is set in the 1960s. As Highway recalls,

this was an important time in regards to the fight for autonomy by First Nations people; "[With] the acquisition of the [right to] vote […] Native people were finally able to move away from reserves, and to live as recognised human beings, so to speak, in so far as the status of being a human being is equated with the right to vote." (Shackelton & Lutz 75)[2] In this story, Mr. Tipper, explains to the young Native Cree, Daniel Daylight that if one cannot vote, one cannot speak and choose. The other side to this is that without basic citizenship rights one is considered by the dominant (white) community as less than human. As Tipper explains: "You 'vote' for your leader. You decide how you want your life to be in your country. That's what makes you a human. Otherwise you're not." (188) Indeed, by prohibiting the right to exist, to speak and choose, it was assumed that the Indigenous populations would eventually disappear. Writers such as Highway contest this invisibilising of an Indigenous voice for silence need not be understood as an absence of sound, but rather as the presence of something that is not sound (Maitland). As Gerald Vizenor states; "Silence […] is not the end of our stories" (Lee 1999 142) and "Our best stories must be heard in a trickster war, in the shadows, in a world of chance" (Lee 135).

This kind of silence is about enduring, observing, surviving and, most importantly, plotting. It is within this space that the two-spirited Trickster figure arises. The Trickster is a subversive, imaginative figure who, in its capacity for duality, contains as much mythological substance as plays of contemporary language theory. Using humour as its weapon, the Trickster questions that which is posited as authoritative and given. The Trickster balances, challenges and mediates so that its words, "will assume the guise of hypocrisy and even repression in comic roles, [but] as a trope, [the] trickster abhors repression and hypocrisy and challenges us to reimagine the world and liberate ourselves in the process" (Owens 1992 250).

This hypocritical duality is at work within the character of Mr. Tipper in "Hearts and Flowers" for his attempts at explaining the 'Indian' as non-human are closer to the ridicule than they are to an authoritative voice. He nevertheless is the one that enables Daniel Daylight to partake in a piano competition. The language games, which take place during the drives from the Watson Lake Residential School to the little town of Prince William, where the little 'non-human' (Daniel) goes to rejoice in a very 'human' activity (playing the piano), alongside a perfect little 'human' (a little white girl), open up a space in which, as Highway terms it, the "universally transformational" can unfold and change the lives and status of its characters. In effect, the story ends with the winning duet no performance, the music of which, in Daniel's mind's eye, travels far up North to his community, where he wills his parents to walk past the priest, enter the voting booth, and cast their first ballot. A new myth is thereby created; the story of a little boy who played his people into humanity. This is, according to Highway, the power of art and, consequentially, the power of myth. The language game is embedded and

embodied in the actual moment of performance. Performance, as such, is the assurance of the continuity of stories. This performative empowerment, and consequential 'humanising,' is, in Daniel Daylight's words, making "a point" (195): that for all the collected stereotypes – that Highway explores and upsets – that pointed to the *indian* as "vanishing," those *indians* were not only human, they were, according to Highway, half-divine as well, capable of victory, and part of a collective subconscious that needs not only to be healed, but celebrated, with all its sadness and joy: "Tears of sorrow are to be shed, yes, but tears of joy as well, tears of rampant celebration" (2003 44).

Political & Nomadic Rhetorics: Lee Maracle and Joséphine Bacon

The year 1990 marked Canadian and Aboriginal history as importantly as the granting of the right to vote did. The collapse of the Meech Lake Accord and the Oka Crisis are crucial moments in the active re-shaping of the already-encoded relation between imperial powers and Indigenous societies. Indeed, the performative power of Cree Elijah Harper's "no" exemplifies the growing political influence of First Nations peoples across Canada. Eagle feather in hand, Elijah Harper cited the lack of adequate participation by Aboriginal people in Canada's political process as his reason for blocking the accord. He stressed that beyond the recognition as participants in the Canadian process there is also the recognition of Aboriginal Peoples as part of the founding peoples of the country. Harper's "no" was also a stand of principle, on behalf of Aboriginal people. He stated: "it is the first time that we have an opportunity to publicly state that we are disappointed and angered in terms of the outcome of the First Ministers' conference on Aboriginal issues."[3] Lee Maracle's novel *Sundogs* (1992) explores the notion of taking an individual stand, and the repercussions that it has upon a community: "[…] Elijah's small "no" may have shaken us from a deep sleep, but we still have a distance to travel, not the least of which is to alter our perception of ourselves. […] This is just the beginning. […] Oka is just a beginning" (200). On an individual level, Marianne, the narrator in *Sundogs*, finds herself liberated by Elijah Harper's anti-constitutional stance: "If Elijah upset Canada, he upset me more. His message to us was profoundly simple; we are worth fighting for, we are worth caring for, we are worthy" (77). As she performs the Run for Peace – the goal of which is to run an eagle feather, a pipe and a drum across Canada into the town of Kanehsatake as a means of support for the Warriors, as well as to draw media attention away from the reactive events at the standoff, towards the proactive engagements of Aboriginal People across Canada – Marianne grieves for her solitude, the lack of her family's Native language and the childlike innocence that had shielded her. When writing about the reclaiming and repossession of memory, an essential question to ask is how does one reclaim, not only memory, but humanity, in the very language that is responsible for its diminishing, erasing and silencing? For Marianne, who was never taught either of

her parents' Native language, and who "loathe[s] English, feel[s] imprisoned in its dry and cold delivery of pain and truth," (68) it is once again Elijah Harper's words that let her see beyond the dry functionality of the language, which opens up into a space in which his larger message is unveiled:

> Three generations of us glued to the words of a little man whose command of English is connected to some other language, some other rhythm […] His English in translation is free of the dry cold pain. Graphic and gentle, polite, free of the bullshit hierarchy, he drives on relentlessly, but not noisily. He carefully chooses each word so as to sound as unobnoxious as he possibly can, while he articulates, documents and advances the most obnoxious and despicable thing a Nation can do – attempt genocide on a people. (68)

Throughout *Sundogs* Marianne's mother endlessly accuses the television newscasters of that very conspiracy—the cultural genocide of the Indigenous people, which at first enervates and even embarrasses Marianne. Much like the Trickster, who abhors repression and hypocrisy, Elijah Harper's expelling and translation of grief, into a new language and a new form of life, challenges Marianne, her family, and people, to question authority and indeed "to reimagine the world and liberate ourselves in the process." (Owens 250) Marianne's own prejudice and sense of disconnection – instilled in her by the shielding silence of her mother and family, in the hopes that "Baby" would not have to wage as well in the endless struggle against history (205) – lifts with every step that she performs on the Run. Ultimately, and in Joan's words, "the individual has an obligation to cooperate. Everyone is obligated to speak their piece." (202) To partake in the Run is, in a sense, for Marianne, to partake in the struggle, to assert her place, her voice, within that silent, dividing struggle; to participate in the lifting of "the weight of grief unrelenting [that] kept us all standing still," (206) to upheave an intergenerational paralysis of watching in "silent horror," and transform it into the courage "to move beyond grief and take up the business of living." (206)

