Stealing the Horses:
The Representation of non-Natives in Native Canadian Literature

by

Pallavi Gupta

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| Vakratunda Mahakaya Suryakoti Samaprabha |
|| Nirvighnam Kurumedeva Sarvakaaryeshu Sarvada ||

For Maa and Papa
who never doubted

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ABSTRACT

The (mis)representation of Natives in non-Native culture has been well-documented by historians, sociologists, and literary critics, whose research has exposed the political, social, and cultural considerations behind the binary objectification of the Native as the "noble savage" and the "demonic Indian." However, this interest in the Native, while flattering to a certain degree, eclipses the body of literature written by Natives because it focuses exclusively on non-Native works. This maintains the position of the Native as Object and promotes the idea that the Natives are unable to speak for themselves. What is often overlooked in this relation of representation is the possibility that the Natives might also have stereotyped the non-Native. This thesis examines the manner in which non-Natives have been portrayed in the plays, novels, and poetry written in English by Native Canadian writers, such as Tomson Highway, Thomas King, Beatrice Culleton, Armand Garnet Ruffo, Richard Wagamese, Daniel David Moses, Eden Robinson, and Drew Hayden Taylor. Drawing on Homi Bhabha's critique of colonial stereotyping and Judith Butler's study of injurious speech, the thesis investigates how the dominant half of a power relation is represented in the literature of the dominated half, and whether the oppressed, in depicting the oppressor, use the same modes and means as have been used to describe them. The six chapters that study the various representations of the non-Native seek answers to questions such as the following: Is the existing power structure of representation destabilized by the portrayal of non-Natives in Native Literature—assuming that there is an unequal distribution of power between the representer and the represented? Is the representation a collective or an individual assessment—as in are "all" Euroamericans stereotyped or are they granted individuality? Do the Native writers allow their characters relative autonomy of expression, or do they deny them freedom by speaking from within the representation? This thesis examines the types of representation found primarily in the works of Native writers and how they affect the relationship between oppressing Self and oppressed Other.

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To my parents, who have always supported me with unswerving faith, I am indebted for their unconditional love and unshakeable confidence. To my husband, Vivek, who has been friend, critic, counsellor, staunch supporter, and the pole star to my often floundering morale, I am grateful for his patience, his confidence, and his immense capacity for giving.

Introduction

Anishnaabe writer Armand Garnet Ruffo asks what seems to be, in the context of the following study, a very pertinent question in the title of his essay—"Why Native Literature?" The responses to this question are meant equally to answer queries regarding the *raison d'etre* of Native Literature as well as questions relating to why it needs to be addressed as an independent area of literary research. For Ruffo one of the answers lies in the necessity of recognizing that Native Literature is written by "a people under siege" (109). Native Literature is required "to bring hope to young Native people so they too can express themselves and heal," and because a people need their own literature, their own way of expression, and their own stories told by their own people (119). It would be fair to say that representation is an important constituent of literature, because it is an avenue for presenting to others one's culture and beliefs, history and social formations. Literature is also a ground for corrections, negotiations, dialogue, and new beginnings. In this context, Joseph Bruchac's observations regarding the relevance of Native Literature in his foreword to the Native North American Literary Companion are worth thinking about:

> In many ways, the current interest in Native American literature and the mainstream success of many of its writers is both ironic and, perhaps, inevitable. In the early eighteenth century, it was proposed by serious scholars that Native Americans lacked real languages and were only questionably human. A century and a half ago, people still questioned the existence of literary traditions (or, quite frankly, any real culture) among the Native peoples of North America. (xvi)

Nothing is or can be more satisfying for a people than to be able to tell their side of a painful reality to the rest of the world, conveyed through their own representatives and so relatively free from distortions. Native literature appears to have two audiences—Natives themselves and non-Natives—both of whom have heard stories told by people

who either should not have been telling those stories, and/or who misrepresented the people whose stories they were telling. In either case the Natives are the injured party. Accordingly, another answer Ruffo provides is that Native literature serves a socio-political function, which is "[t]o address Native people themselves so that they can empower and heal themselves through their own cultural affirmation, as well as to address those in power and give them the real story: this too is the answer" (120).

It is extremely vital to recognize that Native Literature for Native peoples is more than words on paper: it is a reflection of who they are now, what they have been through in the past, and what their aspirations are for the future. It is in this sense that Native Literature is a communal product and the writer is the representative of his/her people. Native Literature is about "giving something back," and the generations of successful[1] Native American writers pay something back to the community by telling their stories (Bruchac 117). In other words, Native Literature is connected directly and deeply to Native identity and the assertion of a separate and valued sense of being. Native Literature is also about the recognition of difference, and in the words of Elizabeth Cook-Lynn (Dakota Sioux) what Native writers seek is "the formation of a Native American literary canon, not . . . the reform of the Western canon" (Monture-Angus 32). This point is underscored by Paula Gunn Allen (Pueblo/Sioux) in The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions where she differentiates between Native American and Western literary traditions:

> The purpose of traditional American literature is never simply pure self-expression. The 'private soul at any public wall' is a concept alien to American Indian thought. The tribes do not celebrate the individual's ability to feel emotion, for

[1]The success that these writers have achieved resides primarily in their ability to make Native peoples visible to the world through their works, and the extent to which their writing has influenced public opinion regarding Natives.

> they assume that all people are able to do so. One's emotions are one's own; to suggest that others should imitate them is to impose on the personal integrity of others. The tribes seek—through song, ceremony, legend, sacred stories (myths), and tales—to embody, articulate, and share reality, to bring the isolated, private self into harmony and balance with this reality, to verbalize the sense of the majesty and reverent mystery of all things, and to actualize, in language, those truths that give to humanity its greatest significance and dignity. (55)

One of the important themes in contemporary Native Literature is the continuing experience of colonialism, and Native writers agree that creative expression is one avenue that somewhat alleviates its effects. The above discussion supports the contention that Native Literature shoulders the onerous responsibility of making Native peoples visible to the world at large, and of disseminating the varied, rich, and diverse character of Native culture. While different writers approach the topic of colonialism in different ways, most view their literary endeavours as a decolonizing tool. It is evident, however, that the state of Native North America cannot be compared with that of any erstwhile colonized nation, because of the continuance of internal colonization. Postcolonial criticism has generally shied away from applying the rubric of "postcolonial" to the so-called settler colonies (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, and not so long ago, South Africa), and suggested that the truly postcolonial people are the indigenous peoples of these nations. However, the issue is more complicated and will be discussed in the conclusion to this study. Nevertheless, it would be fair to state that while postcolonial nomenclature creates certain problems when applied to Native Literature, there is a commonality between themes found in the literature produced by Native and postcolonial writers.

Before proceeding further, I would like to clarify the use of certain terms employed in the dissertation. Predictably, the four most common terms used are "non-Native,"

"Euroamerican," "Native," and "Indian." In the case of the two former rubrics, it is evident that the reference is to race and place of origin. In the case of the latter two, what seems obvious is not quite so. My use of "Indian" and "Native" follows the distinction made by Daniel Francis in The Imaginary Indian: "In this book I use the word Indian when I am referring to the image of Native people held by non-Natives, and I use the terms Natives, Native people or aboriginals when I am referring to the actual people" (9). In other words, "Indian" refers to the representation of Native peoples in Euroamerican literature, media, and history, while "Native" alludes to the reality of the original inhabitants of pre-colonial North America, or the "casualties of colonialism," as Anne McClintock sees them (86). Gerald Vizenor notes in this regard, "The Indian was an occidental invention that became a bankable simulation; the word has no referent in tribal languages or cultures" (11). Also, my use of the term "Native," unlike say "First Nations," includes the Métis, and wherever required, I have provided the national affiliations[2] of the writers mentioned in this study. I would like to mention, however, that some writers seem to prefer the term "Indian" when talking about themselves or their nations. I see this either as a gesture of empowerment similar to the use of "Black" by African-Americans,[3] or because "the misnomer has a curious sense of legal standing" in federal and state matters (Vizenor 14). I have adhered to the preferred term of individual writers in their quotations, but as a rule I use "Native" when referring to Native peoples

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[2] I am using "national" instead of "tribal" because of the derogatory connotations attached to the latter.

[3] AIM activist Russel Means, in his most famous speech given in July 1980 at the Black Hills International Survival Gathering, in the Black Hills of South Dakota, noted the "confusion about the word *Indian*, a mistaken belief that it refers somehow to the country, India," when, according to Means, "Columbus called the tribal people he met [in North America] 'Indio,' from the Italian *in dio*, meaning 'in God'" (Vizenor 11-12).

of Canada, and "Native American" when alluding to the indigenous people of North America. Similarly, I have used "Whites," "White man," "non-Native," and "Euroamerican" to describe the people who colonized North America and its original inhabitants.

In Richard Wagamese's Keeper'n Me, Keeper reflects on what Stanley, Garnet's elder brother, has said:

> *It's like the boy says all the time. Comes down to stealin' the horses again. Stealin' horses was a thing to be honoured on accounta a couple of things. First, when you took a man's horse you took away his movin' around. Made him less of a threat. Couldn't fight the good fight when he couldn't move around.*
> *Second, when you took a horse you gave yourself the power to move faster 'n better. Could fight better yourself. Stay alive longer....*
> *But Stanley says we gotta be stealin' horses nowadays too. Gotta look at the kinda horses them outsiders ride nowadays. Need them now to fight the good fight, stay alive, keep our families strong. We gotta steal them horses and use them to get us movin' again. (136-7)*

The idea behind stealing the horses is obviously not a simple show of prowess, or an exercise in accumulation: stealing the horses is directly related to survival. It involves a taking up of the same instruments/modes that have been used against the Natives, and employing them for their benefit. I see something of this idea in the literature produced by Natives in Canada, especially in the representation of non-Natives in Native literature. The idea of stealing the horses has both a thematic and a strategic dimension. The thematic dimension comes across in Native creative works where the writers suggest that tools that have been engineered to suppress their culture can be used against the original intention. That is, the White man's knowledge can be used to benefit the Native community and not necessarily to destroy it. It seems that the thematic can also be used strategically, and the tools that have been used against Natives can be used by them to get

their message across to the oppressor; thereby giving the colonizers a taste of their own medicine. Politically, this gesture becomes a means by which Natives break their enforced silence and assume the right to tell their own stories. This allows Natives to intervene in the *grand recits* of colonial history and enables the creation of alternative Native histories.[4] Also, stealing the horses allows the Natives to oppose colonial oppression more effectively, because the terms of engagement are established by the Natives. Accordingly, the Native writer can choose to portray non-Natives stereotypically (Drew Hayden Taylor and Thomas King) or largely ignore their presence in fiction (Eden Robinson).

Two theorists whose ideas coincide with the intentions of the Native writers are Homi Bhabha and Judith Butler. Bhabha's take on the retaliatory aspect of colonial stereotyping and Butler's thoughts on the emancipatory possibilites of injurious speech intersect with the concept of stealing the horses. Both theorists are also interested in the concept of ambivalence, which they see as a site for subversion. While Bhabha locates ambivalence at the heart of colonial discourse, Butler finds it at the site of injurious speech. This presence of ambivalence in oppressive structures, which may be used by the oppressed as a tool for retaliation, coincides with the previously outlined Native project. The use of postcolonial theory and theories regarding performativity to read Native literature is not meant to compromise the autonomous position of Native literature. I recognise and respect the danger of using postcolonial labels indiscriminately, and so my use of certain key concepts and terms, which have been granted currency through their association with postcolonial theory and criticism, is circumspect and judicious. While

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[4] Homi Bhabha puts it more elegantly as "contesting polarized and binary notions of constructing subjects within the play of power" (Mitchell).

the Native attitude to postcolonial and post-structuralist theory is addressed in the first chapter, I would like to underscore the autonomy of Native literature at this juncture. It is with this view that the location of Native literature with regard to both Canadian literature and postcolonial literature is discussed in the conclusion.

Daniel Francis in The Imaginary Indian (1992) notes: "When two cultures meet, especially cultures as different as those of western Europe and indigenous North America, they inevitably interpret each other in terms of stereotypes . . . . But if one side in the encounter enjoys advantages of wealth or power or technology, then it will usually try to impose its stereotype on the other" (221). What is often overlooked in this equation of representation is the other side—the Native side—as is evident from the volume of critical material available on the representation of the Native in North American culture, literature, and media. That the Natives might also have stereotyped the non-Native is fleetingly referred to, as in the above quotation, but to my knowledge has not yet been explored. The representation of the Native in non-Native literature has received much attention from distinguished scholars, both non-Native (Monkman, Berkhofer, Francis, Goldie) and Native (Acoose, Maracle, Ruffo, Bruchac, Keeshig-Tobias), who have offered illuminating thoughts and problematised such representation and the politics involved therein. However, this is not to imply that critics from either category harbour similar reservations or arrive at similar conclusions; for example, Lenore Keeshig-Tobias' rather personal and militant approach to the question of representation, which she regards as cultural theft, is more pointed than Daniel Francis' exploration and critique of the image of the "Indian" in Canadian culture. While much work in this area still needs to be done and is being done, the pre-occupation with the

image of the Native appears to maintain the status quo as the works and the writers discussed are non-Native. This, in my opinion, eclipses the body of literature produced by Native writers and endorses the often-repeated idea of the inability of Natives to speak for themselves and so require someone else to speak on their behalf. In addition, this line of enquiry also maintains the unequal relationship between non-Native/Self and Native/Other, non-Native/Subject and Native/Object. It would be far more rewarding to look at Native literature instead, so that one can get a glimpse of the world as seen through the eyes of the Native. The world perceived could be a mirror-reflection of the one we know, yet more challenging because we are no longer spectators but participants. This strategy achieves two politically concurrent aims: one, it disrupts the existing dichotomy of centre and periphery by placing the Native in the definitive centre, and second, it puts the Native in a position of advantage by subjecting the non-Native to the Native gaze. Also, instead of studying Native literature solely as resistance literature (as one would be obliged to in a postcolonial evaluation), it would be more fruitful to study it as creative expression that has gone beyond the stage of merely being a tool for resistance[5] but has not as yet lost its political edge.[6] Barbara Harlow in Resistance Literature, one of the earliest attempts to theorize the term,[7] describes resistance literature

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[5] Resistance literature is an important constituent of the postcolonial movement. It is used to describe the literature written by the colonized peoples, and tells their side of the story. This involves the correction of falsely created colonial images and ideas, intervention in master narratives, and the creation of alternative histories, among others.

[6] I would like to clarify that I locate the resistant phase of Native literature in the writings of Native forerunners, such as Jeannette Armstrong, Maria Campbell, and Lee Maracle. I situate Tomson Highway, Richard Wagamese, and Beatrice Culleton on the cusp of resistance literature and the move beyond it.

[7] More contemporary studies that look at the relationship between resistance and literature are Dingwaney Needham's Using the Master's Tools (African and South Asian

as "immediately and directly involved in a struggle against ascendant or dominant forms of ideological and cultural production" (28-9). She also underscores its inclination to "[call] attention to itself . . . as a political and politicized activity" (28). Harlow's study is intriguing for two primary reasons: it does not refer to Native literature or socio-political unrest in North America,[8] though it does document similar activity in Central and South America, and it excludes literature from India and the Caribbean, which seem to deserve the rubric of resistance literature.[9] While I find Harlow's argument scholarly and well-documented, I am reluctant to apply the term to Native literature: it seems to me that the limitation of this term lies in its dependence on a model of contestation, which implies that all postcolonial literature is born out of a sense of struggle between colonizer and colonized. This shortcoming is highlighted by Thomas King in his essay "Godzilla vs. Post-Colonial," which is discussed in some detail in Chapter 5 and in the conclusion to this thesis. Also, while the writers in this study regard the act of writing as a political statement, I doubt if they would necessarily describe their work as exclusively political.[10]

Terry Goldie in Fear and Temptation (1989) notes, "[s]uch signs as the treacherous redskin and the Indian maiden have endured from the beginning of the literatures to the present" (148). This is to say that the figure of the "Indian," which has been generated in *a* historic moment, is severed from history and employed as an immutable image

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diasporas) and Hawley's Cross-Addressing (Australian aboriginal literatures).

[8] This book was published in 1987, at which point Native writers had been producing literature for almost two decades, and North America had witnessed some spectacular political resistance from Native peoples.

[9] No rationale is provided for the exclusions, and so it is difficult to tell if it is a deliberate omission or a genuine oversight.

[10] For example, both Tomson Highway and Daniel David Moses view their writing as therapeutic.

thereafter. This image undergoes no substantial change with the passage of time and functions synchronically, always available for deployment, yet unchanged by such use. A study of selected texts by non-Native Canadian writers from the nineteenth and twentieth centuries, in the first chapter of this dissertation, provides evidence for this claim. John Richardson's Wacousta (1832), which is treated as an ur-text with regard to establishing the attitude of non-Native writers toward their Native subject, is examined in terms of the noble savage/demonic Indian binary mentioned earlier. The influence of the binary on later non-Native writers, especially those in the twentieth century, is also assessed in order to illustrate the type of representation Native writers are attempting to demolish.

What is of interest to me is not so much the historical development of the image of the Native in non-Native Canadian literature, though I do recognize the primacy and inevitability of the burden of history in any discussion involving the Native in Canada, but the consequences of the image and its effect on Native literature. More specifically, my thesis is not concerned with the self-image of the Native as put forward in Native literature--which would seem to be the primary corrective to the (mis)representation of Natives in non-Native literature--but with the representation of non-Natives in Native literature. This is to say that the image of the non-Native in Native literature is not merely a counter-representation, a rejoinder to the (mis)representation of Natives, but an attempt to see the Self through the eyes of the Other, and to show the Self as it is seen by the Other. My interest in how the dominant half of a power relation is represented in the literature of the dominated half is in keeping with the interest of contemporary literary scholars who are focusing on topics such as the constructions of masculinity in feminist

literature or whiteness in Black writing.[11] I propose to treat the representation of non-Natives in Native literature synchronically as it seems to me that though the representation is historically generated (the history of colonization) it is not solely governed by it. To study this topic diachronically would be to impart this dissertation the aura of a survey, which it does not intend to be.

While representations of the "Indian" are far more well-known and recognized, the same cannot be said about the representation of non-Natives in Native orature/literature. However, surprising though it may be, Native peoples also have a legacy of representing non-Natives, primarily in their oratorical performances. These declamations are far less known and far less circulated in literary circles; however, collections such as Peter Nabokov's Native American Testimony: An Anthology of Indian and White Relations (1978) and Bob Blaisdell's Great Speeches by Native Americans (2000) are valuable sources for such speeches. The most consistent representation of the "White man" in Native orature is as the guest who has overstayed his welcome and taken over his generous host's house: Tecumseh (Shawnee), addressing a gathering of Osages in 1811 described the Euroamericans in the following manner: "Brothers, the white people are like poisonous serpents: when chilled they are feeble and harmless; but invigorate them with warmth, and they sting their benefactors to death" (Blaisdell 59). In most of the

[11] I am referring here to the scholarly work done by doctoral students in North American universities. Some notable examples being Laura Jo Dubek's dissertation at the University of Iowa on cultural narratives of whiteness in the the novels of James Baldwin, Richard Wright, Zora Neale Hurston, and Ann Petry (2001); Cigdem Useke's work at the University of North Dakota on the presentation of whiteness in August Wilson's drama and blackness in Eugene O'Neill's plays (1999); Kathleen Ann Geisse's exploration of male sexualities in the fiction of post-war Japanese female writers at Stanford University (2003); and Sarah Samantha Gaye Frantz's investigation of the construction of masculinity in the works of Elizabeth Inchbald, Mary Burton, Jane Austen, and Hannah Moore at the University of Michigan (2003).

speeches made by Native chiefs and elders the stress is on betrayal by the White man. The lack of trust comes from an assessment of the White man's character, which is governed by greed and the desire to acquire as much land as possible: Makataimeshiekiakiak (Black Hawk), a Sauk chief, displays his knowledge of the White man's motives in his surrender speech (27 August 1872): "He [Black Hawk] has fought for his countrymen, the squaws and papooses, against white men, who came, year after year, to cheat them and take away their lands. You know the cause of our making war. It is known to all white men. They ought to be ashamed of it. The white men despise the Indians, and drive them from their homes. But the Indians are not deceitful" (Blaisdell 84). It is this awareness that makes other chiefs and elders regard the Euroamericans as "robbers and traitors" and "white intruders and tyrants" (Blaisdell 3, 50). Nowhere is the cultural difference more palpable than in the incapacity of the Natives to understand the acquisitive tendencies of the Euroamericans. Also, the Natives show their awareness of the unfairness of the White man's laws that are not equal for red and white people. Tecumseh's exhortation to the Choctaws and the Chickasaws in 1811 to take up arms against the Euroamericans underscores this fact: "Every year our white intruders become more greedy, exacting, oppressive, and overbearing. Every year contentions spring up between them and our people and when blood is shed we have to make atonement whether right or wrong, at the cost of the lives of our greatest chiefs, and the yielding up of large tracts of our lands" (Blaisdell 51).

It is evident from Native testimonies that the Euroamericans exploited their charity and their good nature when they were in need, only to turn against them when they grew in strength and numbers. It is also evident that the Natives were not unaware of racial

affiliations between the British and the Americans and understood that the White man regarded them as inferior to himself, as is evident in the following speech made by Hopocan (Delaware) to the British commandant explaining why he did not follow his exact orders to execute the American soldiers:

> 'Father! Who of us can believe that you can love a people of a different color from your own; better than those who have a white skin, like yourselves?'
>
> 'Perhaps, I may see my father shaking hands with the Long Knives [Americans]; yes, with those very people he now calls his enemies. I may then see him laugh at my folly for having obeyed his orders; and yet I am now risking my life at his command!—Father! keep what I have said in remembrance.' (Blaisdell 26)

By the late-eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, the Euroamerican threat to the Natives became palpable, such that Tecumseh exhorted his people to take aggressive measures against the intruder: "Let the white race perish! They seize your land, they corrupt your women, they trample on your dead! Back! whence they came, upon a trail of blood, they must be driven! Back! back—ay, into the great water whose accursed waves brought them to our shores! Burn their stock! Slay their wives and children! The red man owns the country, and the pale face must never enjoy it!" (Blaisdell 58). Yet others, like Brulé Sioux Spotted Tail, saw some virtue in the ways of the "strange white man" and the possibility of learning from him: "This strange white man—consider him, his gifts are manifold! His tireless brain, his busy hands do wonders for his race. Those things which we despise he holds as treasures; yet he is so great and so flourishing that there must be some virtue and truth in his philosophy" (Blaisdell 134). As opposed to the non-Natives' inability to appreciate the Native way of life and consequently representing it as inferior, Native peoples, in their speeches, display their understanding of the difference between the two modes of existence, each equally important to the people concerned, while stressing that each should be allowed to follow his/her own path. In the

words of Hunkpapa Sioux Tatanka Yotanka, (Sitting Bull):

> '[The] white men, who belong to another land, have come upon us, and are forcing us to live according to their ideas. This is an injustice; we have never dreamed of making white men live as we live.
>
> White men like to dig in the ground for their food. My people prefer to hunt the buffalo as their fathers did. White men like to stay in one place. My people want to move their tepees here and there to different hunting grounds. . . . I have seen nothing that a white man has, houses or railways or clothing or food, that is as good as the right to move in the open country, and live in your own fashion.' (Blaisdell 169).