To completely abandon the colonial language is a concept that some First Nations writers have explored: to not write in French or English, but in their own language. This, of course, though being a very decisive statement, also implies the restrictiveness of the audience. But according to many others, such as Tomson Highway, Gerald Visenor, Maria Campbell, Thomas King, Joséphine Bacon or Rita Mestokosho, to name only a few, it would be impossible to completely abandon the colonial language – in the end, what is important is the use one makes of the English and French words, which must rise out of one's own understanding of the world. Bearing this in mind then, opportunities for language renegotiation are close to infinite. For instance, some writers integrate words, expressions, even whole sentences of their Native language into their English or French writing – at times without providing the reader with their translation, while others, such as Tomson Highway in his *Kiss of the Fur Queen*, integrate at the end of the work a detailed lexicon for the expressions used. Others

publish their works in bilingual editions. In this sense, questions of translation and voice come to the forefront and require new forms of renegotiation. Just as literature is a site of and for struggle, language becomes one for and of revolution, in the way that Edward Kamau Brathwaite has described in his *History of the Voice*: "English it may be in terms of some of its lexical features. But in its contours, its rhythm and timbre, its sound explosions, it is not English, even though the words, as you hear them, might be English to a greater or lesser degree." (2006 281)

Innu poet Joséphine Bacon, for instance, writes in both her languages, Innu and French, and has published a bilingual collection, *Bâtons à message – Tshissinuatshitakana* (2009). When asked whether having to learn French was a "necessary evil," – she was a student at the Uashat-Malioténam Residential School between the ages of four and nineteen – she replies: "The French language became important once I began working with cultural projects, with storytelling, as a means for the spreading of our culture and our language" (2009 32 [My translation]).[4] Her ability to switch between languages, in thinking and in writing, as well as her translation work, has enabled her to come across many Innu expressions that, she says, no longer exist today and belong to another, earlier, time, "*au temps du nomadisme*" (31). Though these expressions perhaps no longer exist, as such, in contemporary Innu society, the concepts they refer to are not empty, nor forgotten – just as new concepts and words have had to be brought into the language, therefore bearing witness to a language that is, to borrow from Lee Maracle, "alive and crowing" (1989 1). A fact that Joséphine Bacon recognises, as well as the extensive work that such continuous 'updating' may require: "Everyone said: In 50 years, there will be no Native languages anymore; See how they were wrong? So I continue to love what I am, what we are, and we need people who love, as many as it takes to not let ourselves die" (33).[5] The "necessary evil" of learning French became, for Joséphine Bacon, a tool towards personal liberation – and enabled her not only to be "the survivor of a story that is not told" ("*survivante d'un récit / qu'on ne raconte pas*" (82)), but to find the means for the story, finally, to be told, though through writing: "We are a people of the oral tradition… Today we know how to write. Poetry enables us to give life again to the language of *nutshimit*, our earth, and through words, the sound of the drum continues to echo[…] It is a time for storytelling" (8).[6] Though it may now be time for words, therefore, in a way, a time to move beyond silence, it is also about what goes on within silence: "Silence," writes Bacon, "You've told me everything" ("*Silence. / Tu m'as tout dit*" (56)) and "Kill me / if I remain silent / when one disrespects / my people" ("*Tue-moi / si je reste silencieuse / quand on manque de respect / à mon peuple*" (84)). Though silence may also be understood as a statement, Bacon's message is clear, as she explains that she writes "the history of Quebec in a different way than it is written in the school books" – her term for her writing process is "gentle politics" ("*politique douce*")[7] – and she becomes, ultimately, what Leonard

Peltier would refer to as "her own message." Silence, therefore, goes beyond being a voice of complicity – it becomes a responsibility.

"Study," writes Maracle, "is a collective and collaborative process: collective not in the sense that one wants to come to a common position, but collective in that many participate, and collaborative in that we all wish to come to a good mind about what is cherished and hidden. Study is a process, a journey of discovery." (2007 57) The reappropriation of language is an important strategy of intervention in this process, this journey of rediscovery, of regaining control. The initial colonial discourse is upset, infected so to speak, and re-framed into a world-view in which, the mythical holds a crucial place, as manipulation gives way to liberation. This liberation is not from language, but by language: through its instrumentalisation, language is re-manipulated, reappropriated into a "transformative decolonizing tool" (Lundy 112), which not only reports and shows what has been done to the Indigenous populations of North America, but which re-affirms and celebrates what is being done in numerous acts of artistic performance. In this then resides both the decolonising process, as well as the pedagogical project, in that it is indeed one such intervention mode, or strategy of reappropriation, that bears witness to the unveiling and the exploration of the emerging, collaborative discourse, which aims to demystify prior assumptions and discursive expectations, as well as to denounce how different forms of exploitation and strategies of oppression converge. Language, then, becomes a liminal gap, a crossroads at which dialogue – across and beyond linguistic divides – may be achieved, within a shared performative space of renegotiation and resistance, a strategic location of positive resistance and transformational power.

Language reappropriation is the very tool of an emerging methodology that calls for a form of radicalism, one that is fuelled by critical pedagogy and collaborative research. This academic impetus is about deliberation, growth, and transformation. It is also about responsibility; an act of moving beyond the relentless reproduction of cultural dichotomies and racialised bias. The analysis of literary and visual texts is imperative to an emerging criticism in this field. This analysis is also about recognising a common history – be it sombre – and setting grounds for dialogue beyond cultural and linguistic gaps, within that new, shared strategic location in which resistance and renegotiation are sources for creative and transformational power. Analysis is a collective and collaborative process involving the decolonisation of institutions, communities and ideologies while also addressing questions of cultural appropriation.

(Endnotes)

1   A shorter version of this article was originally given at the British Association for Canadian Studies (BACS) 35th Annual Conference, "Democracy as a work in progress: the intellectual and cultural dynamics of the Canadian idea," Murray Edwards College, University of Cambridge UK, April 6-8, 2010.

2 To think of democracy as a process – the result of which is the practice of and adherence to the principles of social equality – is especially important when thinking about the particular *rights* that were granted only very gradually to First Nations people in Canada. The right to vote, for example, was only bestowed on March 31, 1960. Indeed, in the active re-shaping of this already-encoded relation between imperial powers and indigenous societies, I ask, how can one engage in the discourse of humanism alongside any struggle for humanity, without ultimately participating – in the sense of being complicit – in the very discourse that up until the 1960's defined '*Indians*' in terms of the non-human, as mere wards of the State?

3"Constitutional Discord : Meech Lake – An Interview with Elijah Harper." CBC Radio, April 12, 1990. [http://archives.cbc.ca/politics/constitution/topics/1180-6773/]

4"La langue française est devenue importante quand j'ai commencé à travailler dans la culture, dans les récits, pour la diffusion de notre culture et de notre langue aussi").

5 "Tout le monde disait: Dans 50 ans, aucune langue amérindienne va rester vivante; tu vois comme ils ont eu tort? Alors je continue d'aimer ce que je suis, ce que nous sommes, et il en faut des gens qui aiment, autant de fois qu'il en faudra pour ne pas se laisser mourir."

6 "Nous sommes un peuple de tradition orale […] Aujourd'hui, nous connaissons l'écriture. La poésie nous permet de faire revivre la langue du nutshimit, notre terre, et à travers les mots, le son du tambour continue de résonner… [Le] temps est au récit."

7 Address given at a round table event at "Événement KÉBEK: La place des Premières Nations dans un Québec interculturel," Université du Québec à Montréal, March 19, 2010.

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A Hero for all Seasons: A Late Nineteenth-Century Scarface in James Welch's "Fools Crow"

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This article analyses the continuities between the Story of Scarface, a story from the Blackfoot oral tradition, and the contemporary historical novel Fools Crow by Blackfoot/Gros Ventre author James Welch. It is based on a structural analysis of several renderings of the Story of Scarface, a Blackfoot ancestor and culture hero who brought from Natosi (the Sun) the instruction on how to conduct the Blackfoot Ookaan (Sun Dance). The article focuses on the ethical dimension of the characters in both texts in order to link the Blackfoot oral tradition to the contemporary narrative.

This article straddles the disciplinary boundary between history and literary criticism in order to analyze the ethical dimensions in the Story of Scarface[1], a narrative from the Blackfoot oral tradition, and their resonance with the historical novel *Fools Crow*,[2] by Blackfoot/Gros Ventre author James Welch (1986).[3] It argues that a historically-informed reading of the contemporary novel through the lens of the ancient story is instructive, not only about the strategies that Welch employs to represent Blackfoot subjectivity and identity, but also to represent difference between the Blackfoot characters and their "Others". In particular, this article posits that ethics functions as a metalanguage which links 'Scarface' and *Fools Crow*. Welch narrates the world of the Lone Eaters, one of twenty-four bands that once comprised the Pikuni division of the Blackfoot-speaking alliance (Grinnell 208–10). This alliance, including the Pikuni, the Kainai, and the Siksika, once dominated a territory that extended from the Saskatchewan to the Yellowstone Rivers and from the foothills of the Rocky Mountains (Backbone of the World) to beyond the Great Sand Hills, in current-day Saskatchewan. They are collectively known as Blackfoot, but they refer to themselves as the *Niitsitapiksi* or *Niitsitapii* (The Real People); and also as the *Nitsi–poi–yiksi* (speakers of the Real Language) (Blackfoot Gallery Committee (BCG) 2–4).[4]

There is a lack of critical attention to specific connections between contemporary fiction by First Nations authors—such as Welch—and stories from their respective

oral traditions. Thomas King argues that this lack of attention suggests "by omission that the two have little in common" (1987 13). Among the critical scholarship on *Fools Crow,* Nora Barry (1991) points up the connection between the novel and 'Scarface'. Her approach, however, focuses on how the novel fits within non-Blackfoot mythological structures and critical perspectives, rather than within Blackfoot worldviews. In an otherwise thorough reading of *Fools Crow,* Mary Lupton (2004) also mentions the 'Scarface' connection, but merely paraphrases Barry and thus also ignores Blackfoot-centred perspectives. Lupton agrees with Barry's contention that "Fools Crow is a human and therefore incapable of reaching the Above Ones" (86). 'Scarface' shows precisely the opposite, it provides a precedent that demonstrates that humans are connected to the Above Ones through principles of respect and reciprocity. It reflects the ongoing relationship between the Blackfoot and sacred beings, which this essay emphasizes. Other critics have paid even less attention to this "emic" perspective.[5]

Several premises must be borne in mind when reading *Fools Crow* through the lens of the worldviews embedded in 'Scarface': what some Western scholars define as "myths" have not been understood by First Nations peoples as fictions, but as true records of their past; as a foundational story, 'Scarface' is to the Blackfoot a sacred story. As reflected in 'Scarface', the Real People (the Pikuni, Kainai, and Siksika), received assistance from sacred beings, who taught them the ethical behaviours required in order lead better lives, lives that were in balance with those of their relations. The connections between their foundational stories, their ceremonies and rituals, and their practices within the secular realm, require that a holistic approach be employed in the interpretation of texts such as 'Scarface' and *Fools Crow.*

Broadly speaking, literary representation has played a part in the creation and maintenance of pejorative stereotypes of First Nations peoples throughout the Americas, as the colonizer's "Other". It is therefore to the contemporary representations by First Nations authors that, in the first instance, we can look to reverse the colonial gaze. Welch's historical novel fulfils these expectations by representing a world that, like the Blackfoot stories, is Blackfoot-centered—a world in which the Blackfoot characters articulate a Blackfoot perspective of Blackfoot history. Although Welch's narrative is amenable *inter alia* to analysis via Postcolonial theory, we would be yielding to the temptation of interpreting the Blackfoot world through a non-Blackfoot lens. Instead, in seeking to expand our understanding of contemporary writing by First Nations authors such as Welch, the present analysis emphasizes *Fools Crow*'s links with Blackfoot orature. Although the versions of 'Scarface' that inform this analysis were transcribed during the historical era, focusing on this narrative strives for an earlier point of reference. The colonial influence on First Nations literatures, including the adoption of English, and the genres introduced as literary templates by the colonizers, will not be dealt with here, as this would spring the bounds of this article. The specific

purpose in comparing the oral story and the historical novel is to seek out continuities between the old and the new.

When discussing the ethical dimensions of 'Scarface' and *Fools Crow,* this article alludes to Blackfoot ideals of behavior observed by those who strive to lead exemplary lives. It refers to "cultural norms and not exceptional behaviour", to borrow anthropologist Gerald Conaty's phrase (403). The working definition of social relations utilized here is contained within the term 'All my relations', a phrase that has a specific meaning for First Nations peoples in North America. As Thomas King explains:

> All my relations' is […] a reminder of who we are and of our relationship with both our family and our relatives. It also reminds us of the extended relationship we share with all human beings … But the relationships that Native people see go further, the web of kinship extending to the animals, to the birds, to the fish, to the plants, to all the animate and inanimate forms that can be seen or imagined. More than that, 'all my relations' is an encouragement for us to accept the responsibilities we have within this universal family by living our lives in a harmonious and moral manner. (1990 ix)

King adds that it is a common form of admonishment, "to say of someone that they act as if they have no relations" (1990 ix). Indeed, the expression "mind your relations" points to a core Blackfoot ideal, both, in the sense of taking into account, and looking after, *niksokowa* (our relations).[6] These ethics pervade the Blackfoot Stories as Pikuni Woody Kipp notes; "[o]ur relationships—with people, with animal nations, with the forces of the world—are established through our Native tongues, through the stories we tell our children" (ix). Like other narratives in the Star Stories cycle, 'Scarface' promotes "model behavior that is worthy of being retold" (Hernandez 2; BGC 8). The teachings derived from the story reflect the Blackfoot world in which the story is set, but offer "guidelines for behavior" for successive generations of the Real People (Weasel Traveller 31–3 and 35–7).[7] In her *Mokakssini: A Blackfoot Theory of Knowledge,* Blackfoot scholar Nimachia Hernandez points up values from the Blackfoot stories that best reflect their worldview: *inter alia* bravery, generosity, group effort/community harmony, honesty, knowledge as power, perseverance and strength, reciprocity, respect, responsibility, and sacrifice. The entire Blackfoot community, she argues, takes notice of individual adherence to these ideals (94–115). Pity and Compassion, notably absent from Hernandez's list, are also ubiquitous in the Blackfoot stories. According to Kipp, "[i]n the Native languages we talked with the animals, who were not animals but nations of very different beings, beings who could, and often did, help the poor pitiful human. There is, at the very core of the language, the mandate of compassion" (viii).