It is instructive to remember while reading speeches by Natives that appear in collections such as Blaisdell's that these are not well documented; the most information that is provided is the speaker's name, tribal affiliation, and probable date of enunciation. In addition, the speeches have been translated into English, in all probability by non-Natives, which brings up issues of authenticity and truth-value.

The texts that figure in this dissertation belong largely to Native literature written in English in Canada after the 1970s: the texts fall between the years of publication of Beatrice Culleton's In Search of April Raintree (1983) and Eden Robinson's Monkey Beach (2000). My choice of this slim period, which may very well be regarded as a Native Canadian Renaissance,[12] is based on Penny Petrone's observation in Native Literature in Canada (1990) where she cites the 1970s as the period that "heralded a phenomenal explosion of creative writing by Indians. Its enormous range--poetry, song, autobiography, short fiction, novels, drama, storytelling, retold traditional narratives, history, essays, and children's literature--make this period a turning-point in the development of literature in English by Canada's first peoples" (112). I am aware that

[12] Not all Native writers accept this description, and, according to Laura Coltelli, these writers "maintain that the enduring vitality of the oral tradition has been central to every form of expression, and as Simon Ortiz argues, 'in that sense the literature has always been there; it just hasn't been written, with its more contemporary qualities and motives'" (6).

my study does not include works by Native stalwarts such as Jeannette Armstrong and Maria Campbell, and the rationale for this lack of inclusion is that their works do not deal with the topic of this thesis in as much detail as the texts chosen for this study. While one can only speculate why this is the case, one possible answer could lie in the period in which they were writing. Campbell and Armstrong spearheaded Native writing in Canada, and so their works had a specific agenda that did not require the extensive presence of the non-Native. The dissertation is also relatively free of poetry, with the exception of Armand Garnet Ruffo's Grey Owl: The Mystery of Archie Belaney, and the reason for this is also the topic of study which demands works that provide a consistent and somewhat lengthy treatment of the representation of non-Natives in Native literature. Given the vertical depth of my chosen topic, as compared to its horizontal span, I find that the works of Beatrice Culleton, Thomas King, Tomson Highway, Daniel David Moses, Eden Robinson, Drew Hayden Taylor, Richard Wagamese, and Armand Garnet Ruffo lend themselves well to my investigation of Native representation of non-Natives. Not only do they afford a variety of approaches to the question of representation but also adopt different strategies to tackle this question. For example, both Highway and Wagamese deal with issues such as colonization and loss of identity, but Wagamese's humorous approach is very different from Highway's and produces very different results. In addition, these writers are still producing literary works in various genres, and I am intrigued by the rich possibilities that contemporary writers have to offer in terms of changing points of view and evolving stylistics. Also, most of these writers tend to experiment with multiple genres and this makes them a unique group for literary-critical study.[13]

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[13] For example, Daniel David Moses is a playwright and a poet, Tomson Highway has

The six chapters that form the body of this dissertation are held together thematically by the question of representation of non-Natives in Native literature. The intention behind the question is, primarily, to investigate whether the mode and means of representation are an imitation of the non-Native literary precedent or whether there is divergence and variety in relation to both. This is a crucial distinction because it is indicative of the stage at which Native literature stands at this moment in its evolution. Furthermore, the manner of representation signals whether Native authors choose to distance themselves from or willingly embrace the rubric of resistance literature. The arrangement of the chapters is meant to suggest a progression from the kind of writing that is reactionary and dependent on an adversary for meaning towards that which embodies independent artistic expression. This is not, however, to suggest that the one is inferior to the other or lacking in artistic expression. What it does indicate is a difference in the concerns of the individual writers, which are influenced by a varied history of first contact and eventual socio-political relations. This difference, in turn, is helpful in demolishing the myth of uniformity in the interactions between Natives and non-Natives. Another, equally important, concern of this dissertation is the attempt to see works by Native writers—some well documented, others not quite so—as a literary group that speaks directly to its creative purpose and to its role in the Native community.

The first chapter is an introduction to the theoretical backbone of this study and is comprised of three sections. The first section of this chapter entitled "Representation: Politics and Possibilities" is an abbreviated overview of the theoretical underpinnings of the term "Representation," which serves to contextualize its use in this project. It is the

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written plays and a novel, and Drew Hayden Taylor is a playwright also known for his non-fictional and journalistic writings.

cultural aspect of representation that figures largely in this section, and is discussed through the theories propounded by philosophers and theorists, such as Michel Foucault and Edward Said, respectively. This section also discusses the possibilities that representation holds for Native writers who can manipulate it to do their bidding.

The second section, "The Intention behind Representation," examines the causes behind the stereotypical portrayal of the Native in non-Native literature. The possible reasons are discussed under the following categories—social, political, moral, and aesthetic. This is followed by the third and last section, which discusses the depiction of Native peoples in nineteenth- and twentieth-century non-Native Canadian Literature. The aim of this section is to the explore the strategies by which the Native is "fixed" in dominant discourse, and determine if the construction of the Imaginary Indian undergoes change in the twentieth century in the face of rising Native political and social awareness. The texts considered include John Richardson's Wacousta, or The Prophecy (1832), which is used as an ur-text for the binary construction of the Indian, W.O. Mitchell's The Vanishing Point (1973), Robert Kroetsch's Gone Indian (1973), Rudy Wiebe's The Temptations of Big Bear (1973), Matt Cohen's Wooden Hunters (1975), and M.T. Kelly's A Dream Like Mine (1987). These texts provide examples of the kind of images Native writers are challenging and writing against in their fictional works.

Chapter two begins the examination of four Native texts discussed under the collective heading of "Counterwriting Native texts," which are Tomson Highway's Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing (1989) and Kiss of the Fur Queen (1998), Richard Wagamese's Keeper'n Me (1994), and Beatrice Culleton Mosionier's In Search of April

Raintree (1983). 'Counterwriting'[14] is a concept that draws on the Self-Other power relation and strives to counter misrepresentations of the Other by exposing how the Other has been manipulated by the Self. The most important purpose of the 'counterwriting' text is to assign blame where it is due: in other words, it returns the gaze of the colonizer by directing it away from the colonized Other and onto the Self. This involves the representation of non-Native characters from the Native point of view. However, 'counterwriting' accepts the definitions imposed by the colonizer, and functions within the established binary of Self and Other. The inability of the 'counterwriting' text to effectively challenge the fixed image of the Native in non-Native discourse may be attributed to this shortcoming.

"The Euroamerican as Wannabe" is the third chapter and discusses the phenomenon of "wannabeism," its colourful history with regard to Native peoples, and its representation in Drew Hayden Taylor's alterNatives (2000) and Thomas King's Green Grass, Running Water (1993). Along with a discussion of the uses to which the image of the Indian has been put by Euroamerican society, the chapter also discusses the reactions of Native peoples to what is a blatant act of cultural appropriation. The depiction of the "wannabes" in the novels ranges from humorous consideration to ironical exposé, and the writers seem to have few qualms in revealing their views on the phenomenon.

Chapter four studies Armand Garnet Ruffo's Grey Owl: The Mystery of Archie Belaney (1997) and David Daniel Moses' The Indian Medicine Shows (1995) under the heading of "Sympathetic Representations." As the title suggests, this chapter explores

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[14] "Counterwriting" is term that I have created in order to accurately express the primary function of the above-mentioned texts. It is a simple, though useful, conflation of two key terms which are inevitable in a discussion of these texts—"Counter discourse" and "Writing back." For details see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin.

how Ruffo and Moses represent their white characters in, what may be seen as, a sympathetic manner. These texts make for an illuminating reading in the context of the personal involvement of the creators with their subjects: for example, Ruffo draws on family history in his characterization of Grey Owl, and Moses on his childhood experience of white adolescent masculinity. The texts also serve to undercut the assumed antagonistic uniformity of Native/non-Native relations by displaying the uniqueness of individual encounters in the monotony of generalizations.

A further departure is found in the following chapter entitled, "Thomas King's Native Grinder: Green Grass, Running Water." Published in 1993, Thomas King's Green Grass Running Water is a studied humorous look at Native/non-Native relations in the various contexts of literature, history, myth, and the present day from the Native point of view. King's novel breaks the continuum of the focus on the struggle of Native peoples against oppression, established in the previous chapters, by privileging not only the Native point of view over the non-Native but also by rejecting the definitions of the colonizer. This decentering of the non-Native is also palpable in Eden Robinson's Monkey Beach (2000), which forms the second section of the last and sixth chapter. "Other Ethnicities and the Marginalization of the non-Native" is composed of two sections; the first is an examination of how other ethnicities are represented in Native fiction and the possible historical connections between them and the Natives, and the second discusses the marginalization of the non-Native in a novel such as Monkey Beach.

The three ethnic entities that figure primarily in the works, aside from the Anglo-Americans, considered for this study are Blacks, Jews, and Germans—namely, Babo in Green Grass, Running Water, Colleen Birk in alterNatives, and Herr Schwarzkopf in

Kiss of the Fur Queen. As mentioned earlier, Robinson's Monkey Beach makes for a refreshing read in the relative absence of non-Native characters, most of whom are found lurking on the periphery of the Native-dominated centre.

The conclusion presents the inferences drawn from the five chapters, and also considers the relation between postcolonial literature and theory, Canadian literature, and Native literature. The texts examined in the previous chapters strongly indicate that Native representations of non-Natives do not simply replicate the binary found in non-Native literature, even though some of the writers are re-turning the images to the oppressor. While I am aware that a thematic approach ties these chapters together, I have to concede that my manner of addressing it is not quite consistent. This is partly due to evident inconsistencies in the Native portrayal of non-Native characters, and partly due to the writers themselves, who exploit all the possibilities of depicting non-Natives in their works. Having said this, I would have to admit that there are, broadly speaking, two ways in which I have approached the question of representation: the first is by grouping those texts together that display a certain affinity in the manner in which they approach this question, and show a consistency in the depiction of their non-Native characters, as in the chapters "'Counterwriting' Native texts" and "Sympathetic Representations." The second is by grouping texts on the basis of the type of illustration that is found to be dominant in them, for example, the chapters "The Euroamerican as Wannabe" and "Other Ethnicities." There is, finally, a third approach by which texts such as Green Grass, Running Water and Monkey Beach are given individual attention, because their treatment of Native-non-Native relations departs radically from the manner in which other writers treat this issue.

The six categories under which the representation of the non-Native in Native literature will be studied are meant to illustrate the diversity of the representation. This diversity is proof of the richness of imagination and the abundant creativity that Native writers possess. In addition, the different ways in which the writers approach the representation of non-Natives and the various results that are produced indicate that each writer brings his/her unique view to bear upon this problematic issue.

Chapter 1: Representation

(a) Politics and Possibilities

The field of representation is a vast and varied area of study. Aside from furnishing a useful tool with which to unravel social, political, and cultural constructions, specific theories of representation aid our understanding of the role of historical intervention in the creation of such constructions. It is perhaps useful to specify at this juncture that representation should be considered in two senses of the term (not necessarily mutually exclusive)—political and cultural—and it is the latter that figures in this study. Representation as a critical term has been actively investigated since the 1960s and its critics have exploded all notions of transparency and innocence attributed to it. In its contemporary sense, the term can be seen as "a complex set of cultural practices, made up both of textual systems of knowledge and material or economic arrangements for the (re)production of knowledge" (Jay 11).

In relation to this examination, representation is integral for an understanding of how power operates through images and seeks to 'fix' the object of interrogation in a pre-determined field. The field of representation also covers under-representation, over-representation, and misrepresentation, of which the last category will figure most prominently in the following study. I will limit my discussion to those theorists and critics whose work in the field of representation has exposed its manipulative underpinnings and opened it up for further questioning.

The study of representation in the twentieth century inevitably involves a discussion of culture and language because representation is a signifying practice through which

meaning is produced in a given culture.[1] Culture may be defined anthropologically as the way of life of a people, or sociologically as their shared values, and also as "a set of practices" that produces meaning (Hall 2). Meaning is "what gives us a sense of identity, of who we are and with whom we belong," and encourages the recognition of differences (Hall 3). Language, which is "a system of signs," is not limited to the spoken word but includes all possible modes of communication such as written texts, music, photographic images, paintings, digital impressions, and gestures; it also enables the sharing of cultural codes that provide a sense of identity and community (Culler 19). Representation is a signifying practice whereby we give meaning to the world around us as we see it, and this makes it culturally specific. As opposed to the *reflective* or *mimetic approach* to representation, which assumes that things exist in the material world, are determined by it, and have a perfectly clear meaning outside of how they are represented, the *social-constructionist approach* regards representation as "entering into the very constitution of things; and thus, culture is conceptualized as a primary or constitutive process [and not a given], as important as the economic or material 'base' in shaping social subjects and historical events—not merely a reflection of the world after the event" (Hall 5-6). The third view, which is better known as the *intentional approach*, holds that "it is the

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[1] The history of representation can be traced back to Plato's idea of *mimesis*, which is discussed in Books III and X of the Republic. According to Jan M. Bremmer, "For the Greeks, mimesis (sic) is not only imitation, as one might be initially inclined to think. In various cases it can indeed be an attempt at realism in its most trivial form, pure copying; but it is also often more than that. In fact, in many passages mimesis (sic) is best translated as 'representation': even Plato realized that artists sometimes represent things that have no counterpart in real life" (6). Aristotle, on the other hand, counters Plato's negative view of mimetic representation by suggesting that *mimesis* is a valuable tool for projecting reality because it deals with the experiences of life and is a valuable extension of these experiences.

speaker, the author, who imposes his or her unique meaning on the world through language. Words mean what the author intends they should mean" (Hall 25).

The study of representation, according to the social-constructionist view, has two main approaches—the semiotic and the discursive. While the semiotic approach was greatly influenced by the Swiss linguist Ferdinand de Saussure, the discursive approach owes much to the theories of French philosopher and historian Michel Foucault. Foucault diversified the semiotic approach by arguing that representation should be concerned with the production of social knowledge, and not confine itself only to language. Accordingly, he introduced three concepts that eventually shaped the discursive approach to representation: power, knowledge, and discourse (Hall 43). Not as concerned with the production of meaning, Foucault's interest lies in the production of knowledge and relations of power in a given historical period, and on who has the power to represent whom. His study laid bare the manipulative workings behind discourses that were treated as unquestioned givens in society. If the semiotic approach discovered that signs were not fixed or essential and, therefore, were open to intervention, the discursive approach unveiled the mechanics behind a given representation and exposed it to further questioning and revision by Third World critics and theorists.

Foucault's study of the apparatuses of power and discursive formations in society pointed toward the presence of unequal distributions of power. In other words, discourse was mapped on to a power structure, which dictated the ends to which it was directed. The rich possibilities of the discursive approach to representation were discovered by other fields of study, and it found its way into diverse fields, such as cognitive psychology, media and literary studies, sociology, and political science. This approach

posited the relationship between the representer and the represented, in keeping with the premise of asymmetrical power distribution in society. Also, the constructed nature of representation revealed how the representer doctored the image of the represented to suit his/her specific requirements. Foucault's legacy of discourse and power/knowledge has been passed on to his critical/theoretical successors, each of whom have extrapolated from his work, and that of Jacques Lacan and Jacques Derrida, to create their individual theories: Of these, Edward W. Said, Homi K. Bhabha, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak[2] have applied Foucauldian theory to the overlapping fields of race, gender, and colonial discourse.[3] Of the three critics, it is undoubtedly Said who is most influenced by Foucault's theories; his Orientalism (1978) follows Foucault in its preoccupation with questions of power/knowledge and representation and applies it to non-European history and culture. Widely acknowledged by his peers as a path-breaking study of the construction of the Orient by the West, Orientalism has had its share of bouquets and brickbats.[4] Nonetheless, Said has to be credited for his

> insistent emphasis on the relationship between Western representation and knowledge on the one hand, and Western material and political power on the other, which underwrites the decisive push Orientalism gave to the transformation of earlier metropolitan[5] approaches to the study of the literature of empire and the new literatures which began to emerge from the decolonized

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[2] While Spivak's "Rani of Sirmur" draws on Foucauldian discourse theory, in her subsequent work she is more critical of Foucault and tends to lean heavily toward Derrida (deconstruction) and Gramsci (hegemony).

[3] Or alternatively the fields of nation, culture, and ethnicity.

[4] The former received from contemporaries like Bhabha, Spivak, and Robert Young, and the latter from critics, such as John Mackenzie and Aijaz Ahmed.

[5] Such as the work of M.M. Mahood, Martin Green, and Alan Sandison.

> regions, into what is now known as the postcolonial field of study. (Moore-Gilbert 34)

Said's Orientalism, according to Bart Moore-Gilbert, draws on Foucault in two principal ways: "first of all, in its conception of what power is and how it operates," and secondly, "Said adapts from Foucault the argument that 'discourse'—the medium which constitutes power and through which it is exercised—'constructs' the objects of its knowledge" (36). And so, Said regards the 'Orient' as a discursive formation, a construction by the West, which enables it to control the Orient and strengthen its self-image of superiority. However, Said differs from Foucault in regarding power not as some "arbitrary phenomenon but a conscious and purposive process governed by the will and intention of individuals as well as by institutional imperatives" (Moore-Gilbert 37).

While Said concerns himself primarily with the colonizer, Homi Bhabha—taking his lead from Fanon—makes the colonized his province of study. Building in a certain sense[6] on Said's Orientalism, Bhabha's take on colonial discourse suggests that the identities of colonizer and colonized are not stable or 'fixed' entities, nor are representations of the Other unchanging or static. Unlike Said, Bhabha's interest lies in colonial discourse as it pertains specifically to the Indian sub-continent. To the interrogation of the representation of the Other in colonial discourse Bhabha brings the concepts of ambivalence and mimicry. He argues that in spite of the colonizer's diligent efforts to frame the colonized in a representation that best suits his/her requirements,

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[6] Moore-Gilbert regards Bhabha's description of Said's analysis in Orientalism as 'undeveloped' as it does not attempt to move beyond the analysis of colonial discourse in terms of systems of binary oppositions (115-116).

what Bhabha calls the stereotype,[7] the Other manages to elude the framework. In his essay, "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism," Bhabha has this to say regarding the contradiction at the heart of colonial discourse: "An important feature of colonial discourse is its dependence on the concept of 'fixity' in the ideological construction of otherness. Fixity, as the sign of cultural/historical/racial difference in the discourse of colonialism, is a paradoxical mode of representation: it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy, and daemonic repetition" (66). This suggests that the process of representing the Other as a 'fixed' entity contains both the desire for and fear of the Other. Robert Young connects the concepts of ambivalence and mimicry in the following manner:

> [T]he colonizer performs certain strategies in order to maintain power, but the ambivalence that inevitably accompanies the attempt to fix the colonized as an object of knowledge means that the relation of power becomes much more equivocal. Mimicry at once enables power and produces the loss of agency. If control slips away from the colonizer, the requirement of mimicry means that the colonized, while complicit in the process, remains the unwitting and unconscious agent of menace—with a resulting paranoia on the part of the colonizer as he tries to guess the Native's sinister intentions. (147)

This, in brief, is the theoretical backdrop on which I draw for the following study: extrapolating from Bhabha's concept of the ambivalence inherent in colonial discourse and Judith Butler's ideas regarding the ambivalence that resides at the heart of injurious speech, I detect the presence of an ambivalence at the heart of representation that enables the (hitherto) represented to turn it against the representer.

The preceding discussion concerning the nature of representation should not give the impression that Native writers are dependent on this framework in order to express

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[7] Bhabha defines the stereotype as "an arrested, fetishistic mode of representation" ("The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism" 76).

themselves effectively and cogently, or that they are trapped in the colonial structure of representation. The framework is meant to serve as a tool that provides a better understanding of how these writers manipulate western literary representation to serve their goals. The theoretical premises that follow are neither intended to eclipse Native literature nor to place the theorists above the writers. On the contrary, the framework is a stepping stone in the direction of the attempt to develop a Native theory regarding representation.

Judith Butler in Excitable Speech (1997) locates ambivalence at the heart of the performativity of injurious/hate speech. Butler draws on Althusser's concept of interpellation and J.L. Austin's views on performativity and speech acts to interrogate how words can inflict violence on the addressed, and how "the offensive call runs the risk of inaugurating a subject in speech who comes to use language to counter the offensive call" (2). According to Butler,

> One is not simply fixed by the name that one is called. In being called an injurious name, one is derogated and demeaned. But the name holds out another possibility as well: by being called a name, one is also, paradoxically, given a certain possibility for social existence, initiated into a temporal life of language that exceeds the prior purposes that animate that call. Thus the injurious address may appear to fix or paralyze the one it hails, but it may also produce an unexpected and enabling response. (2)

The above formulation suggests two things: first, injurious name-calling establishes a relationship—albeit an unequal one—between the caller and the called, and second, this relationship is open-ended in that it can produce an "enabling" response such that "speech can be 'returned' to its speaker in a different form, that it can be cited against its originary purposes, and perform a reversal of effects" (14). The presence of such ambivalence implies that "the very terms of resistance and insurgency are spawned in

part by the powers they oppose (which is not to say that the latter are reducible to the former, or always already coopted by them in advance)" (40). Moreover, injurious speech "reinvokes the position of dominance, and reconsolidates it at the moment of utterance" and becomes "the site for the mechanical and predictable reproduction of power" (19). The salient points of Butler's argument are concerned with the fixing of the object through performativity, the ambivalence inherent in it, and the rearticulation of social dominance through it. A similar point of view is articulated through Homi Bhabha's concept of ambivalence as applied to colonial discourse.