Generosity occupies a central place among the Blackfoot ethical ideals that permeate 'Scarface' and *Fools Crow;* it has been, from time immemorial, the *sine qua non* of a leader. Moreover, generosity and reciprocity cannot be disentangled within Blackfoot social relations. Kainai, Betty Bastien *(Sikapinaki,* or Blackeyes Woman)—when

referring to a Blackfoot Old Man story—notes the importance of "the natural law of reciprocity" that informs on Blackfoot "connections with [their] relatives ", based on "the observation of nature … [which] always tries to be in balance" (1999 1–2). Cultural insiders understand the link between respect and reciprocity. Nowhere is this imperative expressed more clearly than during *Ookaan* (Sun Dance), which takes place to show reciprocity for benefits received from Natosi (The Sun). The ceremony is one of the strands of continuity linking 'Scarface' to *Fools Crow.* This connection is neither serendipitous nor surprising. *Ookaan,* which during the non-sedentary era was held at the time when the bands of each Blackfoot division gathered together in a Circle Encampment *(Akkokatsin)*, presented unique opportunities to showcase ethical behaviour. The significance of *Ookaan* brings forth the significance of women often neglected in the historiography, but whose contributions to the wellbeing of their communities Welch has been careful to acknowledge in *Fools Crow.*

Ethical Dimensions of 'Scarface'

This study brings into dialogue six renderings of 'Scarface', collected in five ethnographic texts, with sporadic reference to other versions, among the many extant.[8] Despite the protean nature of oral stories that makes each retelling unique, there is a commonality of actions across the different versions of one story. The aim here is not to search for a 'true' version, but rather to canvass a number of representations in order to arrive at common core ethical ideals. What follows is a sequential composite of units of meaning (ætiological passages)[9] that are relevant to our purposes. 'Scarface' is set during the "dog days", an era when the Blackfoot were yet to acquire horses, which they obtained through intertribal trade during the early decades of the eighteenth century. According to the story, during the dog days the Real People lived in peace (McClintock 491–2; and Grinnell 93, 177, and 186). The narrative begins by establishing the main character's social standing and what he must do to become worthy. He is poor, and he is an orphan (Schultz 339).[10] He wishes to marry a chief's daughter who has rejected many "rich, handsome and brave" suitors but agrees to marry Scarface, if and when his scar disappears (Grinnell 93–5). Scarface is dismayed at the thought of getting rid of his scar. The task seems impossible. The chief's daughter is virtuous and kindly, and because of these qualities, Natosi has reserved her to become his own wife (Bullchild 329–31; Grinnell 94). She tells Scarface: "I have a lot of pity for you … Creator Sun has a lot of pity for the two of us" (Bullchild 333). Her pity has positive connotations. To ask one's relations for pity is a respectful form of address. In the version of 'Scarface' where the chief's daughter shows no compassion, she meets with an early death.

Scarface travels to the end of the known world, where the Above Beings reside, to ask Natosi to remove his scar (and in Grinnell's version to give up his own bond to marry the chief's daughter). He lives for a time with Natosi, his wife Kokomi-kisomm (Moon), and their son, Ipiso-waahsa (Morning Star).[11] Scarface proves his courage by killing several birds that were attacking Ipiso-waahsa, whereupon Natosi agrees to remove the scar. Before Scarface returns to his people, Natosi instructs him on the manner in which he wishes to be honoured through *Ookaan* (Sun Dance). Scarface's conduct throughout his epic journey illustrates the qualities that were most appreciated by the Blackfoot who looked to the story as a repository of knowledge and a guide to lead a moral life. The narrative integrates all the elements within the Blackfoot circle of life and thus provides an example of the way in which their stories teach their worldview. It contains lessons about the relationship between humans and all their relations, animate (humans, four-legged and two-legged animals), and inanimate (plants, rocks, including the Star People "and the earth itself" (BGC 9)).

The ethical ideals of 'Scarface' reflect an apparently male-centred worldview that places a premium on women's chastity: "The sun pities good women" (Grinnell 93). Chastity is embodied in the Holy Woman during the Sun Dance. Only a virtuous woman can play an intermediary role between the sacred realm and her community; her virtue has a positive impact on all her relations; her lack of virtue a negative one. When the chief's daughter refuses her suitors, her mother despairs at the thought that a child could be born while she is unmarried. However, although the chief's daughter appears to play a passive role, she is not without power. She has demonstrated personal autonomy, rejecting many suitors despite parental pressure. More significantly, she has been chosen to become Natosi's wife and thus she stands to become an intermediary between her people and the Star Beings.[12] Alice Kehoe, who proposed a reading of the workings of power in Blackfoot culture that contrasts with earlier representations of women as having little or no power, argues that within Blackfoot society "anyone can aspire to becoming more powerful" (113–23), power being open to all persons.

Scarface prepares for his quest like a warrior about to go on the warpath. Being poor, he must rely on helpers who pity him—often these helpers are women. An Old Woman gives him moccasins and food for his journey (Grinnell 95–6). In Uhlenbeck's and McClintock's versions, four women, each of whom he meets consecutively, give their own moccasins and instruct him: "when you arrive, put them with the fore-ends back", whereupon the moccasins will return to their owners by themselves. The fourth woman tells him where to find Morning Star, who will tell him "how [he] can live." These four women, according to Mike Swims Under, are one and the same: Natosi's wife, the Moon. Unbeknown to Scarface, he returns to the same lodge because "the whole world is the Sun's lodge" (Hernandez 86–9).[13] When the husband arrives, the woman intercedes on Scarface's behalf.

In other versions, Scarface's helpers are not human, but animals, from which Napi, a Creator and Trickster, has taught the Blackfoot to seek help: "if you are overcome, you may go and sleep and get power. Whatever animal answers your prayer, you must

listen to him (Grinnell 141). In one version, "wolf", "bear", "badger", and "wolverine" assist Scarface. Wolverine, being the fourth, brings forth a resolution by showing Scarface the trail (Grinnell 96–7).[14] The resolution after a four-fold cycle of repeated actions moves the narrative to the next phase. This cycle relates to the sacredness with which the Blackfoot view the four directions, North, South, East, and West. In his earliest fieldwork in the late nineteenth century, Boas noted similar rhythmic repetition as a formal aspect fundamental to the stories of many First Nations (Hymes 17–9).

Such cycles are often taken to signify sacred numbers. Linguist Dell Hymes, however, notes that "so-called sacred numbers" might not be primarily "something of transcendental mystical value". Rather, he suggests, they might have "developed from the aesthetic values of rhythmic repetition". The functions of repetition, whether sacred or aesthetic, are not, however, mutually exclusive. Among the Blackfoot there are myriad references to four being a sacred number. For example, in a Blackfoot story, when Napi first created "a woman and a child … her son," out of clay, he kept them covered, and each morning during four consecutive days he would uncover and inspect them. On the fourth morning "he told them to rise and walk; and they did so" (Grinnell 138). Moreover, up until the early reserve era, the Blackfoot camp moved four times before *Ookaan* could begin.[15] Once it began, many of its rituals were repeated four-fold. On the one hand, repetition follows the Blackfoot stories. On the other, drawing out the resolution increases suspense, and emphasizes the perseverance of the characters. It is notable that some transcriptions of 'Scarface' are devoid of repetition, for example, the version by a Piegan Woman (Wissler and Duvall 61–6). This suggests that non-Blackfoot editors, unable to appreciate merit in this "emic" device, might have wished to shorten the narrative for their white readers. The opposite would have been required from storytellers whose role was not only to impart knowledge, but also to keep their audiences entranced.

To return to the narrative, our hero reaches a crisis point when he faces the "Big Water," the last obstacle in his quest to find Natosi. In Schultz's version, two swans (a male and female couple) find Scarface when he is ready to give up: "here I die", he tells them, after confiding his troubles. Pitying Scarface, they ask him to "take courage," and take him on their backs to Natosi's "island home", showing him the trail he must follow. In Uhlenbeck's version the Morning Star guides Scarface.[16] Again, the intercession of a helper is emphasized in this passage. By the time Scarface arrives at Natosi's lodge, his perseverance and courage have been tested. He has also shown respect for his relations, yet further tests await him.

The friendship that develops between Scarface and Morning Star stems from incidents concerning which the various versions of the story disagree. In the Piegan man's version, Morning Star persuades Scarface to accompany him to a place where dangerous birds live, which Scarface agrees to do after being asked four times. In Grinnell's version, Scarface finds "a war shirt, a shield, and a bow and arrows," which belong to Morning Star and which Scarface leaves untouched, following his helpers' advice. All versions of the story agree that Scarface saves Morning Star from being killed by the "angry birds." This illustrates the significance of bravery in the Blackfoot worldview. Moreover, the contrast between the birds who help Scarface and those who attack Morning Star shows that nature is not always benign. Facing fear with courage on this occasion resulted in Scarface's coming of age. Grinnell notes the value of courage by the Blackfoot, who taught boys "that to accomplish anything they must be brave and untiring in war; that long life was not desirable; that the old people always had a hard time [...] Much better, while the body is strong and in its prime […] to die in battle fighting bravely" (189–90). Scarface's courage and honesty, respectively, make him a worthy *tak.a* (male friend/partner) for Morning Star. As such, Scarface enters into a special relationship that exists between two Blackfoot males from early childhood, who might participate jointly in age-graded societies, warfare, and at times even share a wife.[17] As Morning Star's *tak.a,* Scarface becomes like a son to the former's parents.

The generosity shown to Scarface as a guest of the Star Beings sets a precedent for the Blackfoot to follow. When Scarface arrives at Natosi's lodge, he is given shelter, food, and clothing. Prior to his departure he receives valuable gifts. Moon made him beautiful clothes, and Morning Star gave him a shield (Schultz 343; Wissler and Duval 64; Grinnell 102). Natosi gave him two raven feathers to be "worn by the husband of the woman who builds a Medicine Lodge *[Ookaan]*"; and a "cloak"; a "hat," and a "wooden pin" (Grinnell 101; Uhlenbeck 55), which are respectively the Elk Woman's robe, the *Natoas* Bundle, and the digging stick which are part of the attire worn by the Holy Woman during the Sun Dance.[18] In the Piegan Man's version, Scarface receives a shirt and leggings on which he paints seven black stripes, one for each of the birds he killed. He is also given songs to go with the suit, to be sung each time this is transferred to a new owner. This is the suit that should only be worn by those who have killed an enemy. When he returns to his people, Scarface gives the suit to his Blackfoot *tak.a.* The suit and the absence of the scar are proofs of his visit to the Star BeinIn the versions in Schultz and Grinnell, Scarface marries the chief's daughter and they both live happily into old age and die without pain. According to McClintock's version, Natosi takes Scarface and his wife back to the sky. In the version where the chief's daughter has been unkind, Scarface throws a piece of sinew into the fire. His action causes the woman to die, and thereby to join Morning Star, who, wishing to marry the chief's daughter, had given the sinew to Scarface. In the same way that Natosi surrendered the chief's daughter to Scarface, so does the latter surrender her to join Morning Star. The contradictory endings in separate versions of Scarface lead us to speculate about the fate of the chief's daughter. What might appear as punishment—her early death—is also a privilege, since she will become the wife of a Star Being.

The teachings Natosi bestowed on Scarface define, not only the reciprocal relationship between Natosi and the Blackfoot, but also that between the Blackfoot and all their relations. These teachings, Hernandez argues, "reify the strength and continuity of a uniquely Blackfoot way of understanding the world" (77). This claim of uniqueness underlines the Blackfoot-centered worldview embedded in their stories. Taking into account that the stories are enacted in ceremony, it follows that, as Hernandez notes, the Blackfoot ceremonies re-enact "the sacred paths that those who journeyed to or from the sky travelled" (83).

While the ethical ideals taught through the Blackfoot Stories serve to maintain a reciprocal relationship between the Blackfoot and all creation, *Ookaan* is the most significant ceremony for the maintenance of the reciprocity between the Blackfoot and Natosi. Flesh-offerings that took place during the Sun Dance, like other ritual offerings, were meant to show reciprocity for benefits already received. However, during the Circle Encampment that culminated in *Ookaan,* generosity was extended to human beings, especially visitors from afar. Generosity elevated those who practiced it in the eyes of the whole community. Although the genesis of 'Scarface' and *Fools Crow* resides in two chronologically distant eras, the ethical ideals in 'Scarface' are a significant component of the Blackfoot subjectivity that Welch represents in the historical novel.

The Hero in James Welch's *Fools Crow*

The ethical behaviour of the hero in *Fools Crow* coincides with the ideals represented in 'Scarface'. This is not accidental, given that Welch has placed the story at the centre of his novel. During 1870, the year in which Welch set his narrative, Blackfoot autonomous lifeways were yet to end, and life "was as it should be" (*FC* 391). *Fools Crow* is set in Montana, where the Pikuni once pursued their non-sedentary existence. Despite having signed a treaty with the United States in 1855 that marked new boundaries of their land, and while the buffalo herds remained, the Pikuni continued traveling in separate bands. They hunted buffalo, raided enemies' camps and, every summer, when the saskatoons were ripe, gathered together in the Circle Encampment in readiness for *Ookaan*. The border between the United States and Canada was at this time porous, with Blackfoot bands moving freely between both sides of what they called "the Medicine line".

From an ethical perspective, the Blackfoot social organization in bands sets a premium on community focus and makes survival dependent on the minding of all their relations, particularly those with their sacred helpers who, often through dreams, provide them with knowledge to lead better lives. The wellbeing of the Blackfoot bands was dependent on securing a consistent supply of buffalo meat and hides, and obtaining weapons to maintain ascendancy over their enemies. Blackfoot youth were expected to acquire prestige and wealth through horse raiding in order to become *akáinauasiu* (full grown in age). Welch's hero, White Man's Dog, obtains sufficient horses in his

first raid to be worthy of a wife, and in a subsequent raid proves his valour, thereby earning a man's name for himself, that of Fools Crow.[19]

While 'Scarface' is set at a time when the Blackfoot traveled on foot and were yet to acquire horses and guns, by 1870 the Pikuni world was on the cusp of life-threatening change. Plains culture had already been transformed by the fur trade, which ensured a steady supply of European goods, including guns and ammunition. However, while horses and guns helped to consolidate Blackfoot dominance over a vast territory, contact with fur traders also introduced alcohol-induced violence and disease. Between 1869 and 1870 more than one thousand Pikuni died from smallpox, which caused *c.* 2,200 deaths among the Blackfoot (Dempsey 59–60). Ironically, as Lupton remarks, the benefits of the fur trade were far outweighed by the consequences of white arrival in Blackfoot territory (84). Settlers arrived in the wake of fur traders, exacerbating the competition for ever-contracting resources. Within this volatile environment, intertribal and Blackfoot-white violence increased. Yet, White Man's Dog believes that by acquiring a repeating rifle from the traders "he could bring about his own luck" (*FC* 4). Like Scarface, White Man's Dog begins his quest when he is yet to become a man. Unlike Scarface, who faced a peaceful world, White Man's Dog comes of age at a time when the Pikuni are threatened not only by their traditional enemies, but also by settlers. By 1870, large numbers of settlers have come to Montana and are competing with First Nations peoples for life-sustaining natural resources. An event occurred in 1870, which makes this year one of the lowest points in Blackfoot history. In that year, the US Army massacred 173 Pikuni men, women, and children from Chief Heavy Runner's band at their winter camp on the Marias River.[20]