As mentioned earlier, in his essay "The Other Question: Stereotype, Discrimination, and the Discourse of Colonialism" (1994), Bhabha speaks of the concept of "fixity" in colonial discourse, which he regards as "a paradoxical mode of representation" as "it connotes rigidity and an unchanging order as well as disorder, degeneracy, and daemonic repetition" (66). The compulsive reinforcement of the stereotype signals the presence of a crack in the colonial construction of the stereotype, which I would argue, enables a resistance to the construction. The construction of the stereotype engenders an asymmetrical power relation between the colonizer and the colonized that seeks to fix the colonized, but the ambivalence inherent in the stereotype signals a possible avenue for the reversal of the existing relation. It is useful to remind ourselves here that representations of the Other, in the colonial schema, are always injurious representations. While colonial representations might bring the Other into the circuit of discussion and thereby mobilize it for further reciprocal action, this hailing is always hurtful to the colonized.

It is evident that the literary critics and theorists mentioned above are neither Native

nor have they addressed issues that concern Native peoples in their discussions. They have, however, questioned existing structures of power in their writings, and shown critical interest in literary decolonization movements in the Third World. Needless to say, the application of Third World theory to Native literature is a contested issue. Dakota Sioux Elizabeth Cook-Lynn is a Native writer and critic who endorses the need to study Native literature in the contexts of Third World literary criticism[8] in "The American Indian Fiction Writers: Cosmopolitanism, Nationalism, the Third World, and First Nation Sovereignty." She bases her claim on the fact that "American Indian writers work with themes which might be said to be comparable with the themes of their contemporaries in the Third World, such as oppression, diaspora, displacement, colonization, racism, cultural conflict, exile, resistance, and other assorted experiences" (82). Citing shared concerns among colonized peoples regarding themes of invasion, oppression, and nationalism, Cook-Lynn emphasizes that "major concerns of Third World writers must be crucial analytical components of anything that might be said about the current literary trends in American Indian voice," because "the interest in decolonization goes back to the Mayan resistance narratives of the 1500s and has always played an important role in political and social life" (83, 96). Kimberly Blaeser (Anishnaabe/German) is another Native critic who has called for the development of a Native literary theory that arises from within the literature in her essay "Native Literature: Seeking the Critical Centre." Blaeser's objection, however, is to the application of western universalizing theories to Native literature that tend to

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[8] Her list of non-Native critics includes, Homi Bhabha, Timothy Brennan, and Edward Said.

transform/remake it in the process. In her own words:

> Scholars like Owens, Gerald Vizenor, James Ruppert, Gretchen Ronnow, Arnold Krupat, Elaine Jahner, and myself have employed, for example, postmodern theory and critical language of the likes of Mikhail Bakhtin, Jacques Lacan, and Jacques Derrida in the reading of Native American texts. We have made use of the intersections of Native works with postcolonial and semiotic theory, and with any number of other established critical discourses. (54)

Then again, there are non-Native critics such as Emmanuel Nelson who contend that "Fourth World" literature need not remain "an awkward and often neglected appendage of Third World literary studies," because "the concept of Fourth World literature offers us a sound theoretical framework as well as a useful political context to understand international indigenous writing" (58). Nelson points to the themes of Native literature, which appear remarkably similar to postcolonial literary themes and include the "uses of history, particularly imaginative and subversive revisions of European-generated historical discourses"; the "relationship between self and community; social and psychological changes caused by colonial invasion, encroaching technology, and detribalization; intergenerational conflicts; [and] issues of bicultural ambivalence as the indigene is forced to negotiate between two cultures" (58). A step in the direction indicated by Nelson is Thomas King's "Godzilla vs. The Post-Colonial," which is an insightful essay objecting to the use of postcolonial nomenclature[9] to describe Native writing and providing alternative terms of description, even if King does not develop his theory fully.

It becomes fairly obvious after this discussion that there is little consensus among Native critics regarding the use of Third World theory to study Native literature.

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[9] It is worth noting that King objects to the terminology of postcolonialism, but not its theoretical premises and applications. This topic will be discussed in detail in the conclusion.

Needless to say, the critical application of literary theory to Native writing, while beneficial, will have to be judicious and specific; and, the critic will be obliged to ensure that the theory serves the needs of the literature by adapting to its requirements. While there is no need to handle Native literature with kid gloves, there is the need for respect and awareness when non-Native theory is applied to it.

To represent is not only to depict but also to define; the existence of an asymmetrical power relation between colonizer and colonized implies that the former has control over the colonized because all definitions rest with the colonizer. However, the presence of ambivalence in the structure of representation enables the colonized to define themselves and the colonizer as well. As mentioned earlier, a redefinition of the colonized, by the colonized, would seem to be the primary corrective for (mis)representations by the colonizer; however, the true efficacy of re-turning the representation can only come across through the representation of the colonizer from the perspective of the colonized. This allows the colonized to counter the colonizer's claim and fervent belief that they are "themselves richly and diversely individual," while the Other is "synecdochically homogenized by this or that stereotypical attribute or trait" (Pickering 74). Butler's observation regarding the "terms of resistance and insurgency" that are produced in part by "the powers they oppose," works well in conjunction with what I have called the Native strategy of "stealing the horses" because both are concerned with how a system of oppression can provide the very tools with which to confront and counter it (40). The Native writers, whose writings are the focus of this study, recognize the subversive potential inherent in and the motives behind colonial representation. Accordingly, some of the writers prefer to interrogate and expose the motives behind colonial representation,

while others are engaged with trying to subvert the existing power relation through their writings. The device, which is employed, is the representation of the colonizer/non-Native from the viewpoint of the colonized/Native.

What remains to be seen is whether the representation of the non-Native by Native writers follows the same trajectory as the representation of the Native by non-Native writers, and results in the production of binaries/stereotypes, or whether Native writers can provide fictions that avoid such divisions and essentialisms. Accordingly, the next section is an interrogation of the intention behind the binary representation of the Native through a consideration of the social, moral, political, and aesthetic dimensions of Euroamerican culture. This is followed by a study of John Richardson's Wacousta (1832) and five twentieth-century Canadian novels, which illustrates the longevity of stereotypes such as the noble savage and demonic Indian. The two latter sections serve the function of providing a milieu for a better understanding of the type of depictions that the Native writers are writing against.

Some of the questions which will be addressed in the following chapters include questions relating to power, paradigms, and putative givens: Is the existing power structure of representation destabilized by the portrayal of non-Natives in Native literature—assuming that there is an unequal distribution of power between the representer and the represented? Is the representation a collective or an individual assessment—as in are "all" Euroamericans stereotyped or are they granted individuality? There is a type of representation in which the object of study is observed and commented on—which keeps the object relatively autonomous—as opposed to the attempt to get under the skin and speak from within the representation—in which case autonomy is

denied. Which type is found primarily in the works of Native writers? How do these representations affect the relationship between oppressing Self and oppressed Other?

(b) The Intention behind Representation

To represent is to express a desire to control. The act of representation by the oppressor is governed by the knowledge of difference and based on the assumption that the oppressed/object being represented is fully knowable and therefore inferior. Knowledge—true or otherwise—confers the power to modify and construct images as per the requirements and fantasies of the oppressor/representer. It is useful to bear in mind that these representations are never objective: on the contrary, they are always coloured by the perceptions and biases of the representer. This attribute of representations makes them potentially injurious.[10] Their injurious nature is compounded when they are presented to the world as *the* authoritative images of and not just *a* perspective on the oppressed. Whether as graphic images or as verbal images, representations hold the power to convert the gullible observer/reader to their point of view. Accordingly, this section explores the bases behind the negative construction of the Native in non-Native culture and how these constructions have affected the Natives.

According to Michael Pickering, "The location of the Other is primarily in language. It is through language that selves and others are mediated and represented. The symbolically constructed Other and the patterns of social exclusion and incorporation entailed by it are distributed in sign and language, discourse and representation" (72). In

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[10] Most representations of the colonized/oppressed by the colonizer/oppressor are injurious. This includes the more sympathetic ones, because they create yet another stereotype that either replaces or joins the existing one.

a culture that has been dominated by the printed word, the power of the written script is authoritative and potentially destructive. The unquestioned acceptance of the image of the oppressed conveyed by the printed word has resulted in the production and perpetuation of certain representations that have proven to be lethal for those being represented. The representation of the colonized by the colonizer is one such case. In the long history of colonization, the colonized have always been characterized as the Other. And this colonized Other is not as good or better than the colonizing Self, but inferior to the degree that it has to be either rejected or chastised. While rejection manifested itself, in colonial history, as the extermination of the brutes, chastisement took the form of religious conversion and assimilation. Thus were born the idealized tropes of the "White man's burden" and the "Civilizing mission," which proved to be the bulwarks in the justification of Euroamerican colonization.

As mentioned earlier, Edward Said's influential and controversial work, Orientalism, is an in-depth examination of the representation of the Orient by the Occident. Said makes note of the Western impulse to classify, codify, and re/name the Orient and in his words, "[Orientalism] *is*, rather than expresses, a certain *will* or *intention* to understand, in some cases to control, manipulate, even to incorporate, what is a manifestly different (or alternative and novel) world" (12). Said's "Orientalism" can be extrapolated and applied to any other colonized entity to reveal similar inclinations on the part of the colonizing power. The representation of the colonized by the colonizer reveals an uneasy tension between the aforementioned incorporation and rejection of this manifestly different world. While the colonizer is quick to grasp what is good in the colonized, he is also speedy in eliminating that goodness from the colonized. As a result, the colonized is

reduced to a negative mirror-image of the colonizer, an image that the colonizer may look at to better appreciate his own self. It is the reduced husk of the colonized that then becomes the object of representation. Needless to say, the representation is not only inaccurate but also lacking in veracity. The evidence of colonial (mis)representation has been scrutinized both by academics and by non-academics,[11] and the overwhelming verdict goes against the colonizers. As a result, the (mis)represented peoples have taken to representing themselves in an attempt to correct the damage done by the oppressors. Contemporary literature from the erstwhile colonized nations such as Africa, the Caribbean islands, and the Indian subcontinent testifies to the abiding need and pervasive urge to correct the damage done by colonial discursive strategies.

While this postcolonial writing back to the empire may work for the peoples of Africa, India, and the West Indies, the situation differs when it comes to the Natives of North America. Elazar Barkan has this to say regarding the difference between the decolonization movement in the settler colonies and the rest of the world:

> Within twenty years [after World War II] most of the world's populations were liberated from the yoke of Western imperialism and colonialism in a wave that established many of the countries that constitute the Third World today. Still, in much of the rest of the world, colonialism could not be reversed. From the United States and Canada to New Zealand and Australia, colonialism has changed the country and its people to form a new reality in which the indigenous peoples form only a small minority and were on the verge of extinction. (159-60)

The state of internal colonization, which is enforced by the governments of the United States and Canada, is proof that the Native is still colonized and subject to the vagaries of colonial representation.

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[11] I am referring to critics such as Edward Said, Abdul R. JanMohamed, Benita Parry, Patrick Brantlinger, et al, and novelists of the ilk of Nadine Gordimer, Chinua Achebe, Ngugi wa Thiong'o, Dionne Brand, Wilson Harris etc.

A reading of critical material which addresses the representation of Indians in Euroamerican culture, such as Roy Harvey Pearce's The Savages of America (1953), Robert J. Berkhofer's TheWhite Man's Indian (1979), Raymond Stedman's Shadows of the Indian (1989), Daniel Francis' The Imaginary Indian (1992), Ward Churchill's Fantasies of the Master Race (1992), and Helen Carr's Inventing the American Primitive (1996) among others, indicates that non-Native representations of the Native are directed by a variety of motivations. These motivations can be sub-divided into four broad categories, which inevitably overlap: social, moral, political, and aesthetic.

Gerald Vizenor in Manifest Manners: Postindian Warriors of Survivance (1994) defines "manifest manners" as "the simulations of dominance; the notions and misnomers that are read as the authentic and sustained as representations of Native American Indians" (5-6). These simulations, in turn, are responsible for the portrayal of the savage as "an impediment to developmental civilization" and for "protract[ing] the extermination of tribal cultures" (6). Needless to say, the most obvious intention behind representing the Indian in an inferior manner was to maintain the status quo in Euroamerican society. Berkhofer observes in this regard that "[a] persistent theme in White imagery is the tendency to describe Indian life in terms of its lack of White ways rather than being described positively from within the framework of the specific culture under consideration" (26). Once pronounced socially unfit to hobnob with the lowest of White society members, the Indians could be conveniently sidelined and ignored, thus allowing White society to continue on its own merry "progressive" way. The only way in which an Indian could become a marginal part of White society was either through assimilation or through a graphic representation of him/herself. In either case, the Indian would be

circumscribed, framed, and would become the object of White gaze. Should s/he demur from becoming an imitation, the most convenient solution at hand was that of putting the Indians into reservations and rendering them socially invisible. The reservation system, it appears, was a convenient social maneuver that also had its political advantages. Once herded into these corrals, the Indians could be kept under surveillance and controlled. According to Francis, "Reserves were originally intended as safe havens where Native people could live isolated from the baleful influence of their White neighbours.... But in the nineteenth century, officials increasingly thought of reserves as social laboratories where Indians could be educated, christianized, and prepared for assimilation" (203).

The confiscation of liberty in the guise of protection and treaty-making was fairly common practice. The representation of the Indians as primitive and childlike, requiring the protection of the "Great Father" or "Grandmother," undermined their ability for self-governance and self-determination. A telling example in this regard is the essay "The Last of the Indian Treaties" by Duncan Campbell Scott. In this essay Scott recounts his travels to Dinorwic in 1905 on a treaty-making mission. What is worthy of note in this essay is the manner in which Scott portrays the Indian as incapable of taking care of himself. Stan Dragland in his collection of essays titled Floating Voice: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Literature of Treaty 9 remarks, in relation to Scott's opinion on Indian nature: "White nature, or at least the best of White behaviour, is the norm by which Indian nature is measured and found lacking in development. Indian nature is implicitly essentialized, as a feminine nature has so often been, as passive, to be acted on" (51). To begin with, Scott plays on the idea of the dying Indian: "The Indian nature now seems like a fire that is smouldering and dying away in ashes" (110); this is followed

by Scott's analysis of the exploitation of the Indian by unscrupulous traders: "He enriches the fur-traders and incidentally gains a bare sustenance by his cunning and a few gins and pitfalls for wild animals. When all the arguments against this view are exhausted it is still evident that he is but a slave, used by all traders alike as a tool to provide wealth, and therefore to be kept in good condition as cheaply as possible" (114-5). Presumably the treaty is meant to alleviate all these ills in the life of the Indian. According to Dragland, Scott's ethnographic bias casts the Indian as having "scarcely emerged from a North American version of the Dark Ages" (62). Moreover, his good intentions and his desire to "protect" the Indians gave rise to "one of his paternalistic recommendations [which] was to remove the Indians' freedom to direct their treaty annuity where they chose" (63).

A study of other such material relating to the Indians (expedition literature, treaty accounts, anthropological reports) shows a similar pattern of casting the Indian in the role of the primitive/simpleton who is unable to protect his/her own interests. This classification of the Indian as politically inept contributed largely to the disenfranchisement of the Native peoples. The removal of agency from the Natives gradually took away their right to speak for themselves, and they were rendered not only invisible but also inarticulate. If language is the vehicle of representation then by denying the Natives language—by making them mono-syllabic or silent—Euroamericans were denying them the ability to represent either themselves or the oppressor in fiction and in life. This relegation of the Indian to the pre-linguistic realm also served to bolster the scientific theories of racial inferiority and social evolutionism. Once this was achieved, the representation of the Indian expanded from his/her being "spoken about" to being "spoken for."

The consolidation of the Indian Act of 1876 was the first palpable step in this direction. The Act granted singular power to the Minister of Interior Affairs who would supervise Indian affairs and be "in the control and management of the reserves, lands, moneys and property of Indians in Canada by the provisions of this Act" (Taylor). The deterioration of the Natives from the "noble inhabitants" of a "beautiful land" and equal partners in trade to dependents of a heavy-handed and paternalistic government was a matter of time and Euroamerican requirements. Thus muted by history, the Indian was mercilessly exploited for fulfilling the moral requirements of the new arrivals.

The part that Christianity played in the project of imperialism is a well-known and established fact. The zealousness of the missionaries to save Indian souls, and as expediently as possible, engendered yet another image of the Indian as the spawn of Satan. According to Roy Harvey Pearce, "The logic was inexorable and unrelieved. Wherever the Indian opposed the Puritan, there Satan opposed God; Satan had possessed the Indian until he had become virtually a beast; Indian worship was devil worship.... Satanism, it was abundantly evident, was at the core of savage life" (22). Once Natives were established as antagonists not only to civilization but also to God, their obliteration was imminent. However, there is a discernible contradictory impulse in the reaction to the image of the Indian: while on the one hand the Indian was considered intractable and ungodly and therefore worthy of eradication, on the other hand there was still some inherent goodness left in the Indian for the redemption of his/her soul. It is for the latter, the colonist argued, that America would have to be settled. Pearce observes:

"The practical problem of bringing savages to civilization was to be solved by bringing them to Christianity which was at its heart. Success in empire-building and trade was to

be measured by success in civilizing and Christianizing; success in civilizing and Christianizing would assure success in empire-building and trade (6). Not surprisingly, the extermination or preservation of the Indian was determined by his/her degree of cooperation in and compliance with the colonizer's plans. Consequently, the ideas of the "good" and the "bad" Indian were generated, and remain current in popular usage and perception. The earlier accounts, especially during the phase of preliminary contact, regarding the Natives were generally favourable. The representation of the Natives as "gentle, credulous, amicable and peaceful" was dictated by the Euroamerican hope for trade with them and the establishment of a market for European goods (Nash 39). At this stage trade was primary and the idea of conquest was not that important. Eventually, the counter-image of the Native as "savage, hostile, dangerous, and beastlike" justified the mindless slaughter and the forceful acquisition of land (Nash 40). This bi-polar imaging of the colonized is a common strategy practiced by the colonizer, one clearly influenced by economic motives. According to Abdul R. JanMohamed, like the Indians, the "Africans were perceived in a more or less neutral and benign manner before the slave trade developed; however, once the triangular trade became established, Africans were newly characterized as the epitome of evil and barbarity" (80). In short, the image of the Indian as satanic, uncivilized, and ungovernable was conceived as a justification for his/her extermination. The opposition between Euroamerican and Indian became the opposition between God and Satan, civilization and savagism, modernity and primitivism, Christian and heathen, order and anarchy respectively, among others. Once North America was transformed into a colony, the moral stance toward the Indian showed a marginal change. The Indians began to be pitied for their degraded state,

though the root cause of it remained uninvestigated and unaddressed. The colonizers turned their gaze away from the adults, whom they had been unable to convert or who had become victims of white vices, toward the children whom they hoped to assimilate and thereby generate an entire race of "Apples," that is, Indians who were white inside and red on the outside. The adults were left to their own devices and "the basic idea of degeneracy became fused with later interpretations of the Indian through the doctrines of environmentalism, evolutionism , and racism to explain the decline of Native Americans from alcohol, disease, and general deterioration in the face of White contact" (Pearce 38). In 1920, Duncan Campbell Scott, then Deputy Superintendent of Indian Affairs, expressed his desire for getting rid of "the Indian problem" in the near future, not because the Indians would be granted autonomy to direct their own lives, but because there would be no Indians left in American society: "Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department" (Napier, par. 4). The erasure of racial identity through assimilation was the ultimate goal of the Euroamerican government.

While North American policy makers were directing their efforts toward reducing the numerical presence of the Indians on land, the latter were populating the pages of various Euroamerican texts. Writers such as Montaigne, Rousseau, Voltaire, and Diderot had already made use of the Indian as a tool to critique contemporary European society. The image of the noble savage was used to present a counter-image to the European, and "the life of the American Indian offered a thoroughgoing critique of European social institutions and cultural values" (Berkhofer 76). However, nowhere did the authors suggest that the European start living like the savage, but deployed the image to point to

necessary changes in their own societies. Helen Carr in Inventing the American Primitive: Politics, Gender, and the Representation of Native American Literary Traditions, 1789-1936 comments on the use of the Indian in the American War of Independence: "The idea that the American colonist was, like the Indian, natural and virtuous by contrast with the corrupt, over-civilized European court was a constant motif in independence rhetoric" (24). She goes on to note:

> [T]he Indian became in the revolutionary period a potent symbol for the Americans themselves. Popular iconography used the Indian to represent the new, freedom-seeking Americans, and the revolutionaries repeatedly drew on the image of the Indian to exemplify the defiant colonists in their struggle. The perpetrators of the Boston tea-party dressed up as Mohawks, and cartoons depicted the colonists as Indians oppressed by the British. (36)

However, post-revolution, the American zeal for empire-building gave rise to a paradox in the treatment of the Indian: while the Indian was deployed as a subject for an American literature in the quest for cultural identity and nationalism, "in the Constitution Indians were conceived as aliens, and Congress given power to treat with them as with other foreign nations" (Carr 39). Philip J. Deloria in Playing Indian makes a similar observation about the contradictory manner in which the Indian was perceived by pre- and post-revolutionary Americans: "Americans wanted to feel a natural affinity with the continent, and it was the Indians who could teach them such aboriginal closeness. Yet, in order to control the landscape they had to destroy the original inhabitants" (5). He goes on to connect this dualism with the unresolved nature of American identity which he sees as arising from "the nation's inability to deal with Indian people" (5). Deloria sees this dualism as the contrast between what he calls the "interior" and the "exterior" Indians: the "interior" Indian is used by that part of the American identity which defines itself in opposition to the British/European, yet is one that cannot be completely incorporated

because of the existence of its "exterior" savage twin, against which the civilized—read British—American identity is constructed. The dilemma arises from the difficulty the Americans experienced when they tried to "displace either the interior or the exterior Indian Other. As long as the Indian Others represented not only us but also them, Americans could not begin to resolve questions swirling around their own identity vis-à-vis Indians and the British. Yet choosing one or the other would remove an ideological tool that was essential in propping up American identity" (36). By contrast, in Canada, the Native was looked upon as an impediment in the path of national progress. While the Canadians did not openly endorse the policy of extermination, the understanding was that the Indians would capitulate and be assimilated into Euro-Canadian society. In fact the Canadians prided themselves over their tolerant attitude toward the Indians as compared to that of their neighbours, and so "wholeheartedly endorsed the assimilation of the Indian, which in the long run meant the same thing, an end to an identifiable Indian people" (Francis 59-60).

The image of the noble savage in combination with the romantic trend of the times gave rise to the concept of the dying or vanishing Indian. Interestingly, as Daniel Francis notes, nothing was done to prevent the Indians' headlong rush toward extinction: "the Vanishing Indian was a very expedient notion. It was reinforced by the perception that Indians seemed to serve no useful purpose in the modern world.... It was convenient that they should simply disappear" (62). The idea of the passing away of a noble and courageous race was met with a mad rush to collect whatever memorabilia was available, and resulted in the Indian paintings of George Catlin and Paul Kane, and the photographs of Edward Curtis. Yet another nail in the coffin for the Indians was the idea of the

Indians' closeness to Nature, which was "another confirmation that Indians were backward failures in the evolutionary process, and must disappear along with the buffalo and the forest from whom [sic] they could be scarcely distinguished" (Carr 67). The economic viability of the image of the savage Indian was exploited in the use of the Indian as antagonist in the dime novels, nickelodeons, and penny arcades on both sides of the border. The *tour de force* of the "Mountie" novels of Canada was the savage Indian; these stories of adventure on the North-West frontier were entirely dependent on the conventional image of the Indian for their popularity. However, these novels were not *about* the Indians; they were testimonies to the act of constructing a nation. As a result, the values embraced and expounded were Euro-Canadian cultural values that were not shared by the Indians. However, the Indians served as useful tools in the following ways: "they obstruct the spread of civilization; they provide a reason to feel superior to the Americans; they provide an excuse to feel good about British justice" (Francis 81). The power of the word in combination with that of the image served to freeze the Indian in popular imagination as the buckskin-clad, befeathered, in-tune-with-nature, arrow-shooting savage. In Robert J Berkhofer's opinion: "Although each succeeding generation presumed its imagery based more upon the Native American of observation and report, the Indian of imagination and ideology continued to be derived as much from the polemical and creative needs of Whites as from what they heard and read of actual Native Americans or even at times experienced" (71). The next section of this chapter explores this "Indian of the imagination," who appears to have blinkered the creative vision of non-Native writers, and investigates whether the image of the "Indian" undergoes any change with the rise of awareness regarding Natives.

The mouth that spoke, the eye that saw, and the hand that wrote, all belonged to the colonizer. The dominance of Euroamerican culture was so complete that it even convinced the colonized of their essential inferiority by stereotyping them as alcoholic, irresponsible, and hopeless. The Indian was reduced to a commodity that the oppressor could use as and when required. What this resulted in was an epidemic of self-hate and cultural alienation, which produced a generation of Natives unsure of the present and uninterested in the future. As will be illustrated momentarily, Indians in their "good" and "bad" roles continued to be used by Euroamerican writers, intent on either exploiting or remedying their dismal situation. However, the expected life-long exploitation of the Indians—both artistically and politically—was somewhat alleviated by the rise of Native politicians and writers who gave them a voice to tell their own stories from their own perspective, without any mediation.[12] It is the work of those writers that form the body of this study, and it is through their writings that we are able to glimpse an untold dimension of North American culture and history.

(c) The Representation of "Indians" in 19th and 20th Century non-Native Canadian Literature

In The White Man's Indian Robert F. Berkhofer comments on the gap between the "real" Native American and the "invented" Indian: "Since the original inhabitants of the Western Hemisphere neither called themselves by a single term nor understood themselves as a collectivity, the idea and the image of the Indian must be a white

[12] This is, of course, not to negate the presence of Native orature, instead the focus is on the efficacy of the message and the number of people—both Native and non-Native—that the Native politicians and writers were able to address.

conception" (3). The fact that the "Indian" is a figment of White imagination has also been observed by both Native (such as Gerald Vizenor and Philip J. Deloria) and non-Native critics (such as Daniel Francis and Terry Goldie). These critics also agree that the "Indian" is a textual/fictional construct and the best place to find him/her is between the covers of non-Native texts. The representation of Natives, both men and women, in non-Native Canadian literature has been dichotomous in that they have been painted in stark oppositions by their creators. Astounding but true, this persistent duality has been dictated by the material and moral requirements of the colonizer, which will be discussed shortly. Commenting on the "profound symbiotic relationship between the discursive and material practices of imperialism" Abdul R. JanMohamed notes, "the discursive practices do to the symbolic, linguistic presence of the Native what the material practices do to his physical presence; the writer commodifies him so that he can be exploited more efficiently by the administrator, who, of course, obliges by returning the favour in kind" (83). And so, in the discourse of colonialism, the Indian man is typified as either the noble savage who is childlike, self-sacrificing and easy to manipulate, or as the savage beast that inspires fear and loathing. The Indian woman is typically the innocent and noble princess rescuing the European from her own kind, or the sexualized squaw inspiring temptation and lust. Predictably, the Indian is cast in either positive or negative role depending on the vagaries of his/her creator. According to Robert F. Berkhofer,

> [T]he good Indian appears friendly, courteous, and hospitable to the initial invaders of his lands and to all whites so long as the latter honored the obligations presumed to be mutually entered into with the tribe . . . . On the other side, a list of most contradictory traits emerged of the bad Indian in White eyes. Nakedness and lechery, passion and vanity led to lives of polygamy and sexual promiscuity among themselves and constant warfare and fiendish revenge against their enemies. (28)

Evidently, the initial image of the "good" Indian was based on the kind reception that the newly-arrived Euroamericans received, and driven by the need to present America as a hospitable place in order to encourage immigration. Negative images of the Indian took ascendancy once it became obvious that the huge influx of immigrants would necessitate the acquisition of more land. The image took concrete shape when the Natives resisted the encroachment of their lands by the Whites.

The range of representations, associated with the Indian of White imagination or the Imaginary Indian,[13] can be encompassed economically under the two headings of noble savage and demonic Indian. However, some critics, such as Helen Carr, argue that "depictions of unequivocally noble or ignoble Indians, particularly the former, are rare. Even the noblest of Indians are shown with a flaw, the moral equivalent perhaps of the skull in Arcadia. Many accounts do not fit either label very easily" (10-11). Obviously, the representation of the Indian in American literature was intended to achieve certain goals and justify certain practices and so it is not surprising that the noblest of Indians should sport flaws. However, it is worth noting that there is no noticeable equivocation in the characterization of the demonic Indian, and the legendary savage nature of the Indian was exploited to the maximum. In Gretchen Bataille's words, "[i]ndividual Indians could be 'good,' but the group had to be depicted as 'bad' in order to justify the existing philosophies of government and religion" (Kilpatrick 2). As is the case with any attempt at categorization, there are always exceptions to the rule, which in a way, prove the rule. The appreciable number of critical works devoted to the study of the

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[13] A term borrowed from Daniel Francis' book The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture.

representation of the Native in non-Native fiction attests to the abiding fascination with and power exerted by the stereotypes perpetuated in the works of non-Native writers.

In his article "Richardson's Indians" Leslie Monkman observes: "No writer of nineteenth-century Canada more fully explored the literary potential of the Indian than Major John Richardson" (86). Accordingly, the most productive way to discuss the issue of representation by non-Natives is to illustrate it with the help of the novel that has proven to be the ur-text when it comes to representing Natives in Canadian literature, Richardson's Wacousta. Published in 1832, it is based on the events of the 1763 Native uprising against the British forts at Detroit and Michilimackinac. Gaile McGregor in The Wacousta Syndrome approaches Richardson's text as one that is symptomatic of a characteristically "Canadian" reaction to Nature, which is a recoiling from it.[14] She sees Wacousta as a profound expression of the Canadian imagination, which can be identified in the works of later Canadian writers such as Matt Cohen, W.O. Mitchell, David Williams, Rudy Wiebe, Hugh MacLennan, and Robert Kroetsch. This "recoil [sic] from nature" followed to its logical conclusion would explain the negative attitude toward the Indian in fiction, since "to the early colonist the Indian represented not merely nature but, inevitably, man-in-nature—a phenomenon even more disquieting to contemplate than the naked face of the wilderness" (412, 216). Given the fact that Wacousta is not so much *about* Natives as it is about *going* Native, it is nevertheless singular in possessing "hordes" of "savages" and "bold and daring warriors" (25, 66). It is also distinguished in providing its readers with Native characters who express themselves in fairly intelligible speech and are capable of conveying a variety of emotions. However, the novel replaces

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[14] Northrop Frye calls it "a tone of deep terror in regard to nature" (The Bush Garden 225).

lascivious and vengeful Italian counts with the bloodthirsty and savage Indians who serve as the backdrop to Richardson's colonial gothic.[15] Monkman claims that Richardson's "emphasis falls on the existence of two distinct orders" in Wacousta, namely the civilized and the savage, but he does not assign positive or negative values to either order (89). However, Monkman also points out that the scale of values used to measure the Indian is different from that used to appraise the white man, and "[e]ven Richardson's 'good savages' remain decisively separated from the civilized order"(90). While "the presence of such clearly opposed structures cannot be denied," according to Robert Lecker, the British are just as well-versed in the arts which their adversaries practice (507). And so, "[when] such tactics are used...it becomes difficult to differentiate between what at first might have seemed so obviously to contrast: the line between self and otherness fades, the civilized may seem savage . . ." (Lecker 510). Lecker's observation becomes more pertinent in the context of the transformations of Ellen and Wacousta which will be discussed later.

Richardson's representation of the Native functions on two levels: the first is the quasi-anthropological commentary that applies to the collective body of Indians, and the second is the characterization of individual characters such as Ponteac and Oucanasta. In the first instance Richardson chooses to make broad generalizations regarding the Indians when he refers to them as a "savage and warlike people" (15) or to the "wandering Indian" (21). There is no attempt to individualize this undistinguished horde, which inevitably and essentially embodies savagery. The Indians are repeatedly referred to as

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[15] Patrick Brantlinger refers to this genre as the "imperial gothic" which is "a late nineteenth century and early twentieth-century combination of the scientific, progressive ideology of imperialism with a contradictory interest in the occult" (Jones 529).

"a powerful and vindictive foe" (24, 66), "savage enemies" (24), "the devilish throng" (396), and the non-Native characters are constantly wary of the "craftiness of the surrounding hordes" (25). Simultaneous with this image of the savage and crafty Indian is the portrayal of the Indian as a curious child, as illustrated in the episode of the attack on Fort Détroit, where the fascination of the Indians with the cannon ball is described as "the childish wonder and curiosity of men in a savage state" (70). Not satisfied merely with portraying the Indian as a savage to suit the needs of his fiction, Richardson provides his European readers with anthropological insight into the character of the Indian: Consequently, there are references to "the habitual reserve and self-possession of [the] race" (184), "[the] proud reserve of the Indian" (193), "[the] Indian ear" (238), "Indian etiquette" (245), "the true obstinacy of [the] race" (329), "the natural haughtiness of his savage nature" (331), and "the untutored mind of the Indian" (529). All things considered, the Indians are represented as monosyllabic, yelling, tomahawk wielding, bloodthirsty, scalp-coveting savages. While Richardson is careful to indicate that the Indians in his fiction belong to different tribes/nations such as the Ottawas, the Delawares, and the Shawnees, he elides these differences when he makes sweeping generalizations about the Indian character and race.

In the second instance, two Indians are individualized—one a historical character and the other fictional. As to why Richardson chooses to sketch Indians of both sexes is open to deliberation; a possible answer may be found in Terry Goldie's Fear and Temptation, in which he notes that the two commodities generated by "the semiotic field of the indigene" are sex and violence: the two "poles of attraction and repulsion, temptation by the dusky maiden and fear of the demonic violence of the fiendish warrior" (15). It is

worth noting that both Ponteac and Oucanasta are held up as deviants: they are distinguished by that which separates them from the norm. Ponteac is described as "A tall and noble looking warrior, wearing a deer-skin hunting frock closely girded around his loins, [who] appeared to command the deference of his colleagues, claiming profound attention when he spoke himself, and manifesting his assent or dissent to the apparently expressed opinions of the lesser chiefs, merely by a slight movement of the head" (185). Such is his magnificent nobility that Captain Erskine is moved to regret that "such a fine fellow should be so desperate and determined an enemy!", and later to exclaim "What generous confidence the fellow has, for an Indian!" (185, 187). Richardson grants Ponteac nobility, but denies him the badge of civilization. However "noble looking," Ponteac is as wily as his brethren and equally gullible (193). While his guile is demonstrated through his plan to occupy Fort Détroit by tricking the English into believing that the Indians want peace, his gullibility is proven by the influence that the faux-Indian Wacousta exerts over him. Richardson goes to the extent of clarifying at the end of the novel that Ponteac "was perfectly sincere in a resolution [for peace], at which he had the more readily arrived, now that his terrible coadjutor and vindictive advisor [i.e. Wacousta] was no more" (531). Needless to say, the lynch-pin of any action taken by the Indians in Wacousta is Wacousta himself. The Indians are driven by feelings of friendship or of hatred with regard to him. This divests the Indian of the capacity to act strategically without Wacousta. Richardson is at pains to impress on his readers that the acts of horror perpetrated by the Indians are partly motivated by their affection/respect for Wacousta, the West-educated gentleman-soldier gone Indian.

The female counterpart to Ponteac is Oucanasta, Richardson's version of the Indian "princess" or Pocahontas figure. Oucanasta is not portrayed as one of the innumerable squaws who populate the novel and is such a "generous creature" that she is willing to betray her own people to preserve Frederick de Haldimar's life (360). While Richardson does give the reader a reasonable story of Frederick saving Oucanasta's life to rationalize her actions, and also allows the romantic build-up between the two characters, he stops short of inter-racial marriage by providing Frederick with a childhood sweetheart, Madeline. Helen Carr makes note of this "horror of miscegenation" and notes that "in popular US fiction [and Canadian too] of the late eighteenth century beautiful Native American women were always saving the lives of American men, but they never ever married them. The man went back to a pure white woman waiting patiently for him" (117). However, the figure of Oucanasta is, for Frederick, an avenue for a more passionate relationship than is his European partner. And so, we are given the following description of Frederick expressing his "gratitude" to the Indian maiden: "the young officer caught the drooping form of the generous Indian wildly to his heart; his lips pressed hers, and during the kiss that followed, the heart of the latter bounded and throbbed, as if it would have passed from her into the bosom of her companion" (259). Richardson is quick to qualify that "[n]ever was a kiss less premeditated, less unchaste. Gratitude, not passion, had called it forth..." (259). Contrast this with Frederick's and Madeline's lack of emotional expression in the episode that would seem to beg some clasping to the heart, namely Madeline's recovery after the fall of Michillimackinac. We are told:

> [E]ven he [Frederick], whom at any other moment she would have clasped in an agony of fond tenderness to her beating bosom,—he to whom she had pledged her

> virgin faith, and was bound by the dearest of human ties,—he whom she had so often longed to behold once more, and had thought of, the preceding day, with all the tenderness of her impassioned and devoted soul,—even he did not, in the first hours of terrible consciousness, so much as command a single passing regard. (346)

One could argue that Madeline's numbness is the result of her particularly frightening and horrific experience after the fall of the fort; however, one could question Richardson's motives in making this the first meeting in the novel between Frederick and Madeline. Why is there no episode in Wacousta that can be cited as a concrete example of the existence of a passionate relationship between Frederick and his childhood sweetheart? Moreover, Richardson's choice of terms, in the above-quoted passage, to describe Madeline's feelings for Frederick in a more suitable situation, such as "virgin faith," "human ties," and "devoted soul" conveys a sense of chaste love and domestic felicity that has been purged of all baser passions. Apropos this is the depiction of Madeline's reunion with Clara who was thought to have been lost forever: Madeline "uttered a hysteric scream and threw herself impetuously forward on the bosom of the sobbing girl, who, with extended arms, parted lips, and heaving bosom, sat breathlessly awaiting the first dawn of the returning of her more than sister" (345). Lecker finds this episode redolent with "[t]he suggestions of incestuous union and homosexuality [that] are difficult to ignore" (517).

Richardson also plays on the popular use of the Indian as a counterpoint to the European: Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr. notes the prevalent tendency of non-Natives to measure "the Indian as a general category against those beliefs, values, or institutions they most cherished in themselves at the time" (27). The episode in which Oucanasta leads Frederick to eavesdrop on the Indian meeting and persuades him to wear her moccasins while she goes barefoot elicits the following remark from Richardson:

> Most men love to render tribute to a delicate and pretty foot. Some, indeed, go so far as to connect everything feminine with these qualities, and to believe that nothing can be feminine without them. For our parts, we confess, that, although no enemies to a pretty foot, it is by no means a *sine qua non* in our estimate of female perfection; being in no way disposed, where the head and heart are gems to undervalue these in consideration of any deficiency in the heels. Captain de Haldimar probably thought otherwise; for when he had passed his unwilling hand over the foot of Oucanasta, which, *whatever her face might have been*, was certainly anything but delicate, and encountered numerous ragged excrescences and raspy callosities that set all symmetry at defiance, a wonderful revolution came over his feelings.... (240-1) (italics mine)

Richardson's reluctance or inability to describe Oucanasta's face is in marked contrast to his habitual indulgence in describing his characters. One can only hazard a guess at this omission and see it as the reluctance on the author's part to sketch an identifiable and attractive Indian face.

But the *tour de force* of Richardson's representation of the Indian lies in his characterization of Wacousta and Ellen Halloway. Both these characters serve as the "bad" half of the binary of which Ponteac and Oucanasta form the "good" half. Clearly, Wacousta and Ellen fulfill the roles of the demonic warrior and the wanton squaw. Ellen and Wacousta, by taking on Indian accoutrements and moving to the forest, establish themselves as peripheral to White civilization and the fort; they do not/cannot, however, relinquish their non-Indian identities. Their Indian present is predicated on and guided by a White past from which neither has succeeded in disengaging. Therefore, their defective transformation is a usurpation of Native roles, and can be read as an attempt to eliminate the Native from the New World. According to Manina Jones, this move "allows Richardson to present the spectacle of resistance to the colonial order and to resolve it in his narrative without coming to terms with the real players in the cultural conflict" (526). It is not surprising, therefore, that both characters embody the threatening "Otherness,"

which lurks around the boundaries of the White Self. Both Wacousta and Ellen are victims of Colonel de Haldimar's ruthlessness: While Wacousta is compelled to cross over to the "other" side to seek revenge; Ellen pronounces doom on the de Haldimar clan and becomes his unwitting accomplice. Carole Gerson is perceptive in observing that "Richardson's plots of curses and revenge risk losing sight of the historical issues at hand. While historical events provide a factual anchor as well as local colour and sensational effects, the politically based moral claims of the conflicting parties soon evaporate" (86-7). By crossing over, Wacousta and Ellen also blur the line between civilization and savagery and prove that the two are not mutually exclusive categories. It is, therefore, not surprising that both characters eventually disappear from the novel, which is intent on maintaining rigid binaries from beginning to end.

Ellen is sexualized from her very first appearance in the novel when she struggles with Colonel de Haldimar in a bid to save her husband's life:

> Her long fair hair, that had hitherto been hid under the coarse mob-cap, usually worn by the wives of the soldiers, was now divested of all fastening, and lay shadowing a white and polished bosom, which, in her violent struggles to detain the governor, had burst from its rude but modest confinement, and was now displayed in all the dazzling delicacy of youth and sex. (124)

After her abduction by Wacousta, she next appears dressed like a picture-book Indian—complementing Wacousta who dresses most extravagantly—"Her dress was entirely Indian, however; consisting of a machecoti with leggings, moccasins, and shirt of printed cotton studded with silver brooches,—all of which were of a quality and texture to mark the wearer as the wife of a chief" (426). In addition she behaves most wantonly: "she sprang nimbly to her feet, and was in the next instant lying prostrate on the form of the warrior; her arms thrown wildly around him, and her lips imprinting kisses on his cheek"

(427). The sexual license that Ellen's behaviour reveals is connected directly with her crossing-over to Indian territory. Similarly, Wacousta's changeover to the Indian side has more to do with the stereotype of the savage Indian than with the Indian himself. As Leslie Monkman observes: "The figure who transforms the savages into a 'legion of devils' and 'fiend-like bands' is Wacousta. This man, so consumed by his desire for revenge that he crosses the barriers separating civilized and savage orders, becomes a larger than life Satanic figure, exploiting the worst instincts of the savage Indians" (90). Reginald Morton, also known as Wacousta, is "playing" the Indian in order to vent those emotions and gain those ends that his own culture prohibits. The idea of play is further supported by Wacousta's rather elaborate and fantastic costume, the description of which takes up two pages and possesses an element of the wildly imaginative. In other words, for Wacousta the Indians are an alternative to all that Europe stands for. However, as argued earlier, if the British are as accomplished as the Natives in trickery and deceit, then why does Morton have to forsake his racial affiliations to exact revenge? Is Wacousta a case of "it is better to reign in Hell than serve in Heaven"?[16] A possible answer to the above questions is provided by Dennis Duffy, in whose opinion, Richardson "picked a white adventurer who had taken on the dress and manner of a Native Canadian, because his culture saw such people, even though there were many of them, as renegade and hostile. Since his audience also saw the Native cultures as savage and uncontrollable, the renegade could appear all the more monstrous" (535).

Richardson's representation of Indians in his novel becomes profoundly disturbing in the light of his biography. According to Monkman, "Richardson's interest in the Indian

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[16] John Milton. Paradise Lost. (I, l 262).

may have stemmed in part from his own family history; the question of whether or not his maternal grandmother was an Ottawa Indian has not yet been conclusively answered" (86). In addition, he is said to have met the celebrated Shawnee chief Tecumseh, and "[t]hroughout his work, Richardson affirms his admiration for the red man..." (Monkman 86). Unlike most non-Native writers who either relied on second-hand information regarding the Indians or on their own imagination, Richardson seems to have had first-hand knowledge of his subject. Given this, it is disturbing that he chooses to "ultimately present the red man only in the context of savagism" (Monkman 86). Richardson's choice, however, appears to substantiate JanMohamed's claim, quoted earlier, regarding the complicity of the discursive and material practices of imperialism.