By including this episode in the novel, Welch is able to present a Blackfoot centered perspective of the context surrounding it. Welch portrays the Pikuni as heterogeneous characters living a communally-oriented existence. They respond to outside threats in accordance with what they perceive to be in the best interests of the band, their organizational unit. His principal characters belong to the Lone Eaters band. Welch portrays them as they go about their daily family affairs, and the challenges they must face: procuring food, and raiding enemy camps. He also sketches how individuals navigate conflict with whites. The heterogeneity of Welch's Pikuni characters and his portrayal of their everyday activities provide a multidimensional view of a close-knit band whose very survival is threatened. Rather than the eager warriors of the white imagination, his characters are foremost fathers, mothers, wives, sons, and proud Pikuni, most of them apprehensive about war. They view warfare as unavoidable: a necessary means for individuals to gain respect and sufficient wealth to gain independence. Moreover, within the competitive environment of the Plains, war is a mechanism for maintaining the respect of their enemies and to discourage them from making incursions into Pikuni territory. Some Pikuni characters deal better than

others with the vicissitudes that survival in such an environment entails. This survival is dependent on the hunt, which fulfills their needs for food and shelter: "only the blackhorn [bison] could provide for all the needs of a family" (*FC* 47). Moreover, the tanned robes of the bison can be exchanged at the trading post for European goods, especially guns and ammunition, on which the Pikuni depend for their survival.

Authorial ethics are as important to the analysis of *Fools Crow* as the ethics represented in the narrative. In choosing the historical novel genre, Welch takes on a challenge that most contemporary First Nations writers avoid. His narrative is dependent upon a historiography written mostly by non-Blackfoot, albeit Welch brings his emic knowledge as Pikuni into it. Moreover, Welch has to deal with the weight of the history of colonization borne by the Pikuni. To fulfil the expectations of the historical novel genre the ending cannot ignore that history. In order to write this novel, Welch consulted the very texts which contain the different versions of 'Scarface' cited earlier, especially those by McClintock and Schultz. Together with the texts by Grinnell, Wissler, and Duvall (Uhlenbeck's texts are not as widely available), these are the sources to which scholars must return again and again, as the earliest sources of Blackfoot history and literature. It is pertinent to note that these texts owe their genesis, in great part, to Blackfoot informants, who collaborated with the authors/editors.[21] Welch acknowledged McClintock's *Old North Trail* as one of his sources for *Fools Crow* (Lupton 88). McClintock quoted Blackfoot speech at length and, from his pages, Welch recovers the voice of his ancestors. Compare the two passages below. In the first, from *Fools Crow,* Mountain Chief speaks after White Man's Dog fulfills his vow to Natosi during the Sun Dance, in reciprocation for his safe return from the horse raid:

> Haiya! Listen, my people, for I speak to you with a good heart. Once again we have constructed the Sun Lodge in the way we were taught by our long-ago people […] We have smoked the long-pipes together and are at peace with ourselves. Many have left presents for Sun Chief, and some among us have fulfilled vows made in times of trouble. [The Medicine] Woman and her helpers have shown our young girls the way to virtue. Our young men api have listened to the wisdom of their chiefs. (*FC* 120–1)

The second passage is taken from McClintock, being the words of Chief Mad Wolf, at the conclusion of a Sun Dance:

> Hear! my children, for I speak to you with a good heart. It does us all good to assemble every summer around the Sun-lodge. We have smoked the Medicine Pipe, and the rising smoke has carried away all of our bad feelings […] Many have given presents to the Sun, and some have fulfilled their vows […] The young men have listened to the wise counsels of the chiefs, and the young girls have seen the [example set by the] medicine women. (322)[22]

The two speeches emphasize the importance of ritual in the ongoing construction of a distinct Blackfoot identity. During the Sun Dance young men and women learn from those elders who are able to lead their lives in accordance with Blackfoot worldviews. They also denote the importance of reciprocity through gift giving, which also extends to the fulfillment of the vows made to Natosi.

Welch's hero develops into a quintessential warrior while remaining a devoted family man. He is introduced as White Man's Dog when he is about to join in a raid against the Crow. He is yet to prove his courage, earn for himself an adult name, and become worthy of a wife (*FC* 3–7). His *tak.a*, Fast Horse, calls him "dog-lover" and "near-woman" (*FC* 6). White Man's Dog has been unsuccessful in his search for sacred power, he has "no song" and "no vision", even though he has undergone the required rituals of going through the sweat-bath, fasting, praying, and smoking a pipe to propitiate a meeting with a would-be sacred helper (*FC* 7). White Man's Dog's efforts to reach the status of a gown man provide the focus to Welch's narrative as the author portrays a view of the Blackfoot world to which non-Blackfoot authors have seldom paid attention. Reading the novel as a quest, and placing it against the backdrop of 'Scarface' brings to the fore a distinct Blackfoot ethical dimension. Although the continuities that emerge between 'Scarface' and *Fools Crow*—added to the direct allusions to the sacred story in the novel—would be too many to enumerate, some of the most striking links corroborate the influence of the Blackfoot stories to the contemporary narrative. This is particularly evident in White Man's Dog's trajectory to become Fools Crow, and subsequently, for example, in Fools Crow's killing of the Napikwan, the white trapper. It is only as a last resort that Fools Crow is forced to take the life of one who "is more animal than human" (*FC* 165), and the action is not unlike Scarface's courageous killing of the birds who threatened Morning Star.

The concept of "all my relations" infuses the narrative of *Fools Crow,* wherein the Lone Eaters look askance at those who fail to live by this tenet. Emulating Scarface, White Man's Dog maintains reciprocity with his sacred helpers: Raven and Wolverine. In turn, he receives sacred power. Attending to his sacred relations is as vital as attending to his human relations. Hence, he seeks knowledge from Mik-api,[23] a "great and powerful many-faces man" (*FC* 8). Aware of danger, White Man's Dog vows "that if he was successful and returned home unharmed, he would sacrifice before the medicine pole at the next Sun Dance" (*FC* 27). This sacrifice entails an offering of his own flesh to Natosi; the greatest sacrifice that a warrior can make as reciprocity for sacred protection. After his life is spared, White Man's Dog undergoes the ritual during *Ookaan*. The sacrifice, which the Blackfoot dubbed "taking the cut" and whites mistakenly called "the making of braves", was performed during *Ookaan* by male warriors. Cuts were made "through the right shoulder blade and … on each side of [their] breast then running a sharpened stick through the skin … a shield was

fastened to the stick in his shoulder blade while two ropes were fastened to the two sticks on his breast." The two ropes were attached to the Sun Dance centre post. After embracing the post, the man offering the sacrifice "backs off until he comes to the end of the rope and starts to dance [...] trying to break the skin which the ropes are fastened to" (Duvall M-4376 891). Only those who faced life-threatening danger would make a promise to undergo this ritual (McLean (*sic,* Maclean), 6–7; Wissler, 1918 262–3; Grinnell 264). Breaking a promise to Natosi would sever the reciprocity connection and might result in the death of the one who broke the promise, or a close relative.