Canadian writers, post-Wacousta, continued to make use of stereotypes about Indians in their fictional works. A good example is Duncan Campbell Scott (1862-1947), whose poetry echoes the dominant sentiment of his time regarding Indians, and finds a counterpart in his non-fictional writings, which have been referred to in the previous section. A change, however, becomes discernible in the representation of the Indian in the fiction of the 1970s. According to Kathryn W. Shanley, "[S]omething happened in the 1960s and 1970s with the rise of Indian activism and writing: some American writers began to question their inherent sense of ownership of Indianness" (676). With the media popularization of Native organizations, such as the American Indian Movement, and events, like the occupation of Alcatraz Island (1969), and Wounded Knee (1973), the Native voice began to be heard and this affected the manner in which the Indian was viewed. This was also the time when Native artists started developing a voice of their own and began to tell their side of the story. These developments make the study of

fiction written around this period worth examining to see if and how the image of the Indian underwent change. While aspects of Richardson's legacy of the representation of the Indian can be seen in the works of Robert Kroetsch, W.O. Mitchell, Rudy Wiebe, Matt Cohen, and M.T. Kelly, among others, the following study will examine the manner in which these writers either maintained or challenged the idea of the Imaginary Indian.

When W.O. Mitchell set his novel The Vanishing Point (1973) on Paradise Valley reserve he became the first Prairie writer to address Native-White issues. The Vanishing Point, a "drastic rewriting" of an earlier novel entitled The Alien,[17] is more of an inquiry than a statement about the condition of Native peoples in Canada (Keith 252). Mitchell sets up a dialectic between White notions regarding Indians and their needs and the ideas of the Indians about themselves. By doing so, he is able to provide the Indians with a voice as well as presence. Mitchell goes one step further when he offers an insight into how the Indians perceive the Whites. Rather than limiting his inquiry to showing how White culture has affected Natives, Mitchell involves his characters, both Red and White, in debates that illuminate perspectives ranging from those of the Indian agent, religious minister, educator, medical advisor, to those of the Indians on the reserve. The paternalism exhibited by the Whites in charge with regard to their Indian wards is mirrored in Carlyle Sinclair's concern for Victoria, and Mitchell makes this relationship a metaphor for exploring the attitudes and motivations of White society when it comes to their dealings with Natives.

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[17]The Alien was serialized in McLean's magazine between September 1953 and January 1954. A vastly different novel from its original version, The Vanishing Point lacks the disturbing elements found in The Alien and attests to the growth in Mitchell's outlook with regard to the Indians. W.J. Keith in "W.O. Mitchell from The Alien to The Vanishing Point" compares the two versions, as do Sheila and David Latham in their book-length study on Mitchell titled Magic Lies: The Art of W.O. Mitchell.

Carlyle Sinclair, Indian agent cum school teacher, is—and has been for the last nine years—a resident of Paradise Valley reserve. Emotionally impoverished and desperately seeking to escape his past, Carlyle is the focus of the novel, which is about his eventual growth and self-discovery. In the absence of any diversions, Carlyle regards the Natives on the reserve as his project and takes it upon himself to make a success out of Victoria, a Native girl whom he has singled out as "special." However, in spite of his best intentions he still remains an alien, an "outlander," who has not managed to make it across to the Indians (12). Carlyle's solution to bridging the distance between himself and the Indians is the creation of "some sort of suspension bridge that could carry hearts and minds across into other hearts and minds. Indian Affairs ought to study the possibility of constructing and issuing them to every agent on every reserve" (11). The symbol of the suspension bridge is thought provoking as the suspension bridge in the novel, which connects the outside world to the reserve, is virtually inaccessible by vehicle and has to be traversed on foot. Carlyle's investment in Victoria's future, both emotional and aspirational, is guided toward turning her into the antithesis of what she is: When he takes her to nursing school dressed in "the navy suit with lace at her throat," he regrets that her eyes still carry "a trace of smoke" (197). Even when she is a student in his school he is convinced that she is not entirely Native in spite of Dr. Sanders assuring him that her pallor is the result of anaemia and not racial mixing. Intent on removing all traces of Nativeness from her body and mind, he never takes into account what she might want for herself. It is unclear whether Carlyle's aspirations for Victoria stem from his belief that she is not purely Native, or whether his ambition blinds him to the extent that he creates Victoria in his own image. Theresa M. Quigley observes in this regard, "[t]he Victoria

that Carlyle is searching so desperately for is a product of his projection, a painstakingly pruned flower, cherished, trained, cultivated" (160). It is clear, however, that her intelligence convinces him that she deserves a better future and he makes his decisions without bothering to consult either Victoria or her family. The episode with Fyfe's orchids and the bee is an intelligent illustration of Carlyle's attitude. Fyfe's violent reaction to the possibility of the bee having pollinated one of his orchids is comparable with Carlyle's reaction to Victoria's pregnancy.[18] Fyfe's orchid, General Eisenhower, is "spoiled" and "pretty sure to be selfed," in the same way that Victoria too is "spoiled" for Carlyle and is also "self-ed" (78). Carlyle's blindness to his own desire to control Victoria is ironically demonstrated through his conversation with Fyfe, when he asks Fyfe if he knows what his orchid wants, and later when he muses, "Listen to the orchid, Fyfe—let her tell her own delight and need" (71).

Carlyle's inability to gauge Victoria's needs and wants is replicated in his dealings with the Native community, as revealed through the oats incident. Three years after performing his duties as school teacher, Carlyle is appointed as the Indian agent for the reserve. In addition, he finds himself serving in the multiple capacities of judge, nurse, police, and agriculturalist. The oats incident relates to the last of his assumed roles, when he tries to transform the Indians into responsible white farmers. Unable to get the proper response from the Indians in charge, Carlyle solicits Archie Nicotine's help to set things in order and get the Indians to sow oats. Archie gets the process going and the oats are

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[18] Arnold E. Davidson in "Lessons on Perspective: W.O. Mitchell's The Vanishing Point," cites this example as "the first lesson" which is that "One's own concerns are self-evidently valid, important; others who see things differently are clearly missing the point" (62). In this context, Fyfe's reaction to the bee and Carlyle's to Victoria's pregnancy is arguably disproportionate to the causes.

sown; however, when the time to reap them comes around, there are no Indians in sight, including Archie, to do the work. An irate Carlyle locates them at the local rodeo show and forces them to return. The Indians are reluctant to leave because the rodeo pays well and the local organizers are unwilling to let them go because they attract tourists. The organizer's response to Carlyle's reprimand reveals that the Indians are being exploited by the whites for their own profit, and there is little or no concern for the Indians. Yet another example of such self-serving exploitation is Reverend Heally Richards' insistence that the healing of the ailing Esau Rider come right at the end of his revival meeting in spite of Archie's warning that the ailing Esau might not last until that time. Carlyle's righteous notions are punctured when the Indians return but the oats remain uncut. This incident aside from confirming Carlyle's paternalistic attitude regarding the Indians sends out mixed signals: Is it unwise to trust Indians to do work? Are Indians basically irresponsible? Are the two ways of life—Red and White—essentially incompatible? These questions do not have clear-cut answers, and the issues are further complicated by the contradictions posed by the text. For example, Archie Nicotine tells Carlyle that he needs to pay the Indians in advance to get them to work, which conflicts with Ezra Powderface's comment, "I guess money isn't everything, Mr. Sinclair," when he tries to explain the motivation behind going to the rodeo and leaving thousands of dollars' worth ripe oats to rot (162).

Notwithstanding his failings, Carlyle's concern for the Indians is more earnest than Fyfe's resignation, Sheridan's defeatism, or Reverend Dingle's vacuous goodness. Ian Fyfe, "Regional Director Western Region, Indian Affairs and Northern Development Department of Indian Affairs Branch, MS Group 4" regards the Indians "as terminal

cases to be made comfortable as possible within the terms of the reserve system—the budget and the Indian Act—and the civil service machinery. All you could do with terminal cases—wait and see if they expired" (64, 76). Arthur Sheridan, the Indian agent before Carlyle, is peeved with the Indians because he has "spent thirty-five years fighting his way through red tape—paper—department and Indian apathy," and is convinced that "an Indian does as he damn pleases" (148, 150). Reverend G. Bob Dingle is a well-meaning man who "loves his fellow man with a great, big, happy, boob heart" (109). He regards the Indians as children and has "indulged himself in a sort of absent-minded masturbatory loving-kindness that has borne no fruit" in all his years of service at the reserve (109). It is Dr. Peter Sanders who tenders a different view regarding the Indians and often offers a corrective to Carlyle's prejudiced outlook. Commenting on how the Indians are referred to as children, Sanders observes, "Horse shit! They are children, but with adult drives—grown up hungers—mature weaknesses—envy—love of power—of their own children; they have vanity and—what's very—the key—a terrible feeling of inferiority. If you know that—and that they are child-like—then you won't give them too much load to carry; you won't rant at them because they failed to carry what you piled up on them" (108-9). Carlyle, of course, does not heed his advice. And so, Victoria's shame at becoming pregnant is not directed so much toward herself and her people as it is toward Carlyle, as "[s]he knows that she has carried the weight of [his] aspirations for her and that she has failed to be the success whereby he would justify all his past labours" (Davidson 63). When Carlyle objects to the playing of the drum, which he perceives as "Green Lobotomy," Sanders defends the Natives and tells him:

> "Christ, Sinclair—let them keep their drum at least!"
> "I tell you—it's what we're up against."

> "Maybe. But it is theirs."
> "That makes it all right."
> "It is—at least—one thing we didn't give them—along with the D.T.'s—TB—V.D. The drum is beautiful." (169).

Carlyle's lack of appreciation for Native culture is evinced through his disregard for the drum and his aversion to the Prairie Chicken Dance. Carlyle is at least three removes from the Indians: he doesn't speak their language and makes no effort to learn it, he is White, and he harbours White preconceived notions about Indians. This makes Carlyle the ideal tool with which to critique White-Native relations, and provides Mitchell with a character that makes mistakes and becomes the butt of authorial irony.

Other examples that demonstrate the gap between White notions and Indian requirements are the invention of the inedible Fyfe Minimal Subsistence Cookie which Fyfe regards as the "one redeeming triumph in his forty-five years of service" (Davidson 66), Victoria's decision to opt out of nursing, and the school incident where Carlyle financially blackmails the Indians into sending their children to school. Mitchell also explores the self-serving nature of White-Native interactions through the Carlyle-Victoria relationship. While Carlyle's almost obsessive concern for Victoria's success at the beginning of the novel comes across as an act of disinterested benevolence, eventually it appears that Carlyle does have an axe to grind. Carlyle has unwittingly transformed his adult attraction for Victoria into paternal concern, which is revealed through his violent reaction to any suggestion of her budding sexuality, his frenzy at her disappearance, and his sense of loss on hearing about her pregnancy. Victoria "Lamb" and Carlyle "Shepard" are the latter's creations to give meaning to his messed-up life, to fill up the vacuum created by the loss of his wife and child: "The loss of Victoria had shattered something inside him. He knew that now. He knew he was not trying simply to find her.

He knew that he must put back together something he had been trying all his life to keep from being splintered—broken beyond repair. It was something important to him, and it had never—ever—been whole for him really . . ." (267). The quest for Victoria is revealed ultimately to be a quest for the Self. Mitchell suggests that for Carlyle Victoria is more important for what she symbolizes than for herself by showing us Victoria through Carlyle's eyes for the better part of the novel. Since Victoria is very much the Other, the Self's (that is, Carlyle's) dependency on her has thought-provoking implications with regard to the Self-Other paradigm.[19] Mitchell is thus able to illustrate the gap between White expectations and Native requirements without having to resort to any didactic mechanisms.

W.O. Mitchell's efforts are undeniably laudable; however, in spite of his ironizing critique of the White characters, The Vanishing Point is a disturbing novel in some regards as it perpetuates and maintains certain stereotypical ideas with regard to the Natives. For example, Carlyle's perception of the Indians is in terms of classic binaries, and his stance with regard to "them" smacks of Richardsonian anthropology. Mitchell's audience is undeniably white, and he commits the same error as Richardson of assigning himself the role of specialist and guide. The us-and-them divide, which causes Carlyle so much anxiety, is ultimately unbridgeable. The end of the novel, which indicates some sort of acceptance of the White by the Native is, in all probability, as illusory and as elusive as the vanishing point that unites two non-convergent lines on paper. While much of the humour in the novel arises from Mitchell's censuring of non-Native characters who voice stereotypical ideas about Natives, he unwittingly makes use of

[19] The Self-Other paradigm is discussed at length in the following chapter.

stereotypes such as the Indian as the child of nature (Esau Rider), the wily Native (Archie Nicotine), the squaw (Gloria Catface), and the princess (Victoria Rider). Other stereotypes that populate the novel include urban Indians given to alcoholism, poor living conditions on the reserve, tuberculosis, and Indian women as available sexual objects. Such stereotyping becomes harder to comprehend in the light of the knowledge that Mitchell was actively involved with the Stoneys—the featured tribe in the novel—in their cause to obtain more land. O.S. Mitchell in "'What's Ahead for Billy?': The Stoneys, The Alien, and The Vanishing Point" makes note of how W.O. Mitchell met the Stoneys in October 1943 when he "attended a council meeting held on the Macleay ranch at which the Stoneys discussed their case and signed a formal petition to the federal government requesting that land be purchased for them in the foothill country of their traditional territory" (128). Mitchell was impressed with some of the Stoney speakers and "his interest in the Stoneys obviously went beyond their immediate land claims. During this brief encounter he began some lasting friendships as well as a long-standing fascination with the Stoney culture and the impact of White culture on it" (129). Yet another disturbing aspect of the novel is Carlyle's paradoxically[20] artificial identification with the Indians, which smacks of the "going Native" syndrome, and his self-righteous assumption of anger on their behalf. Some good examples are his sense of personal affront at the activities of the oil company, his irritation at the elk guts lying open on the street, and his opposition to Archie's suggestion that Esau be taken to the faith healer: his advice to Archie is "let him die Indian" (21).

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[20] Paradoxical because Carlyle is caught up in the Us-Them binary in relation to the Natives, but identifies more with the Natives than with his own race. O.S. Mitchell refers to this as "the twinned but conflicting tensions of alienation and bridging" (130).

The difference between the American and the Canadian representations of the Indian as victim is aptly described by Gaile McGregor: "The difference between the two usages lies in the fact that one images victimization as *event* and the other victimization as *state*. Where the American writer focuses on the catastrophe and the tragic decline from greatness, in other words, the Canadian is more likely to treat the Indians' condition as a fixed *donnée*" (218). Needless to say, the Indians get the short end of the stick in Mitchell's novel. The victim status of the Indian is maintained in the novel, and only slightly mitigated through Mitchell's exposure of the incompetence of white bureaucracy in handling Indian affairs. The focus of the novel is White as is its guiding consciousness, and the presence of Natives often seems peripheral to the growth and self-discovery of the protagonist, Carlyle Sinclair. The most interesting Indian character in the novel, Archie Nicotine, is also ruled by his position as victim. In relation with Carlyle, he functions as the necessary evil required to aid Carlyle's growth.[21] While Archie always gets the better of him in arguments and is ever ready to play up Red against White, the unequal power equation is maintained as he needs Sinclair to bail him out of prison on numerous occasions. His dysfunctional truck, which lacks the appropriate machinery because he is not resolute enough to withstand the temptations of the Empress Hotel Ladies and Escorts room, is used by Mitchell as a metaphor for the condition of the Native. Keith observes that in spite of his previous failures to obtain the spare parts for his truck, Archie at the end of the novel is "[s]uddenly...presented as successful, though we have been offered no clear reasons for his transformation" (259).

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[21] O.S. Mitchell sees Archie Nicotine and Dr. Peter Sanders as Carlyle's "good Angels" (150).

What may have been an act of agency turns out to be a requirement of the plot.[22] If, as Keith suggests, Archie's "mechanical quest" is meant to parallel Carlyle's "love quest," then Archie's success is merely an act of tying in the loose ends and creating an artificial atmosphere of hope (259).

Matt Cohen's Wooden Hunters (1975) is yet another novel that deploys the urban Indian, in the form of Johnny Tulip and his family. The novel revolves primarily around its female protagonist Laurel Hobson, and her attempts to find meaning and direction in life after the sudden death of her parents in an accident. Johnny Tulip comes into the picture as Laurel's rescuer, when she is seventeen years old, from a beach where she is camping with a friend. His appraisal of her as "young and timid, like a rabbit" (144) and his memory of her as "useless and white" (145) is a recurrent trope throughout the novel. So much so, that when he has sex with Laurel for the second time "[h]e felt possessed, pumping like a madman trying to deliver this greedy white ghost" (152). Calvin, Laurel's boyfriend, repeatedly thinks about himself, with reference to Johnny Tulip, as "a spirit so fragile and so white" (20), and finds his blue eyes—as opposed to Tulip's brown ones—"further necessary proof of his whiteness, of his inability to survive here except by the good graces of those who surrounded him" (116). Needless to say, the emphasis on white establishes and reinforces the us-and-them divide. While the novel is remarkable in allowing an Indian and a White to have sex, not once but twice, the attendant catastrophic repercussions are conveyed through Laurel's accident the day after she has her first sexual experience with Johnny.

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[22] The choices made by the Indians in the novel end in negations: Victoria's abandoning of a nursing career is seen as suicidal while Archie's decision to take Esau to Heally Richards results in his death.

In addition, the novel promotes the urban Indian stereotypes: Johnny is a chronic alcoholic who suffers from TB and is given to fits of rage, while his sister, Mary Gail, is the abused mistress of the white owner of the only hotel on the island. In his foreword to the New Canadian Library edition of the novel John Moss identifies Mary Gail as "a representative of her people's condition" who clearly "cannot win" (xi). In the novel, Calvin draws a parallel between the deer that is shot in the beginning of the novel and Mary Gail whom seems "to have emerged from some mythic country where there were no human beings, only large animals in pain, caught and waiting, waiting, like deer to be shot" (198). The distancing of Mary Gail from the real world ("mythic country") and from humanity ("large animals") is a convenient gesture of evading confrontation with contemporary Native problems. The Indians are represented as victims with no redress in sight. Their condition is a given and the characters are constructed accordingly.

It seems that in the process of canceling out the imaginary these writers unwittingly construct another stereotype, which is that of the urban Indian. This Indian is not the uncivilized, monosyllabic, devil-worshipping heathen who nevertheless occasionally had a dignity of his own, but the persecuted, morally degenerate, never-do-well victim of Euroamerican attempts to civilize the Indian. The profile of this Indian includes a chronic inability to achieve success in any endeavour, alcoholism, tuberculosis, unemployment, and drug abuse, combined according to the specific requirements of individual writers. He is also given to fits of impotent rage, which is normally directed toward the women in his life. The urban female Indian, when she is not the silent, long-suffering, and abused wife and mother, is usually a prostitute. In some cases, even if she starts off well, the trajectory of her life is predetermined and ends with either pregnancy

or violent death. All things considered, the representation of the Indian shows a change and for the worse, as the Indian from being an object of fear and fascination has become an object of pity.

In addition to the reasons, mentioned earlier, that may have affected the perceptible change in the representation of the Indian in Canadian literature, another possibility is suggested by Jürgen Schäfer in his article "A Farewell to Europe: Rudy Wiebe's The Temptations of Big Bear and Robert Kroetsch's Gone Indian." While Schäfer recognizes these two novels as unlikely bedfellows, he makes a convincing argument regarding how they reflect the change in attitude toward the Indian in Canadian fiction. According to him, "[t]his drastic change entails a new national consciousness: Canadian history suddenly begins to extend backwards beyond the first settlers; there is a continuity of the Indian past no longer preserved in place names only but also cultivated in memory and fictionalized in literature" (80). The emerging national consciousness is connected to two probable causes: the political separation from Britain and the adoption of a policy of multiculturalism, and a new ecological awareness that devalues the traditional Western concept of civilization (Schäfer 80). Read in this light, the novels do seem to convey a sense of continuity with a previously ignored or vilified historical past. The authors endeavor to break out of prescribed binaries by imbuing the past with an unprecedented grandeur. How successful are they in achieving their goal forms the matter of the following discussion.

In Robert Kroetsch's Gone Indian (1973), the author uses his protagonist to demolish stereotypical notions regarding Indianness. While Kroetsch shows insight by challenging the notion of fixed ethnic identities, his protagonist Jeremy Sadness maintains or

supposes to maintain the distinction between White and Indian by choosing one identity over the other. According to J.R. Snyder, "Kroetsch's position is not that we live in a dualistic, dichotomized world, but that the human mind seeks dualistic structures and easily assimilated binary oppositions" (par. 17). Jeremy Sadness is characterized as a failure—intellectually and sexually, at work and at home, as graduate student and as husband. His incapacity to use his pen—figuratively and literally—has resulted in the inability to produce either a dissertation or an heir. After nine years of unfruitful drudgery, Jeremy—prompted by Professor Madham—is compelled to travel to Alberta, in search of a job. Jeremy's westward journey is guided more by personal than financial motives. Not surprisingly then, his reply to the Customs official's inquiry regarding his "purpose of visit" is "I want to be Grey Owl" (6). While he goes with the intention of securing a job to relieve his overworked wife, his mind is occupied with the thought of going Indian. His fixation on Grey Owl appears to confirm this impression; however, Jeremy's desire to become Grey Owl is only a symptom of the larger need to divest himself off his identity as failed graduate student/husband. According to Justin Edwards, "Jeremy's adoption of Grey Owl as a role-model is based on the symbol of Grey Owl as the effacement of Western rationalism[23] and the performance of identity" (par. 15). In choosing Grey Owl Jeremy chooses a figure himself once-removed from the original.

It is noteworthy that Jeremy does not want to be "like" Grey Owl; he wants to "be" Grey Owl. This reveals that Jeremy does not want to be like the Native or even go Indian in the widely understood meaning of the term: in the words of Arnold E. Davidson, "To go Indian is, by now, a definitely outdated escape from the trials of civilization.

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[23] Jeremy is named after philosopher and utilitarian Jeremy Bentham.

Furthermore, to go Indian, for Jeremy, is to go Grey Owl to go Archie Belaney—hardly an original move" (par. 3). Jeremy, in his conversation with Daniel Beaver—the novel's Indian— exposes his interest in Grey Owl:

> 'He [Grey Owl] was a good fighter,' Daniel explained. 'He killed a man himself one time, in a fight.'
> 'He killed himself,' I whispered. I didn't dare flex a muscle. 'He killed Archie Belaney. Then he became Grey Owl.' (100)

Jeremy is attracted to Grey Owl for the latter's capacity for self-invention, for the ability to transform himself from one thing to, what Jeremy sees as, its antithesis, for offering Jeremy the possibility of becoming what he is not. Professor Madham's assessment of Jeremy's fascination sounds fairly accurate: "The possibility of transformation, I must recognize, played no little part in Jeremy's abiding fantasy of fulfillment. It gave him, in the face of all inadequacies, the illusions of hope" (7). Going Indian, for Jeremy, is a convenient model to pursue; as the narrative goes on to show, Jeremy is prepared to be Roger Dorck if it keeps him from being himself. Jeremy's over-eagerness to lose his identity as graduate student/husband is complemented by and reflected in instances such as the loss of his bag and his reluctance to claim it once it has been located, and his inability to remember his name at the airport.

Influenced by Grey Owl, Jeremy's "Indianness" is of a peculiarly visual/physical nature, reminiscent of Richardson's elaborate descriptions of Wacousta's costume. His braids, moccasins, and fringed moosehide jacket serve to make him an "Indian" not only for himself but for others as well. According to Edwards, "Grey Owl is not simply invoked by Kroetsch as a symbol of identificatory performativity; he is also used to explore the absurdity of stereotypes" (par. 18). Jeremy tries to follow in the footsteps of his role model by assuming that his costume will somehow put him in touch with the

essence of Indianness. However, his interrogation of the identity he desires to assume is limited to its physical attributes, and the object of his search is in the realm of the imaginary. This turning of Native culture into artifact is paralleled by the ice statues that Jeremy sees in Notikeewin: "An Indian on a galloping horse bore down on a huge and galloping buffalo, leaned over both the buffalo and Jeremy, aimed an arrow of ice at their twinned hearts. Jeremy turned as if to dodge away. And he faced, on his right, a dogteam of ice; a trapper shaped from translucent ice was fixed into a slow trot behind an icy sled" (18). The statue of the Indian on a buffalo hunt is presented as a relic of the past, as an instance of history. The buffalo has vanished as has the Indian; what remains is an image frozen in time and space, fixed in motion.

Moreover, as the narrative goes on to show, Jeremy's desire to be Grey Owl is the enactment of another man's dream. The game of "Cowboys and Indians," which allocates him his role as Indian, also gives Jeremy the sense of these two identities as oppositional: "We'll hunt you down. No matter where you hide, we'll hunt you down. We'll kill you," the Cowboys tell Jeremy (94). The menacing threats and the accompanying physical abuse, in what is a game for children, echoes the reality of a conflicted past and becomes a mirror for the present. Unwittingly playing the role of victim aligns Jeremy with the Indians, and he starts taking comfort in his role when the tailor across the hall from his mother's apartment brings him "books of Grey Owl" (94). The tailor gives Jeremy "his dream of the European boy who became pathfinder... borderman . . . the truest Indian of them all" (94). The "Cowboys and Indian" motif is apparent in Jeremy's meeting with the "bronc rider," who offers him a lift to Notikeewin (16). This cowboy in a ten gallon hat assumes that Jeremy is an Indian from a northern

reserve based on his physical appearance. And after he wins the snowshoe race he is given the third degree because his competitors assume that he is an Indian who has dared to win:

> 'Stranger like this,' a sweating face said. 'Comes sticking his nose in here looking for trouble. Sometimes he finds it.'
> 'Where you from?' the beak of a ski cap said, raising itself up from over a glass of foam and beer. Revealing the beady eyes of a muskrat.
> Connect, I told myself. Connect.
> I said nothing.
> 'Wouldn't be from the Hobbema reserve, would you?'
> 'Maybe he just phoned from the other side of the grave and said he was on his way.' (90)

Through Jeremy's travails Kroetsch undercuts the stereotypical ideas associated with the Imaginary Indian such as the Indian as the child of nature, the Indian as one with the elements, and the superior sexual prowess of the Indian. Further, by presenting Daniel Beaver—a Native with a "brush cut"—and his family, Kroetsch makes a distinction between the imagined and the real (65). Jeremy's obsession with the Imaginary Indian is clarified through his contempt for Daniel Beaver and his family whom he refers to as "those slicked-up stoic Indians"(64), and his resolve to "show that fucking dumb redskin [i.e. Beaver]...how to win" after Beaver has "thrown the race" (81). At the same time we see his resentment against the "city slickers" and his reference to himself as "native." Evidently, Kroetsch is at pains to stress the schism between the real and the romantic notions of the Indian. Beaver's decision to throw the race is guided by practical considerations, such as his physical well-being, while Jeremy, intoxicated by his posture as Indian, is oblivious of the dangerous ramifications of winning for a Native. Not surprisingly then, Beaver correctly interprets for Jeremy the reason why he has been beaten up: "They kicked the shit out of you.... They took you for an Indian" (93).

However, Kroetsch's critique of the binaries inherent in Western thought and society is dulled by his granting Jeremy an apocalyptic vision of the Native world. Jeremy's dreaming of Mrs. Beaver's dream in the back of the truck is a series of episodes which includes the return of the Native and the buffalo, the regrouping of Native peoples, his "adoption" by Poundmaker and subsequent naming, and his fantastic sexual union with the mythical Buffalo Woman. According to Edwards, "The pre-modern, oceanic nature of this scene serves as a realization of Jeremy's desire to have his primitive self reassert itself. Here, Kroetsch is once again parodying Jeremy's essentialist notions of identity, which locate identificatory authenticity in a natural or primitive self" (par. 26). However, the filtering of Mrs. Beaver's dream through a white consciousness, which then proceeds to build its own fantasies on it, is vexatious. While this incident might be useful for displaying the fluidity of identities and "as an exposure of the falseness surrounding the rhetoric of ethnicity" (Edwards, par. 1), the unbroken continuum from Mrs. Beaver's vision to Jeremy's reverie conveys a sense of easy transitions between conflicted elements. By making a character who is himself a failure and, in some senses, a victim of society display the desire to go Indian, Kroetsch is not doing the Native cause any good. On the contrary, he reinstates the victim status of Natives in White society. In addition, like W.O. Mitchell's TheVanishing Point, the novel is about a white character and centered in his consciousness;[24] the Native characters are peripheral to his growth, though they might have aided it. It is, therefore, only natural that Beaver and his family should return wherever they came from once Jeremy has achieved his vision.

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[24] I am aware that this is a safe option for a non-Native writer if he is not to be accused of appropriating Native voice, but surely not the only one. Rudy Wiebe's The Temptations of Big Bear admirably succeeds in achieving much without shouldering the blame for appropriation.

Unlike the novels discussed so far in this chapter, which portray the contemporary condition of the urban Native, Rudy Wiebe's The Temptations of Big Bear (1973) turns to the past to examine how this condition was achieved. In choosing to do so, Wiebe not only narrativizes the hidden and silenced history of imperial domination of Native peoples but also disproves McGregor's above-quoted claim regarding the representation of First peoples in Canadian fiction. However, by presenting Native "victimization as *event*" Wiebe seeks not to chronicle the vanishment of a noble race but to highlight the social, political, and historical events which contributed to the present state of Natives and White-Native relations (McGregor 218). Indeed, as will be discussed later, it is debatable whether he presents his Native characters as victims at all.

Wiebe's novel, which falls between 1876 and 1888 is structured around milestone historical events such as the signing of Treaty Six (1876), the Northwest Rebellion/Resistance (1885), Big Bear's imprisonment (1885), and his demise (1888), and is easily recognized as an example of "historiographic metafiction,"[25] which "refute[s] the natural or common-sense methods of distinguishing between historical fact and fiction" (Hutcheon 93). The "common-sense" method is predictably the Western method that privileges the written word over the spoken, and presents a subjective version as objective truth. This naturalization of a subjective rendition of history is refuted by writers of historiographic metafiction, who treat it as *a* view-point among many others. In addition, these writers privilege alterity by taking into account other sources that would be ignored or regarded as suspect by mainstream historians.

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[25] Catherine Higginson makes a similar observation in "The Raced Female Body and the Discourse of *Peuplement* in Rudy Wiebe's The Temptaions of Big Bear and The Scorched-Wood People."

Accordingly, Wiebe's novel is "a fugue for several narrative voices," which juxtaposes historical records, court testimonials, autobiographical accounts, and official documents with imaginative reconstructions of private exchanges, unexpressed thoughts, letters, and probable occurrences (Whaley 134). The seamless quality of his narrative accounts for the fluid transitions from public to private, written to oral, speech to thought, and fact to imagination. However, contrary to expectations, this fluidity serves to highlight the differences between Native and White cultures instead of eliding them. Wiebe reinforces this idea of difference in several ways, such as those of language, metaphor, mode of communication, approach to time, and worldview. The language employed in the sections involving White characters differs greatly from that used by and for the Natives. According to Susan Whaley, "[t]he main difference between the Indian and the White Man...is clearly to be found in their language. While the former speaks cryptically in metaphors drawn from nature, the latter tends to communicate in rather rigid, sterile speech" (143-44). The overarching concern of the Whites with delivering accurate meaning is counterbalanced by the emptiness of what is said; the language of the White man, Wiebe suggests, is duplicitous and unreliable.[26] Faced with the vexing questions from Native chiefs regarding ownership of land, Governor Morris proceeds to do what he has always done: "Here there simply remained to do what had been done often before: be immovable, repeat everything once more in a good farewell speech" (29-30). Big Bear remembers this incident while he is addressing the council:

> I know how it [the treaty] was done. While Governor Morris was speaking a man was writing words on a paper beside him. When the Governor had finished

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[26] Even when the White man, such as the Canadian volunteer, makes use of poetic language the form employed is satire, which underscores the gap between what is said and what is meant.

> the People said what we wanted and the man wrote down those words too. After we had done speaking they placed a paper before us to make our names on, but we refused until they had given us a copy of the words which we could send around among our people to hear what they said, for words written down always say the same thing. But they would not let that; it was not necessary they said, we could trust them, so then we made our names. They went to Battleford and sent back a copy which they left with us, and after they went to Ottawa they sent another copy. And then we found that the words no longer said the same thing; then we found that half the sweet things were taken out and all the sour left in, and we knew we would never stand on the same place with the white man on our land. (200)

The written word, which is explicitly associated with the White world, is undependable and does not "always say the same thing." As Whaley observes in this regard: "From the deadly serious to the painfully satiric, all speech from the White Man has one common characteristic: it is deceptive. One always wants to ask: what are they *really* saying?" (146). Connected with this unreliability is the betrayal of trust. The lesson the Natives learn from interacting with the White man is that they cannot trust him: Governor Morris' assurances to Big Bear about his intentions—"[w]e are not coming to buy your land"—are proven false when the Court tells Big Bear that "[t]his land never belonged to you. The land was and is the Queen's. She has allowed you to use it" (199, 399). Contrasted with this is the Native oral tradition which relies entirely on the spoken word and the trust therein. Wiebe provides the cultural context for the spoken word in Native culture by making his Native characters stress its importance and through Big Bear's voice. Big Bear's voice, which Governor Morris finds "incomprehensible" (19), is "a tremendous cry echoing over the valley…as if again and again in any language the words of themselves would refuse to stop sounding" (23), and according to Governor Edgar Dewdney "it is his voice, and his perception, which draws more and more people to him. His voice would be unbelievable in Parliament. The deep rich timbre of it alone, forget all sense (so rarely needed anyway) would devastate any

opposition, including Blake" (113). Evidently, Big Bear's power lies in his voice and his words and are, therefore, used to characterize him. Wiebe repeatedly emphasizes the contrast between Big Bear's unassuming and unimpressive physique and the effect his voice has on Natives and non-Natives alike.

It is not difficult to see that the narrative of Big Bear pivots on the issue of land. Land is the primary factor in the interactions between Natives and Whites: it is the guiding impulse behind the need to form treaties, to practice deception, to establish laws, and take military action to dispossess the Natives. The connection to land and the attitude toward it is an important index for reading the characters in this novel. The most important item in the treaties for the White man is land, and it is also the most sensitive issue for the Natives. It is not surprising then that Wiebe foregrounds how the Natives perceive their land and how they understand the treaties. The organic connection which the Natives have with land is stressed through images, such as the following: Governor Morris sees the Indians "circled before him" as "not so much human as innumerable mounds the earth had thrust up since morning" (17), when Big Bear lies on the ground "the earth warmth [grows] in him and slowly each sound and movement and colour and whispy smell of the living world [works] in him (127), and his people like him are "turning in the complete circle of living and solid sweet immovable and ever changing Earth" (51). Robert Lecker observes in this regard:

> The confrontation between the White Man's logical, linear understanding, and the Indians' consciousness of their place in relation to a symbolic universe in harmony with the cycles of nature, is expressed by the fact that instead of straight-line parades and geometrically divided spaces the Indians are pictured in terms of circles, mists, a blending with the land, endlessly flowing water, and an appeal to seasonal time. (338)

The Natives' apprehension of the treaties proposed by the White government is shown to be based on a worldview that does not regard land as a commodity. Their inability to understand how the land can be bought or sold is repeatedly contrasted with the White man's commonsensical approach to the land question. While Big Bear can only wonder "'Who can receive land? From whom would he receive it? '," Governor Morris has already "personally negotiated three treaties that gave his country more lands [a little over three hundred and fifty thousand square miles] than any one negotiator in history" (29, 26). The vastness of the land may take Edgar Dewdney to the conclusion that "it can drive a small man to madness" and so requires men "to control, to humanize, to structure and package such a continent under two steel lines" (114), but for Big Bear this humanization is tantamount to rape: "a giant blade was slicing through the earth, cutting off everything with roots, warping everything into something Whiteskin clean and straight..." (91). In an interview with Om P. Juneja, M.F. Salat, and Chandra Mohan, Wiebe describes how the Native peoples of North America perceived the treaties made with the Canadian government:

> As far as I can surmise, the Natives never understood the treaties to be land *surrender*; they were peace treaties between roughly equal nations—while acknowledging that the whites were technologically advanced with many things (i.e. made stuff) to drag about with them. Certainly there was never, I believe, the vaguest thought that language or mythology would be surrendered. The chiefs who signed felt they did so for the protection of their people in relation to a powerful people moving into what remained their (Indian) territory. (16)

The Native chiefs in Big Bear do not equate the signing of the treaty with the relinquishment of land, and are repeatedly assured by the Queen's men that they do not intend to buy land but to borrow it. It is worth noting in this context that

> [I]n spite of the clear emphasis on land surrender in the written text of the Treaty, there is no mention at all in the recorded speeches of the commissioners of the

> voluntary and total surrender forever of the Indians' country. Nor is there any indication that the commissioners attempted to explain a concept which was at the heart of the treaty from the Government point of view which loomed so largely in the treaty text. (Taylor)

Wiebe plays on this historic "misunderstanding" between the two races and makes his novel, though it is set in the past, relevant for the present and the future in an unprecedented manner. While he does not comment on the moral aspect of treaty-making, he does illustrate the conditions under which the treaties were signed: Governor Dewdney in a letter to the Prime Minister reports how he created "a chief with two hundred Indians," who signed the treaty, "by the simple device of piling up a few tons of flour and beef behind an open gate" (119).

By exposing the manipulation inherent in and the motives behind the making of the treaties, Wiebe distances himself from the White camp. Though Wiebe refuses to take sides explicitly and does not "think [that] everything the whites did in history was necessarily despicable" (Juneja 8), in Big Bear the omniscient narrator's "sympathies obviously lie with the Indians" (Lecker 337), and "the main point of view is that of the Indian, presented through very sympathetic, perhaps identifiably twentieth-century eyes" (Goldie 431). In the aforementioned novels, the Natives are peripheral to a centered White society and their lives are dominated and controlled by a White government. In Big Bear, the frame of reference is that of the Natives and the Whites become peripheral to it. In other words, White characters and culture are portrayed as intruders in a world that has its own set of rules. In this world the Natives decides for himself, irrespective of whether the decisions are good or bad ones. The Natives are responsible for their own choices and are not merely victims of other forces. By doing so, Wiebe grants them agency, albeit in the past, which is denied them by other non-Native authors. In addition,

the central most important character of the novel is a Native chief who is admired by the author, the narrator, and the characters in the novel. It would not be incorrect to say that through the figure of Big Bear Wiebe demolishes some stereotypes about Natives and their culture. As Catherine Higginson notes with regard to The Scorched Wood People and Big Bear, "[a] recognition of the prevalence of racist, nineteenth-century perceptions of Riel and Big Bear as antinational traitors makes explicit Wiebe's admirable desire to reposition these men as profound orators and potential spiritual leaders for the Canadian nation" (172). Though Wiebe resists casting him in the mould of the noble savage, he makes no bones about Big Bear's inherent nobility. And this nobility is not that of the dying Indian but that of the defiant chief whose primary concern is the welfare of his people, and who will not settle for a cheap bargain. Dewdney knows that "all Indians are *not* alike," and that "Big Bear may understand that the present treaty is both the Indian's damnation and his only possible hope for in making it at all," aside from believing that "Big Bear realizes that red moral power, once mustered would outweigh any other kind of power we would willingly apply and that the strongest moral stand they [the Indians] can make is to unite under his leadership" (114, 117). However, as Wiebe and history go on to show, the Indian leaders are not up to the task and fail from uniting under one flag. Terry Goldie sees Big Bear as "a natural aristocrat" (431), and Robert Lecker sees him as "an eminently spiritual man, a scapegoat figure" (346), who is condemned because others are unable to share in his vision for the future. The course of Big Bear's career, from being the spiritual and social leader of the Plains Cree to becoming a social outcast who is nevertheless held responsible for his people's actions, definitely follows the trajectory of a tragic hero.

According to Allan Bevan, the temptations mentioned in the title of the novel are the temptations that Big Bear faces in his dealings with the White man: "to kill, to resort to impotent anger and premature and unco-ordinated [sic] resistance, to despair and do nothing" (xiv). Wiebe's intention of paralleling Big Bear with Christ has been noted by critics such as Bevan, Ervin Beck, Wayne Tefs, and George Woodcock, though Lecker argues that "[Wiebe] is more concerned with picturing Big Bear as an old Testament prophet and visionary who searches for a promised land" (346). Wiebe's tendency to present Big Bear as a seer has made Tefs and Woodcock criticize him for providing spiritual solutions for what are essentially political, social, and economic problems. In addition, Higginson critiques Wiebe for maintaining the dominant society's stereotype of the Native woman as "overly lustful and accustomed to prostitution and as a commodified, slave-like drudge within her tribal community" (183). In the light of this criticism Wiebe may be accused of re-inscribing the Native man as the spiritual other as compared to the rational White, and the Native woman as the temptress/whore as compared to the ideal of Victorian domesticity. However, the novel does provide the antithesis to such stereotypes by undercutting the index against which they are created.

While the critics argue their cases admirably, Wiebe's achievements unequivocally outweigh his shortcomings. However, his handling of the question of appropriation of Native voice is troubling. Speaking from his position of a historically dispossessed Mennonite Wiebe considers himself "well-suited to try to tell the story" of Native dispossession, and also because he is "a person with a religious sensibility, as Native people are" (Juneja 8). Though his intentions are admirable, it is worthwhile to remember that there are different kinds of dispossession and religious sensibility. Even

his distancing himself from Canadian imperial history, on the basis of not having anything to do with "that imperial world," sounds a trifle glib given the fact that Wiebe has benefited from that very society in which he occupies a privileged position (Juneja 9).

The novels discussed so far were all written in the mid-1970s and appear to be symptomatic of a conscious recognition of the Native as a character, and not backdrop, in Canadian fiction. While there is a studied move toward erasing the historical binary of noble savage and demonic Indian, the resistance offered to such efforts is appreciable. In the event that the binary is erased, it gives rise to the creation of the urban Indian on the one hand and the problematic issue of appropriation and assimilation on the other, indicating that any treatment of the binary by non-Native writers is fraught with problems. However, the delineation of the binary seems to blur occasionally, as in M.T. Kelly's A Dream Like Mine (1987).

Set in Kenora, Ontario, Kelly's novel is a telling of a nightmarish kidnapping event that involves the narrator, two Native men, and the manager of a disreputable paper mill. The novel weaves together two mutually exclusive modes of perception—the mundane and the supernatural—and the events in the novel can be interpreted either as literal happenings or as a psycho-spiritual experience that the narrator undergoes during or after a sweat ceremony. What is unusual about this story is that the unnamed white narrator, who is also a reporter, sees his Native kidnapper, Arthur, as a reflection of himself. However, the identification is not constant and the narrator wavers between empathizing with Arthur's actions and being revolted by them. The narrator sees his angst and his inability to act mirrored in Arthur who becomes an active manifestation of his anger. Arthur is a Métis "from the West" (24), who is identified with the sinister Spider, who

also "comes from the West" and is not an Ojibway spirit (1). Thus Arthur is a physical entity—though we are never told which part of the west he comes from, where he lives, or other personal details—and also a mysterious essence who has been "called . . . up from deep water" and dreamed into being by Wilf, the Ojibway elder (140). What binds the narrator and Arthur together is their anger at the abuse of the environment and the resulting effect on human beings. It is not surprising, therefore, that Arthur's entry into the narrative is complemented by the narrator's increasing anger against environmental abuse and the exploitation of Native peoples. It is even more pertinent that the narrator's anger is directed toward the same issue that becomes Arthur's rallying point, which is the dumping of mercury in the river: "'What are the people like, what kind of people are the managers who run the mill in Dryden and who will not stop, who will not stop dumping mercury in the river.' I let my voice rise. 'Negotiations, talk, it makes no difference. They won't stop!' I almost shouted" (17). When Arthur confronts the narrator with his plan of kidnapping the manager of the paper-mill company, his language is a copy of the narrator's own tirade. The narrator is compelled to admit that "this musty, shaking psychopath is a reflection of me," and wonder if he has created him (48). When Arthur offers to show the narrator how serious he is by punishing the latter's noisy neighbors at the hotel, the narrator thinks, "This was like some sort of horrible wish come true. My neighbors had irritated me; out of my subconscious had risen an ogre to make them be quiet" (51). Later, he confesses that "there was an uncanny similarity between what had taken place and my fantasies. Arthur had actually gone and acted out such a scenario. He'd done it" (64). However, there is also the possibility that the narrator's claim to have created Arthur is born out of the belief that Native peoples cannot act for themselves, and

so he imbues Arthur with his own dormant motives to rationalize his actions. The probability of this being the case is supported by the narrator's reaction to Arthur's violent acts: "Every book I'd read on native [sic] people was a lie. Romantic cancer" (61).