Failing to adhere to the principles of reciprocity towards other sacred helpers might also bring fatal consequences. While travelling to the Crow camp Fast Horse—White Man's Dog's *tak.a*—has an encounter with Cold Maker, the one who brings the snow and the winter. Cold Maker asks him to locate a spring, and remove a rock that has blocked it:

> if you do this for me [says Cold Maker], I will make your raid successful. As you drive the Crow horses home, I will cause snow to fall behind you, covering your tracks […] If you don't, you must not go on, for I will punish you and your party. Either way, because I offer my help you must bring me two prime bull robes for my daughters […]. It will go hard on you if you do not do this. (*FC* 14)

Although the spring is not found, Yellow Kidney, the war party leader, decides to continue, thus ignoring the plea for help from Cold Maker (*FC* 21). Although the raid is successful and the party takes "one hundred and fifty horses", Fast Horse is late in rejoining his colleagues, and Yellow Kidney is missing (*FC* 34). An angry Cold Maker has taken Fast Horse to look at his shivering, eyeless daughters, whereupon he gives Fast Horse a second chance: "I will let you rejoin your friends, but you must promise […] [to] bring my daughters two prime robes [and] red coals for their eyes", (*FC* 37–8). Fast Horse again fails to fulfill his promise (*FC* 49). Failure to show respect for his relations causes him to become alienated from White Man's Dog (*FC* 49), from his band (*FC* 70), and eventually to become a renegade. By joining Owl Child and separating from his band, Fast Horse had found "freedom from responsibility, from accountability to the group" (*FC* 211).

Both Yellow Kidney and Fast horse are the foils for White Man's Dog. As the leader of the war party, Yellow Kidney's showed little pity for Cold Maker's plea, and his punishment is the most severe. The young Fast Horse was given a second chance, but he again failed to honour Cold Maker. In contrast, White Man's Dog behaved admirably during the raid, and afterwards gave Mik-api five of his best horses in reciprocation for his prayers. His generosity extends especially to Yellow Kidney's family. He supplies them with meat, since they have lost their only hunter (*FC* 53). White Man's Dog is also generous to sacred creatures. At Raven's instance, he travels to the "Backbone"— the Rocky Mountains—to rescue a "four-legged" (Wolverine) caught in a white man's

steel trap. As an act of reciprocity, Raven teaches White Man's Dog how "to use this creature's power" (*FC* 52). It is a power, Raven warns, that White Man's Dog "must not abuse." The latter "must listen to Mik-api […] that good many-faces man who shares his smoke (*FC* 58)." As White Man's Dog's knowledge increases, so does his respect for his relations. Before he eats, he shares his food, placing meat "in the fork of a tree".

In *Fools Crow*, generosity and reciprocity permeate the actions of those who seek to live their lives in accordance with Blackfoot ideals, men as well as women. It is to sacred helpers that the Blackfoot can look for assistance in times of need, and that relationship between humans and sacred beings needs to be nurtured through continuous acts of reciprocity. It is this need that prompts Heavy Shield Woman (Yellow Kidney's wife) to promise to build a lodge for Natosi (Sun Dance), should her husband return safely (*FC* 44). Of the sacrifices a woman can undertake, becoming the Holy Woman during *Ookaan* is the most onerous, not least because she must endure four days of fasting and praying during the ceremony. As in 'Scarface', women play critical roles in the survival of their people in Welch's narrative. It is women who maintain the families together during the long absences of their husbands, fathers and brothers, and who provide the labour that can turn raw skins into items of trade.

Within the sacred domain, Blackfoot women intercede to maintain the relationship between the Blackfoot and Natosi, as illustrated in Heavy Shield Woman's promise to build a Medicine Lodge if her husband returns. Her prayers are answered. It is during her fast in the "Sacred Vow lodge" that readers are introduced to So-at-sa-ki, Feather Woman, an ancestor who will play a larger role towards the end end of *Fools Crow*. Feather Woman married the Morning Star, with whom she had a boy: Scarface (*FC* 110-11). Therefore, her presence is forever attached to 'Scarface', for which her own story provide the antecedent. Although Heavy Shiled Woman's request was granted, Yellow Kidney returns with no fingers, which have been cut off by the Crow (*FC* 77). Lupton interprets this loss as symbolizing the effects of frostbite, and hence punishment from Cold Maker (*FC* 86). Irrespective of this outcome, Heavy Shield Woman fulfills her vow. As Welch's narrative unfolds, the Blackfoot ideals embedded in 'Scarface' recur. But it is when the novel reaches a crisis point that the connections between the story and the novel gain in significance.

The world of the Pikuni has been turned upside down. Pikuni bands are stricken with smallpox (the white scabs disease), the buffalo are scarce, and the seizers (US soldiers) have delivered an ultimatum. Unless the Pikuni deliver Owl Child (the killer of Malcolm Clark) to the soldiers (*FC* 175)—and the Pikuni leaders have decided against this (*FC* 313)—the US Army will attack them (*FC* 283-4). The Pikuni had never feared their enemies, but their firing power was no match for the seizers. The Pikuni face their "biggest fight of all—the fight for [their] survival" (*FC* 177). The appearance of smallpox among the bands further threatens the Pikuni. The Lone Eaters

have never faced a similar crisis and leaders are undecided on what action should be taken. They can cross the Medicine Line and place themselves away from the smallpox outbreak, but this would entail abandoning their sick relatives from other Pikuni bands. Even while their own survival is at stake, as Three Bears argues, "That is not [the Pikuni] way" (*FC* 307). They also risk losing their lands, which settlers might occupy in their absence. As the very foundations of their world are shaken, Nitsokan (Dream helper) instructs Fools Crow to undertake a journey (*FC* 315). He must dress as a beggar, he must persuade the Above Ones to pity him as they pitied his ancestor Scarface. However, the stakes are much higher for Fools Crow, for it is the survival of the Pikuni that is at stake.

Like Scarface, Fools Crow knows not where he must go, and surrenders to despair. It is then than Wolverine, who had also assisted Scarface, appears to guide him (*FC* 325). So-at-sa-ki (Feather Woman), gives him food so that he can reach his destination, which unbeknown to Fools Crow, is her own abode. Welch thus collapses time by placing Feather Woman, Scarface's mother, face to face with Fools Crow. She recounts her story ("Woman Who Married a Star"), which Fools Crow knows well (*FC* 350–1). This Pikuni Eve takes the blame for all the vicissitudes of her people but refuses to give up; she looks to the future with hope: "One day I will rejoin my husband and son. I will return with them to their lodge and there we will be happy again—and you people will suffer no more" (*FC* 352). So-at-sa-ki shows him a painting where Fools Crow sees the Pikuni dying of smallpox; he sees the soldiers riding to massacre Heavy Runner's village; he also sees "the starvation of the Pikunis" (*FC* 358). In the painting, the animals who provide the Pikuni with sustenance are no more: there are "no blackhorns, no longlegs and no big-horns […] no wags-his-tails or prairie-runners" (*FC* 355–6). There is no possible explanation for what Fools Crow sees as "punishment" for the Pikuni, yet he renounces anger (*FC* 359). As Feather Woman tells him, he needs to prepare his people for what is to come. Thus, Welch links *Fools Crow* to the Blackfoot Stories, creating a sequel that ensures their continuity beyond the new era. In this new era, the Above Ones appear to be distant, and for the first time, Fools Crow thinks of them "as cruel spirits", for allowing Feather Woman, and the Pikuni to suffer. It is within this context that the Stories emerge as a *point d'appui*, the proof that the Pikuni have kept their faith. Although So-at-sa-ki foretells that "Much will be lost" to the Pikuni, "[t]he stories would be handed down, and [the Pikuni] will see that their people were proud and lived in accordance with the Below Ones, the Underwater People—and the Above Ones" (*FC* 360).