This identification, however, falters when Arthur commits acts of violence that repel the narrator. The narrator, after being kidnapped along with the manager, Bud Rickets, takes sides with Bud who also looks upon him as a fellow sufferer. His anger at the way in which Arthur treats Bud lasts momentarily and the narrator moves over to Arthur's side when confronted with the enormity of Bud's actions: "Ideology's funny. It made me forget where I was; the dark night, the gun. All I knew was that I had to object to right-wing Rickets" (90). While he objects to Arthur's methods and to his treatment of Rickets, the narrator is aware of his complicity in the act, if only in thought: "How often had I tossed in bed at night and railed against businessman who looked like that [like Bud] and fantasized about punishing them and torturing them killing them for what they had done" (109). The identification between Arthur and the narrator is emphasized, further, by Arthur's statement toward the end: "I did it because you wanted me to . . . That's what you expected" (146). However, Arthur's statement can be read in another way if Kelly's novel is to be read as a refutation of the Imaginary Indian. The points of psycho-spiritual identification between Arthur and the narrator are counter-pointed by their mundane differences. Arthur identifies himself as Métis though nothing is said of his affiliations or background. As a Métis, Arthur is a product of Native and non-Native interaction. While the narrator consistently regards him as Native, Arthur's racial mixture makes him the ideal person to avenge wrongs done to the earth on the behalf of

both Whites and Natives. In addition, by making Arthur a Métis and not a pure Native, Kelly bypasses the problem of appropriation of voice when the narrator identifies with him.

The narrator, in the process of explaining his choice of books for bedtime reading, confesses to his interest in Natives as escapism and romanticism: "My reading of anthropology, in fact my fascination with Indian culture was both an obsession and an escape, the equivalent of some people's addiction to science fiction, or fantasy, or mystery novels. But behind it there was the search for a way out, a different way of life. For years, for most of my life, I'd romanticized Indians" (44). The "Indian" of the narrator's readings and thoughts is the Imaginary Indian, and evidently of non-Native origins. He is not far from the truth when he says that "[w]e are victims of our own mythologies," indicating that our private mythologies are insular and limiting, aside from being illusory in their claims of absoluteness (105). In addition, the Natives he meets or writes about are measured against the scale of the Imaginary Indian; while categorizing Wilf is unproblematic, doing the same to Arthur proves to be a conundrum. The narrator is presented as the rational Western man who is complacent in his certainties and perplexed when they are challenged, as they are by Arthur. Kelly uses Arthur to undercut and refute the Imaginary Indian; this is achieved by creating a non-Native character, whose knowledge about Natives is primarily textual, and pitting him against a Métis who unsettles his readings. In spite of the fact that Arthur introduces himself as a racial hybrid, the narrator identifies him as Native, and tries to read him accordingly. In doing so, the narrator exposes his European/colonizer sensibilities; it is not surprising, therefore, that the scenery reminds him of "hiking over hill and dale" (31), and he feels

guilty about asking Wilf questions he is reluctant to answer: "'But you don't call this anything,' I insisted, even though I was guilty at the shiver of pleasure I'd felt at finding out the name of a special place. Would I go to that hidden, secret meadow alone? Would I show it off, the prayer flags vulnerable, fluttering in the silence. Already I'd marked the peninsula on a map. Knowing about it was a little like stealing it" (32). J. A. Wainwright in "Invention Denied: Resisting the Imaginary Indian in M.T. Kelly's A Dream Like Mine" observes in this regard: "As [the narrator] sits in the sweat lodge, he connects himself assuredly to colonial history by thinking of how the French explorer Samuel de Champlain had a similar experience in the early days of the seventeenth century, and is comforted by his memories of the imaginary Indian . . ." (257). Arthur unsettles the narrator's sense of certainty by behaving in an unpredictable manner, which prevents the narrator from categorizing him. The narrator tries to classify him as a reformed alcoholic, an extension of himself, a "violent fool" (57), an avenger, a drug addict, and a "psychopath" (62), but Arthur elides these categories. The narrator is bothered by Arthur's unpredictable acts of kindness and comforted when he returns to being his violent self: "The snort and the dumb joke were a relief; what I expected from Arthur. Sincere questions and offers of painkillers would confuse me; I was confused enough as it was. Now the old Arthur, the bad bald cast of eye, the knowing, leering vacancy, was back" (86). Evidently, for the narrator, Arthur plays the demonic savage to Wilf's noble savage. He is, therefore, infuriated to see Wilf working in collusion with Arthur: "Irrationally, I started to hate Wilf instead of Arthur; Wilf padding around in the background like the faithful old retainer, minding his business. He reminded me of a

maid" (67). Whether he wants Wilf to be a Pocahontas and save the White man is unclear, but he certainly wants him to act against Arthur.

Wilf repeatedly suggests that Arthur has supernatural origins and he cannot be stopped from doing what he is meant to do. Arthur is depicted as the avenger for his people and the suggestion is that wrongs done in the past can be avenged in the present: "There can be no revenge, I [the narrator] thought. What good is revenge? Massacre societies, sacrifice societies, history. It happened somewhere else. Then emotion surged in me: there is revenge; there *is* revenge" (99). While one may question the efficacy of Arthur's revenge, which consists of kidnapping Bud Rickets and then severing his Achilles tendon, one cannot dismiss the educational value of the ordeal for the narrator. The motif of education is apparent from the very beginning in comments made by Arthur, such as, "I hear you're going to learn a lot" (23), and "So you're going to be a lesson for my friend, the white man" (52). The narrator is given a lesson in history from the Native point of view, first by Arthur and then in a vision sequence. While he disputes Arthur's claims regarding historical occurrences and asks for the "source" of the "legend" (37), his view of History undergoes dramatic revision when he encounters the voices from the past. The partial reversal of the colonized-colonizer/victim-victimizer binary is evinced by Arthur's enactment of the first contact between the Franciscan monks and the Mayan people; however, Arthur's role-playing as the Franciscan is disturbing as it reproduces the power structure inherent in the process of colonization. Nevertheless, the reversal of the victim-victimizer binary serves temporarily to remove the Native from the realm of permanent victimization. While Kelly does not actively condone the violence perpetrated by Arthur, he does appear to rationalize the basis for it. According to J. A. Wainwright,

"Despite the fact that Arthur, his Métis protagonist, is a kidnapper who flays alive one white man and kills two others (both members of the vaunted Royal Canadian Mounted Police), Kelly does not facilitate a *sauvage diabolique* reading of this character because he consistently contextualizes and so complicates the book's first-person narration of Arthur's deeds" (256). Arthur's vengeance is biblical in its motto of "eye for an eye" and part of the novel's effectiveness lies in its ability to trace patterns of violence from the past to the present, thus making Arthur's acts appear as those of a redresser and not a freak sadist.

A Dream Like Mine leaves its reader with mixed responses toward the aggressor and the sufferer, as the neat divisions seem to break down when both sides suffer. Moreover, it confuses the issue, if temporarily, as to who is the victim, and introduces a grain of doubt in the forgone conclusion of Indians as doomed. For example, the narrator, while in captivity, reflects on the position of the Indian in Euroamerican society: "I recalled a friend saying that he didn't want to buy a new book about the Indian situation because it was too damn tragic: nobody could do anything for them; it was too late for them to do anything for themselves. Maybe" (91). While the events in the novel disprove this thesis, what good comes out of it is debatable. Arthur returns to wherever he came from, the narrator's life is disrupted, Bud gets a promotion, Wilf is sent to prison, and the mill does not stop putting effluents in the river. However, there is "more pressure" on the mill to stop doing so, the government is forced to make "a big financial settlement with some of the affected bands," and the narrator comes to visit Wilf with his son (153). And most importantly, there is the warning that "He's there . . . And he could come back" (156).

The above reading of five novels reveals the mixed response of non-Native writers to the Imaginary Indian. While the writers do an admirable job of demolishing the imaginary, their efforts are not always successful. Of the writers that have been discussed above, Wiebe and Kelly have been successful to a degree in challenging the dominant image of the Native by creating Native characters who have a lasting impact on the reader. Others like Mitchell and Cohen demolish one stereotype only to create another. Yet others like Robert Kroetsch investigate the sources and the effect of the imaginary on popular imagination, and the prevalence of a dominant tendency such as going Indian in non-Native society. Notwithstanding the attempts to rectify or reinforce the damage done to the image of the Indian—and by association to the Native—in Canadian literature, it may be concluded with a degree of certainty that the negative representation has endured and continues to be propagated in other forms. Such is the burden of (mis)representation that it might take another century to undo the harm done by writers zealous of catering to their readers' fantasies and of readers who patronized such writing.

Chapter 2: "Counterwriting" Native Texts

While the representation of Natives in non-Native texts can be reduced to two main types, which are the noble savage and the demonic Indian, the representation of non-Natives in Native literature is a more complex affair. Native writers find themselves confronting stereotypes about their people that have been naturalized by centuries of uncritical belief. Their job is not made easier by recognizing the monumental task ahead, which includes not only going against popular images but also convincing people that the images are constructs that fulfill specific requirements. The manner in which Native writers choose to confront this task varies from writer to writer. In the course of this study I will attempt to isolate some of these methods and trace patterns of commonality among them. The possibility that these methods may overlap is a given considering the common goal toward which these writers are working. The writers, coming as they do from different backgrounds and varying degrees of interaction with Euroamerican governmental and cultural policies, approach their material in a variety of ways. The following chapters are an exploration of their means of representation.

The texts discussed in this chapter are Tomson Highway's Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing (1989) and Kiss of the Fur Queen (1998), Richard Wagamese's Keeper'n Me (1994), and Beatrice Culleton Mosionier's In Search of April Raintree (1983) because they illustrate the phenomenon of "counterwriting" in the best possible manner. For an understanding of how "counterwriting" works, a brief discussion of the colonial Self-Other paradigm is in order. The concept of Otherness, which intimates the presence of a Self, has possible sources in Saussurean linguistics, Bakhtinian theories of language, Lacanian psychoanalysis, and Western anthropology. Otherness, which is a marker of

difference and integral to the production of meaning, is also a, if not the, cornerstone of postcolonial criticism. The Self-Other paradigm has been, and is, extremely useful in understanding the functioning of colonial power relations. Clearly, this paradigm is primarily about power and, more particularly, unequal power distribution, and it has proven extremely useful as a tool with which to critique colonial practices. Versions of the Self-Other paradigm are visible in the works of pioneers such as Fanon and Memmi, and in the works of their intellectual heirs, for example, Bhabha, JanMohamed, Said, Spivak, Ella Shohat, Young, bell hooks, Minh-ha,[1] among others. This paradigm sets up unequal binary oppositions between known entities such as male/female, subject/object, white/black, colonizer/colonized, masculine/feminine, and others. The privileging of the first half of the binary is based on its association with the Self, while the second half suffers devaluation because it is the not-Self. However, even in its unworthy state, the Other is required by the Self for its construction/self-constitution. The Self is defined in opposition to the Other, the boundaries of the Self are held in place by the Other, and so the absence of the Other is tantamount to the death of the Self. The Self is ultimately dependent on the Other as it is what the Other is not. This gives rise to a double bind whereby the Self cannot reveal its dependency as it would be an admission of weakness, and so it reverses the dependency and makes itself indispensable, at least in theory, for the Other.

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[1] For example, Homi Bhabha's The Location of Culture, Abdul JanMohamed's "The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference in Colonialist Literature," Edward Said's Orientalism, Gayatri Spivak's "Can the Subaltern Speak?", Ella Shohat's "Notes on the Post-Colonial," bell hooks' Yearning: Race, Gender, and Cultural Politics, Trinh T. Minh-ha's Women, Native, Other: Writing Postcoloniality and Feminism. See works cited list for bibliographical information.

"Counterwriting" arises from the colonial Self-Other paradigm and strives to counter misrepresentations of the Other by exposing how the Other has been manipulated by the Self. Counterwriting is based on a simple eye-for-an-eye principle: it involves the setting up of oppositions in order to counter mis/representations that have established themselves as truisms in society, exposing the effects of such mis/representations, and creating a new set of representations to counter the existing ones. The opposition is to false representations propagated by the colonizer, and the writers are engaged with trying to unearth the motives and the causes behind such miscontructions. This investigation of causes places the Native writer in the various positions of the historian, the sociologist, and the psychoanalyst; an important consequence of this is the emergence of the Native point of view on non-Native misconstructions. The epigraph to Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing aptly sums up the intention behind the counterwriting text: "before the healing can take place, the poison must first be exposed" (n. pag.). It seems that the most important project of the counterwriting text is to assign blame where it is due: in other words, it turns the gaze of the colonizer away from the colonized Other and onto the Self. This involves the representation of non-Native characters from the Native point of view. As a result, the White apologist's "Look what they are doing to themselves" becomes the Native writer's "Look what you did to us." In addition, while non-Native texts actualize those images that are locked in time and detrimental to Native self-esteem, the counterwriting text forwards images that are contemporary and positive. While three of the texts in this chapter are novels and one a play, the difference in genre serves to illustrate the diversity of "counterwriting." Writing back using the Self-Other paradigm implies that these writers acknowledge that the Native is the Other, the object.

Trinh T. Minh-ha describes the existing Us-Them/Self-Other/Subject-Object relationship is in the following manner:

> A conversation of 'us' with 'us' about 'them' is a conversation in which 'them' is silenced. 'Them' always stands on the other side of the hill, naked and speechless, barely present in its absence. Subject of discussion, 'them' is only admitted among 'us,' the discussing subjects, when accompanied or introduced by an 'us,' member, hence the dependency of 'them' and its need to acquire good tablemanners for the membership standing. (67)

This relationship is reversed in the works of the Highway, Wagamese, and Culleton. In their works, the Native becomes the center of the narrative and the subject of meditation while the non-Native is marginalized. This, while it maintains the Self-Other paradigm, also creates a tension as the Other occupies the center and the Self is relegated to the periphery. However, in doing so these writers appear to admit that the non-Native is essential for defining the Native and are, therefore, unable to break out of the existing schema. The counterwriting model may be compared with negritude or the Black-separatist movements in the United States, which, in Bhabha's view, "reverses but does not displace the models of self-constitution and social identification in the discourse of Western racism itself" (Moore-Gilbert 126). This implies that the writers are unable to challenge effectively the fixed image of the Native.

At the risk of being accused of essentialism, I would say that the presentation of non-Native characters by Native writers imparts a certain force of conviction which is absent from the representations of Natives by non-Native writers. The advantage that Native writers have over their non-Native counterparts is of having lived in both worlds, and this enables them to offer a bolder critique of the Native/non-Native relationship. However, it is notable that Native writers seldom attempt to enter the minds or thought processes of their non-Native characters; the positive/negative views voiced by the non-Native

characters somehow conform to our expectations of them. The espousal of the Self-Other paradigm can also make their writing appear more polemical than intended and take on the colour of a diatribe. But, if the intention is to write back to the colonizer with a pen weighed down by centuries of oppression, more than an iota of diatribe and a polemical posture are inevitable.

Highway, Wagamese, and Culleton represent non-Natives in a manner similar to that of the non-Native writers' presentation of Native characters, which is, by making use of stereotypes. The representation occurs on two levels; the writers choose to target Euroamerican institutions and create characters who represent the popular ideas of White society regarding Natives. For instance, the non-Natives in their works conform to the stereotype of the ignorant, misinformed, racist Whites who support and uphold the theories of racial discrimination so popular in Euroamerican society. While Wagamese's approach to such stereotypes is largely humorous and exposes the hilarious aspect of cultural collision, Highway and Culleton's treatment of the material is more solemn and incisive. Their motto seems to be "As you have been stereotyped, so you shall stereotype," which accounts for the aggressive flavour and unmerciful treatment of their non-Native characters. In addition, each of the three novels has a character who is ashamed of being Native and over-eager to become White. This shameful eagerness is in turn shown to be induced by their White guardians who, by stressing the finer points of Euroamerican civilization and maligning Native culture, are responsible for the confusion that the Native individual experiences. A significant part of these works is devoted to the removal of this shame through the correction of images and popular beliefs regarding Natives. Each of these texts presents a White assimilationist society that is bent on

erasing Native culture and hence becomes the antagonist that the characters have to vanquish. However, none of these writers attempts to subvert radically the existing pattern of White domination. The world of these texts is one in which the Native characters rise marginally above the status of victims, with the exception of Keeper'n Me which offers a more optimistic resolution. The Native characters appear to be locked in battle with an oppressive society and success is measured in the terms set by the same society. This is perhaps because to steal the horses one must first know how to ride them; and in order to do that one has to excel in that very world against which the horses will eventually be used. It is important to note that two of the works that are set on the reservation (Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing and Keeper'n Me) have fewer non-Native characters as compared to the other two, which are set mainly in the city or away from the reservation (In Search of April Raintree and Kiss of the Fur Queen). In addition, the two latter works are harsher in their representation of non-Natives as compared to the former two. While Dry Lips attacks Euroamerican culture through its institutions, Keeper'n Me balances the bitterness with humour and a constructive use of Western ideas of progress.

(a) Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing

Tomson Highway's Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing (1989) opens a window into the male side of events on the Wasaychigan reserve in contrast to his first play, The Rez Sisters (1988), which relates the story of the women on the reserve. What makes Dry Lips intriguing is the total absence of women characters in the play—with the exception of those that Nanabush impersonates and the appearance of Hera Keechigeesik

at the end—which provides space for the male characters to voice their fears, hopes, and somewhat misogynistic feelings toward the women in their lives. Dry Lips has been taken to task by both Native (such as Tuharsky and Baker) and non-Native (such as Bennett and Fraser) feminists/critics for blatantly indulging in misogyny. While Tuharsky charges the play with reinforcing "damaging stereotypes against our women" (5), Baker sees it as a representation of "internalized racism and sexism" (88). In an interview in 1992 with Robert Enright, Highway notes:

> At this point in my career I'm really heavily into the whole gender issue, the male/female dichotomy, the sexual hierarchy, which is an area that knows no racial boundaries. Partly because these things are layered constructions, they can be very easily misunderstood and a lot of people do misunderstand them. I've been called everything from a racist to a sexist and I've been accused of purposely promoting racism and sexism. It reached the point where I've been called the living reincarnation of Satan. (23)

However, it should be taken into account that the misogynistic comments in the play are indicative of a larger problem and are not gratuitously malicious. They are symptomatic of male insecurity and the fear of emasculation, which, Highway seems to suggest, is intimately connected with Euroamerican influence. Billy Merasty, who played the part of Simon Starblanket in the original Playwrights' Workshop Montreal ensemble and the premiere production cast of Dry Lips Oughta Move To Kapuskasing, notes that the depictions of women in the play were controversial "[b]ecause it dealt with the male world, and the male world can be quite misogynistic. And who they are misogynistic against are women. [*Dry Lips*] basically depicted that end of the scale. A macho-influenced society that people found themselves in, at a certain period of time" (Tinguely).

Like Highway's novel Kiss of the Fur Queen, Dry Lips is also a counterwriting text. In other words, Highway is "writing back" to the culture which is responsible for nearly annihilating his own. The terms of exchange remain the same, though, in that Highway does not seem interested in upsetting the Us-Them, Self-Other paradigms. This makes his writing seem reactionary and intent on maintaining the status quo. This is not to say that Highway has internalized the inferior status imposed on him by the oppressing power; on the contrary, he has succeeded in transforming the "lesser half" of the dyad into an instrument for empowerment. Highway is committed to exposing the damaging effects of Western culture and religion on the Native way of life, and he does this by setting up an oppositional structure in the play between Native and non-Native cultural values. The bipartite structure of the play—moving between indoors and outdoors, dream world and reality, upstage and downstage—is in keeping with its theme of oppositions. The manner in which he envisages the presence of Western values in Native culture is succinctly conveyed through the epigraph from Lyle Longclaws, which states, "before the healing can take place, the poison must first be exposed." Ostensibly, the play enacts the exposure of the poison that has been slowly but steadily sucking the vitality out of Native culture and tradition. The most commendable aspect of Dry Lips is that it succeeds in revealing the damage done to Native communities by Euroamerican culture and religion without actually naming anyone or involving any Euroamerican characters. Alan Filewood sees this as a weakness in the play as the invisibility of the colonizer "lets the Anglo audience off the hook" (22). The play seems to suggest that Highway does not hold individuals responsible for the state of the Native peoples in North America. Simon Starblanket in Dry Lips surely echoes Highway when he says: "it

never should have happened, that kind of thing should never be allowed to happen, not to us Indians, not to anyone living and breathing on the face of the God's green earth" (94). Highway's targets are not people but institutions—religious, educational, and commercial—which have conspired to bring Native peoples to their current state. The havoc that these institutions have wrought in the day-to-day lives of the Natives is explored in the play through Native characters. The effect of Western colonization is not an external factor, but has been internalized by the Natives. What is targeted is the enemy within and no external manifestations are required; therefore, Euroamerican culture and religion are represented through their effects on the lives of Natives.

The motif of "search" in Dry Lips has a larger significance that goes beyond the search of the characters for missing underwear, missing skates, missing fathers, and missing spirituality. The absence is not a natural state in Native communities but has been artificially induced by colonization. Kateri Damm in her article "Says Who: Colonialism, Identity and Defining Indigenous Literature" observes in this regard: "'Who we are' has been constructed and defined by Others[2] to the extent that at times we too no longer know who we are. The resulting confusion, uncertainty, low self-esteem and/or need to assert control over identity are just some of the damaging effects of colonization" (11). The absence is also a confusion regarding identity—about who the characters are and what they appear to be. Zachary can be seen as a buffoon who is taken for a ride by a woman or an earnest do-gooder who wants to improve the situation on the rez; Pierre St. Pierre can be dismissed as a chronic drunk or viewed as the product of colonization and

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[2] Damm in this instance is reversing the traditional use of Self and Other by referring to the Native as Self and non-Native as Other.

non-Native oppression; Big Joey can be framed as a virulent misogynist or regarded as a symbol of the depths to which Native manhood and confidence have sunk under the influence of concerted psychological warfare.