Fools Crow depicts the disastrous effects of the fur trade as bison start to become scarce. However, the starvation winter of 1883–84, in which more than a quarter of the Pikuni in Montana died (Grinnell 289) is present only fleetingly in the novel through the painting that Feather Woman shows to Fools Crow (*FC* 356). By ending the narrative prior to this catastrophe, Welch avoids representing the Pikuni in a pathetic light and thus delving into the genre of tragedy. Despite their uncertain future, Welch ends his novel with a scene of hope. It is a ritual, when the Pikuni welcome the first rumblings of Thunder by opening their Thunder Medicine Pipe Bundles. Having survived another winter, this reciprocation ritual symbolizes the ongoing connection between the Pikuni and their sacred helpers. The significance of the ceremony in which the sacred relations of the Blackfoot are honoured with the smoking of the pipe, is the anticipation of the abundance of grasses that will ensure plenty of buffalo. It is a return to the traditional world order: "all around, it was as it should be" (*FC* 391).

Conclusion

By seeking threads of continuity between 'Scarface' and *Fools Crow,* this article has sought to fill the gap created when the contemporary literary production of First Nations authors is viewed merely as a response to colonialism. As Annia Loomba observes, colonialism is not the only history of colonized peoples. Literary representation is a site *par excellence* for cultural revitalization, above all because of its capacity to portray a world in which First Nations peoples, through their own writing, become subjects rather than objects of representation. Indigenous identity continues to be contested terrain in fictional as well as non-fictional representations. In a world that homogenizes human experience, Blackfoot claims to a separate identity can be nurtured through more inclusive and creative re-imaginings and re-interpretations of history as much as through historical novels such as *Fools Crow*.

The renderings of 'Scarface' analyzed here represent the Blackfoot world in which humans, animals, and inanimate beings are seen connected through the observance of ethical ideals, especially of generosity and reciprocity. However, Welch does not represent a utopic community populated by "noble savages". He represents Blackfoot subjectivity as heterogeneous. Some of his Blackfoot characters fail to attain the ethical standards required to show respect for All their Relations. In the same way that 'Scarface' ends without a clear message, so does *Fools Crow*. It is for each reader to resolve this ambiguity, which can function as an invitation to find out more about the Blackfoot and their fate consequent upon the coming of settlers to their land. The novel both vindicates and revitalizes Blackfoot culture, its values, and lifeways, even as it portrays a radically changed Pikuni world. Fools Crow shuns anger as a response to crisis while symbolizing Blackfoot resilience and capacity to adapt and to prevail in a new world. *Fools Crow* fulfils So-at-sa-ki's prophecy that the "stories will be handed down".

(Endnotes)
1 Hereafter cited as 'Scarface'.
2 Cited in text as *FC*.

3   Welch's mother was a Gros Ventre, his father was Pikuni, and his grandfathers, both Irish, married Native women (Lupton 2–4).

4   "Pikunis" is used here to reflect Welch's preference. Other spellings include Pikani, Piikani, Piegan, and Peigan. The Pikuni are divided between the United States, where they occupy the Blackfeet Reservation in Montana; and Canada, where they occupy the Peigan Reserve in Alberta. The Kainai occupy the Blood Reserve, and the Siksika occupy the [Northern] Blackfoot Reserve, both in Alberta.

5   For example, in "A Tapestry of History and Reimagination: Women's Place in James Welch's 'Fools Crow'", Barbara Cook analyses the role of Blackfoot women. However, she omits from her discussion the crucial links between the Blackfoot Stories and Blackfoot women's roles as mediators between humans and the sacred.

6   Lupton refers to *Mitakuye Oyasin* - "All are Related", as per the Lakota of South Dakota (23).

7   Weasel Traveller refers generally to the sacred stories of First Nations peoples.

8   The six versions are: "The Faith of *Ahko Pitsu* (Told by *Ahko Pitsu*)," narrated by Sikochkeka or Chewing Black Bone (Schultz 338–47); "Scarface: Origin of the Medicine Lodge," a composite, in part narrated by Miss Cora Ross, "one of the school teachers at the Blackfoot agency" (Grinnell xxx, and 93–103); "Legend of Star Boy (Later, Poïa, Scarface)" narrated by Natosi Nepe-e, or Brings-Down-the-Sun (McClintock 491–505 and 523–4); Wissler and Duval provide one version attributed to a "Piegan Man," and another to a "Piegan Woman" (58–61 and 61–5); Uhlenbeck provides a composite bilingual rendition 50–7, but only the English translation is utilized here. Other versions include, one narrated by Blackfoot Mike Swims Under to Hernandez *c.* 1999; another published by Pikani author and ceremonialist Percy Bullchild (328–86); and two held at the Glenbow Archives: M-4422 and M-4376, R. N. Wilson, "The Blackfoot Legend of Scarface"; and David C. Duvall, "Scarface", respectively.

9   *The Oxford English Dictionary* defines ætiological as "assigning or tending to assign a cause or reason.

10 In Bullchild's version (331), Scarface was raised by "an old lady," who was his grandmother.

11 Morning Star is the name given to Venus.

12 This passive role cannot be extrapolated to other Blackfoot Stories. Elk Woman, a role model for Blackfoot women, proved her strength to be superior to that of her husband (Kehoe 116–7).

13 In "The Theft From The Sun", Old Man (the Blackfoot creator and trickster also known as *Na'pi*) tries to steal Sun's leggings. During the night he steals away from Sun's lodge, but each morning he finds himself back inside Sun's lodge. Grinnell notes that "the flat circular earth in fact is his home, the floor of his lodge" (167–8, and 258).

14 The two versions in Wissler and Duvall differ greatly in this section, but the Piegan Man's version contains other fourfold repetitions (63).

15 Grinnell (263–66) describes Ookaan's proceedings.

16 A "light trail", possibly related to Morning Star, guided Scarface in Natosi Nepe-e's version (McClintock). In this version Scarface does not meet Morning Star until after meeting the Sun. This step is omitted in the two versions in Wissler and Duvall.

17 The role of Tak.a is explained in Lewis (175); and Wilson.

18 According to the story of "The Woman Who Married a Star," the digging stick was used by So-at-sa-ki, the Morning Star's wife and Scarface's mother, to dig a sacred turnip. She had been forbidden to do so, and as a consequence had to return to her people (McClintock 419–96).

19 Frank Fools Crow presided over the reinstatement of the "piercing" ritual of the Sun Dance, which had been only performed in secret by the Teton Sioux at the Pine Ridge reservation in South Dakota. John Petoskey, "Indians and the First Amendment", cited in Deloria, Jr., (225–27); and Mails (8).

20 Welch, who despite his Irish heritage considered himself an "Indian," writes about the massacre from the perspective of the Pikuni survivors, utilizing the well-documented testimony of Kai Otokan (Bear Head) as a source (Schultz, 282–305). One of Welch's great-grandmothers was a survivor of the massacre, while Malcolm Clark, the settler whose murder by a Pikuni precipitated the massacre, was also his relative. I discuss this massacre in "A Blueprint for Massacre: The United States Army and the 1870 Massacre of Blackfeet on the Marias River, Montana." *Theatres of Violence: Massacre, Mass Killing and Atrocity in History*. Eds. Philip Dwyer and Lyndall Ryan. New York: Berghahn Books. (Forthcoming 2010)

21 Lupton (4) only mentions Grinnell, McClintock and Wissler and Duvall. However, Grinnell acknowledged Schultz's contribution to *Lodge Tales*.

22 A father would encourage his daughter to live a worthy life by pointing to the Medicine Woman during Ookaan as an example of virtue: (Grinnell 190–1).

23 The name Mika'pi—Red Old Man, is the title of a Blackfoot Story in Grinnell ([1913] 2005, 78–87).

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