The damaging effect of Euroamerican culture is made immediately apparent when Big Joey comes on stage and addresses the absent Gazelle Nataways as "Hey bitch!" (16). Language is the conveyor of not only meaning but also cultural values. In the note on Nanabush Highway observes that "[t]he most explicit distinguishing feature between the North American Indian languages and the European languages is that in Indian (e.g. Cree, Ojibway) there is no gender. In Cree, Ojibway etc., unlike English, French, German, etc., the male-female-neuter hierarchy is entirely absent" (12). Big Joey's opening abusive address, spoken in English, connects the presence of gender in language to sexism and abuse. Randy Lundy notes: "[T]he men's ineptitude in their use of English means that they are manipulated by the language and its biases" (112). Violence, Highway seems to be indicating, is encoded in the language of the oppressor, which is then applied to the female sex, which is lower in the gender hierarchy. In other words, the unequal power distribution of the non-Native oppressor/Native oppressed binary is transferred to that of the oppressive Native male/oppressed Native female. This violence, Highway indicates, is also the result of the clash of different cultural values: the fear that the men experience, especially the "stud" Big Joey, is the fear of the women's power.

While there was an acceptance of women's power in "gynocratic"[3] Native societies, this acceptance was displaced with the coming of the phallocentric Euroamerican culture.

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[3]A term coined by Paula Gunn Allen in The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions.

According to Janice Acoose,

> Our once community- and consensually-based ways of governance, social organization, and economic practices were stripped of their legitimacy and authority by White Christian males, who imposed an ideologically contrasting hierarchical structure. Of specific importance to this discussion is the removal of women from all significant social, political, economic, and spiritual processes. (47)

When Big Joey reveals the reason why he did not get the pregnant, bleeding Black Lady Halked to the hospital on time or prevent the rape of Patsy Pegahmagahbow, he provides the reader/audience with an understanding of how Native culture has been distorted by Western values: "Because I hate them. I hate them fucking bitches. Because they—our own women—took the power away from us faster than the FBI ever did" (120). Big Joey connects his feelings of powerlessness to women and holds them responsible for his figurative emasculation, while as he has already told us, his actual feelings of disempowerment come from his unsuccessful political efforts.[4] Others, such as Spooky Lacroix and Simon Starblanket are aware that the power has always been with the women and only they can do something with it. The anxiety of the Wasy men in relation to the women forming a hockey-team (the emphasis being on the word *team*) is a comedic expression of a deeper fear, a fear that is related to the usurpation of gender roles prescribed by Euroamerican society and underscored by the displacement of gender-stereotypes in the play. For example, when we first see Spooky, he is engaged in knitting a pair of pale baby blue booties for the baby his wife is expecting, and Zachary Keechigeesik, who is obsessed with opening a bakery, bakes an apple pie.

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[4] The analogy between white oppression and female usurpation of power is also noted by Randy Lundy and Peter Dickinson.

The abuse of women is also conveyed by the poster of Marilyn Monroe in Big Joey's house and Kitty Wells' song, which implies that men are responsible for the wayward actions of women. Highway's use of Monroe, the icon of sexuality in White circles, conveys how Euroamerican culture commodifies women. Lundy observes that "female bodies, as objects of desire as well as fear and loathing, are an almost constant preoccupation of the male characters in the play" (106). This obsession with the female form is emphasized through Nanabush's use of the over-sized prosthetics for charming and titillating her/his male audience. The life-size poster of Monroe suggests that "the male construction of a specifically White ideal of feminine sexuality as an object of male desire, as a male fantasy, is enabled and perpetuated by the discourses of the English language and the Christian spiritual tradition of the colonizers" (Lundy 106). The absorption into Native society of the Christian view of women as saints or sirens, iconized in the figures of Mother Mary and Mary Magdalene, is portrayed through Dickie Bird's perception of his mother, Black Lady Halked, as the Virgin Mary and the depiction of Gazelle Nataways as the temptress. The elevation of the mother figure to the status of a saint is predicated on the self-sacrificing nature of maternity in Christianity; Dickie Bird's mother is not only a negation of the cherished Christian values but is also represented in a manner that brings her perilously close to the temptress. The debilitating effect of Western culture on Native women is conveyed through the presentation of Black Lady Halked. While alcoholism in relation to men is treated comically in the figure of Pierre, the tragic dimension is played out through the recounting of Dickie Bird's birth in a bar where his mother has been indulging in alcohol for the past three days. Dickie Bird's inability to speak is the result of Fetal Alcohol Syndrome. The second time we see

Black Lady is in a vignette, where she evades the questions of her son and inflicts institutionalized Christianity on him. In response to questions regarding his Native predecessors, she tells him that that he is not to speak of them and makes him say ten Hail Marys and two Our Fathers. Black Lady's alcoholic binge in turn is related to Big Joey's neglect of her after his return from Wounded Knee. She is pregnant with his child and the target for his nascent misogyny. While we are not explicitly told this, Kitty Wells' song in the background suggests that Black Lady's alcoholism is related to the men in her life.

The episode which brings together the injurious effects of Euroamerican culture and Christianity on Native culture and religion is the climax of the play— Dickie Bird's rape of Patsy/Nanabush, the motivation for which is not readily apparent. However, what is apparent is that Spooky Lacroix has been filling his head with Christianity and Dickie Bird feels that his mother has abandoned him. It is quite plausible that Dickie Bird is motivated by his misogynistic feelings toward his mother (he has recently discovered that he is a bastard and that his father is actually Big Joey and not Wellington Halked). The rape, however, functions on another level as well: the fact that Patsy/Nanabush is raped with a crucifix is an overt illustration of how Christianity violated Native religion.[5] The character emblematic of this violation is the reformed alcoholic Spooky Lacroix. Spooky's Christianity is the fire and brimstone kind and his constant preoccupation is with the ending of the world and the Last Day of Judgement. His black and white

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[5] Randy Lundy emphasizes that "the rape is not only symbolic of a crime committed by Christianity against indigenous culture, but that it is also a crime committed by a man against a woman. The rape is symbolic of the conflict between the irretrievably male Christian God and the female manifestation of Nanabush, which is a reflection of the rift between the Indigenous man and woman" (115).

Christian values have made him reject his own father, Nicotine Lacroix, who was a medicine man:

> When the world comes to an end? The sky will open up. The clouds will part. And the Lord will come down in a holy vapour. And only those who are bornagain Christian will go with him when he goes back up. And the rest. You know what's gonna happen to the rest? They will die. Big Joey, for instance, they will go to hell and they will burn for their wicked, whorish ways. But we will be take up into the clouds to spend eternity surrounded by the wondrous and the mystical glory of God. (37)

Simon sets the record straight for Dickie Bird and everyone else by explaining the clash of religious values from the Native perspective: "Your grandfather, Nicotine Lacroix was a medicine man. Hell of a name, but he was a medicine man. Old priest here, Father Bouchard, years ago—oh, he was a terrible man—he went and convinced the people old Nicotine Lacroix talked to the devil. That's not true. Nicotine Lacroix was a good man" (65). The lies of the past have a bearing on the present and on the future, and Highway exposes this through Spooky's total and complete resistance to letting Rosie Kakapetum, "Patsy Pegahmagahbow's step-mother and [she's] Wasy's only surviving medicine woman and mid-wife…" deliver his child (88). The exchanges between Simon, Pierre, Spooky, and Zachary provide the context for the relationship between religion and culture. Spooky's determination that his child will be born at Sudbury General Hospital is an illustration of his White proclivities. In addition, his distrust of Rosie's medical abilities and his declaration that "Rosie Kakapetum works for the devil" (91) expose the degree to which Spooky has internalized the colonizer's lies. Simon's insistence that Rosie must "birth that baby" (91) is connected to Simon's self-appointed task of bringing back the drum. The drum in the play is a symbol for Native traditions, the instrument for healing a disease-ridden community. With the drum goes the dancing, which in Native

religion is a form of prayer. Simon, who is twenty years old and relatively young as compared to the rest of the men in the play, is representative of the new generation of young Natives who are turning to their own culture and religion for answers. His projected union with Patsy, who is learning the power of medicine from her step-mother, presents the beacon of hope in an otherwise dismal society. Patsy's subsequent rape and Simon's accidental shooting of himself appears to be a darkly ironic arrangement on the part of the playwright.

However, the damage is controlled through the framing of the play in the form of a dream that Zachary Keechigeesik has been having. Anne Nothof notes, "The frame, however, does not mitigate the horrific and brutal events of the 'dream.' Their dramatization is more powerful than the comforting conclusion." It is pertinent that the main events of the play are rendered in a dream sequence, which should not necessarily be read as an attempt to sweeten the pill. Highway in his interview with Robert Enright comments, "Our dream visions affect our day-to-day lives and, certainly for North American Indian culture, our dream life is every bit as important as our physical, conscious life" (24).

The play also contains an element of the concept of stealing the horses. This comes through in the entrepreneurial ambitions of Big Joey and Zachary Keechigeesik. According to Big Joey, the establishment of his radio station is a means to bring the community together and "to prove this broadcasting of games among the folks is one sure way to get some pride … some pride and dignity back …" (23-4). The intention behind Zachary's bakery is to provide employment on the reserve—"And this bakery could do a lot for the Indian people. Economic development. Jobs. Bread. Apple pie" (45). This

use of Western tools to serve Native ends is a fairly good example of stealing the horses, but needs to be regarded with a degree of skepticism. Evidently, the recuperation of pride and the move toward development require more means and more effort than what these characters are willing to put in.

As is evident from the above discussion, Highway's play is occupied with exposing the effects of Euroamerican culture on Native peoples. It does not go into great depth when it comes to analyzing the motives behind the negative constructions of Native peoples by non-Natives. While Highway does expose the intentions behind the stereotyping of Native medicine men and women as devil worshippers, his probing is limited to religion. A controversial yet popular play, Dry Lips accomplishes Highway's goal of bringing aspects of Native emotional, political, and spiritual lives on the stage.[6] However, the most important fallout of the play according to Billy Merasty is that "[i]t built a theatre-going audience, especially in the Native community. When those two plays became big hits, it generated its own audience. It did involve the non-Native audience, but it established a theatre-going audience in the Native community. And that is very important. Crucial" (Tinguely). Interestingly, Highway manages to achieve what the characters in his play are struggling toward: if, as Lundy notes, "the men are unable to manipulate the English language into a transformative decolonizing tool," then it is Highway who succeeds in his struggle with the language (112). In addition, the

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[6] Dry Lips was nominated for six Dora Mavor Moore Awards, which recognizes achievements in Toronto theatre, in 1989 and won four of them. It also won the 1989 Floyd S. Chalmers Award for Outstanding Canadian Play performed in the Toronto, along with being shortlisted for the Governor General's Literary Award after it was published in 1989. The play has also been performed on small stages and in mainstream theatre.

community that Big Joe and Zachary are trying to bring together through their enterpreneurial efforts is formed through the audience who come to see Highway's play.

(b) Kiss of the Fur Queen

In Kiss of the Fur Queen Highway represents non-Native culture through the (un)holy trinity of Euroamerican imperialism—Christianity, Western education, and Capitalism. Highway's subjects for this work of autobiographically-based fiction are two generations of the Okimasis family as he explores the effects of Western culture and colonialism on them. Unlike in Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing where the institutions of the West are represented through their effects, in Fur Queen Highway makes use of non-Native characters to sharpen the conflict between the two cultures. Some of the non-Native characters belong to religious institutions, for example Father Bouchard and Father Lafleur, as well as the legendary Father Thibodeau and sundry priests and nuns; others belong to the middle classes such as the nameless teenage boys who rape and murder the Helen Betty Osborne[7] figures. Yet others represent the field of Western education such as Herr Schwarzkopf, Lola Van Beethoven, and Miss Churley, and

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[7] Helen Betty Osborne was a nineteen-year-old Cree girl who was abducted and brutally murdered by four White men near The Pas, Manitoba on the morning of November 13, 1971. It took sixteen years before the people responsible were brought to trial and punished. The Aboriginal Justice Implementation Commission came to the conclusion in 1999 that "Betty Osborne would not have been killed if she had not been Aboriginal. The four men who took her to her death from the streets of The Pas that night had gone looking for an Aboriginal girl with whom to "party." They found Betty Osborne. When she refused to party she was driven out of town and murdered. Those who abducted her showed a total lack of regard for her person or her rights as an individual. Those who stood by while the physical assault took place, while sexual advances were made and while she was being beaten to death showed their own racism, sexism and indifference" (par. 2).

Western art forms are conveyed through Gregory Newman and Robin Beatty. Needless to say, Highway's approach is neither uncritical nor untroubled, though some non-Native characters are let off more easily than the others. Like his plays, his novel is also an illustration of the results of cultural collision and assumed cultural hierarchies.

The aspect of Euroamerican culture that comes under heaviest fire in Highway's novel is religion. Highway observes, "I think I wrote this novel as one, hopefully among a whole series of novels and plays and other works of art, addressing the basic issues of religion, spirituality, because I think this is at the origin of all these [Native dysfunctionality] problems" (Hodgson 5). In the novel, Roman Catholicism is shown to affect both generations of this Cree family in varying degrees: while the blows to the first generation are more social and ceremonial in nature, those to the second are sexual and personal. The priest on the Eemanipiteepitat reservation is every inch the Christian patriarch, more jailor than shepherd in his dealings with his Native wards. Father Bouchard is the spiritual successor to the legendary Father Thibodeau who was responsible for the death of the "last medicine woman," Chachagathoo, and every bit determined as his predecessor to keep his flock untouched by the paganism of their ancestors (247). While there are instances of subversive actions, such as dancing on a Sunday, the sway of the Catholic church is evident in the manner in which Cree beliefs, songs, dances, and rituals have been erased from the memory of the Cree people; for example, when Ann Adele Ghostrider refers to the beautiful songs and dances of the northern people, Jeremiah's reaction is one of caustic bewilderment: "'And what the hell was this tired old bag yattering about anyway? What dances? What songs? '*Kimoosoom Chimasoo*'? The 'Waldstein Sonata'?'" (175). Gabriel's naming ceremony is another

instance of the erasure of Native identity by religion: Annie Moostoos' statement that the boy already has a Cree name is swept aside by Father Bouchard "with airy contempt," and he silences the adamant Annie with his pronouncement that "women are not to speak their minds inside the church" (37). This episode is indicative of two things: first, the ignoring of Native traditions in the presence of Christianity, and second, the imposition of the standards of Western sexism on to the Native context.

Roman Catholicism dominates the lives of the residents of Eemanipiteepitat, to the extent that it controls family ties. It is at the behest of Father Bouchard that Champion-Jeremiah is sent off to Residential School; as Abraham Okimasis tells his disconsolate wife, "What Father Bouchard wants, I guess" (40). Abraham's dedication to the priest's word is such that he even breaks off relations with his sister when asked to do so:

> [A]s the priest thoughtfully informed the hunter that his younger sister, the wild and wilful Black-eyed Susan Magipom, had a place reserved in hell for leaving her husband, physically abusive though he may be, and for daring to move in with another man. With a great puff of smoke from his gnarled, black pipe, the priest advised the hunter that associating with the woman gave approval to her sin until she has returned to her rightful husband and repented. (128-9)

Highway conveys the unfairness of the decree and his disagreement with it by providing an important piece of information in the passage; Susan Magipom leaves her husband not because she wants to break her marriage, but because her husband is physically abusing her. The irony is that the Church prefers to condone the abuse of women rather than do something to stop it or to support women who take measures against such cruelty.

The extent of the brainwashing done by the Church is revealed when Abraham tells his youngest-born, "The Catholic church saved our people. Without it, we wouldn't be here today. It is the one true way to talk to God, to thank him. You follow any other religion and you go straight to hell, that's for goddamn sure" (109). It is this allegiance to

the Catholic faith which prevents the sons from informing their parents of the sexual abuse at the Residential school, and which makes Gabriel leave his parents to join his brother in the city.

As has been observed by various critics and reviewers of the novel, Kiss of the Fur Queen is an illustration of the clash between two cultures with dissimilar structures and beliefs. As Highway observes in the novel, "Wars start when two parties haven't taken time to learn each other's tongues" (95). One telling example of this conflict is the legend of Father Thibodeau's vanquishing of Chachagathoo. This conflict is presented by the Catholic church as the victory of good over evil, when it is actually the annihilation of a people's beliefs and way of life. The irony is heightened by the fact that this story is believed by those very people whose culture was decimated. Passed down from father to son, the legend lives on till it is corrected by Ann Adele Ghostrider at the Wasaychigan Hill Pow Wow. Her version of the story reveals how the priests manipulated the shaman and the circumstances to suit their own requirements and converted the Natives to Catholicism: as Ann Adele tells Jeremiah, "Your parents' generation? In the north? Lied to and lied to and lied to!" (247).

If the priests do not appear to be fairing well until this point in the discussion, then the appearance of Father Lafleur certainly is the final nail in the coffin for them. Father Lafleur is the principal of Birch Lake Indian Residential School to which both Jeremiah and Gabriel are sent, and is representative of the sexual predation prevalent in the Residential schools. In keeping with his predatory function, the animal imagery applied to Father Lafleur has carnal associations; for example, his voice is described as "fleshy" (53), his "eyebrows so black and bushy they could have been fishing lures" (54), he looks

"like some large, furry animal" (55), and when he brushes by Jeremiah he is described as "soft and fleshy" (57). However, the most damning of all associations is the similarity drawn with the flesh eater Weetigo. Jeremiah's description of the figure at Gabriel's bed is as follows: "A dark, hulking figure hovered over him, like a crow. Visible only in silhouette, for all Jeremiah knew it might have been a bear devouring a honeycomb, or the Weetigo feasting on human flesh" (79). It is this introduction to premature and abusive sexuality that appears to govern Gabriel's sexual deviance and Jeremiah's sexual dysfunctionality. The carnal associations are applied to Christian rituals as well, such as the taking of the Holy Communion which Gabriel equates with cannibalism: "Christianity asks people to eat the flesh of Christ and drink his blood—shit, Jeremiah, eating human flesh, that's cannibalism. What could be more savage--?" (184). This is Highway's dig at the dominant culture's belief that cannibalism was practiced by some Indian peoples. Gabriel's ironic statement is revelatory in terms of how one culture can misread the other: a metaphorical ritual can be interpreted as an act of cannibalism in the absence of proper information. Given this scenario how possible is it that Native rituals were misperceived by Euroamericans who had partial or no knowledge about them?

The savagery and racism of the dominant culture is exhibited through the nameless (except in one case) and faceless groups of white middle-class teenagers who rape and murder the Helen Betty Osborne figures. These young men are described in one instance as "[F]our teenaged men with Brylcreamed hair [who] lounged languidly inside, crotches thrust shamelessly, and laughed and puffed cigarettes and sucked at bottles of nameless liquids" (106). These are the men who are responsible for the brutal rape and murder of Evelyn Rose McCrae—"long-lost daughter of Mistik Lake" (106). In another incident,

the aggressors are "young men with baseball caps," who are responsible for the death of Madeline Jeannette Lavoix, "erstwhile daughter of Mistik Lake" (131-2). The commodification of Native women's bodies and the easy manner in which they are discarded after use by "young white men out looking for a thrill" is an index of the meretricious status of Native women in White society. The only individualized white teenager is Rob Bailey who does nothing much to alleviate the representation. On the contrary, his comments are offered as the shallow and common responses of non-Natives to Native peoples: his reaction to Amanda's challenging of Herr Schwarzkopf's blinkered view of History is "Ugh. The Princess Pocahontas has spoken" (148), and his reaction to Jeremiah's presentation, when the guillotine comes down on Marie Antoinette's neck and tomato ketchup spurts forth, is "War war warpaint!" (147). These incidents serve to prove that Euroamerican society is still caught up in the stereotypical notions of what the Natives are like or should be. This episode is also illustrative of the erasure of Native history from the History of the world. The encounter between Amanda, Herr Schwarzkopf, and Jeremiah exposes ignorance in the ranks of the Euroamerican as well as the Native. Amanda's refusal to recognize the French Revolution as the "most violent and bloody period in the history of the world" and her citing of the "Cherokee Trail of Tears...Wounded Knee, smallpox blankets, [and] any number of atrocities done to the Indian people" as equally bloody as, if not more, than events of European History are not received favourably by either teacher or student (148). However, she does make a point in her rejoinder to Jeremiah that he "just shouldn't forget that we have a history, too" (149). Her claiming of a Native heritage is linked to her struggle for identity as she tells Jeremiah, "What use is there pretending to be what you are not? You, me and your

little brother, we're the only three Indian kids in a school filled with two thousand white middle-class kids. We can't let them walk all over us" (149). Amanda's statement might as well be echoing what a lot of Natives feel in a society dominated in numbers by Whites. Her statement, perhaps, is also Highway's message to his Native readers to be what they are, which is Native, instead of becoming what they are surrounded by.

Another institution that Highway takes to task is Western education. The second entity in the triad of imperialism, education is also in cohoots with religion and politics to alienate Native peoples from their culture and religion. The Residential school to which the Okimasis brothers are sent is the site for exerting control on young Native minds through a programme of isolation. Distanced from an affectionate community and put in an environment of rules and codes of behaviour, besides being introduced to a different religion and language, the Native brothers, along with their peers, undergo severe trauma and depression. The episode which recounts Jeremiah's introduction to good and evil is insightful as it shows how the child's mind is worked on from the very beginning to distance him from his own. Unable to locate any Indians in Heaven, Jeremiah is relieved to see them in Hell:

> Aha! This is where the Indians are, thought Champion-Jeremiah, relieved that they were accounted for on this great chart. These people reveled shamelessly in various fun-looking activities....There appeared to be no end to the imagination with which these brown people took their pleasure; and this, Father Lafleur explained earnestly to his captive audience, as permanent punishment. (60-1)

The pun on "captive" is fairly obvious, as is the casting of the denizens of hell as "Skinny, slimy creatures with blackish-brownish scaly skin" and those of Heaven as "beautiful blond men with feathery wings and flowing white dresses" (59-60). The agenda of assimilation that was exercised through the Residential schools included the

shearing of hair and a ban on speaking Native languages. The shearing of hair was the first step toward cultural deprivation. Jeremiah describes it as the loss of "strength" (54) and of his "power" (74). This was complemented by the erasure of identity in the uniforms that the students were required to wear. Following this was the ban on speaking their Native tongue, response to which was open to punishment or reward.

The next educator who is introduced is Jeremiah's piano instructor, Lola van Beethoven, "piano teacher nonpareil, grande dame of the Winnipeg classical music scene, age sixty-five" (99). She is presented as liberal enough, as not only does she take in a Native student but also encourages him to dream of winning the prestigious Crookshank Memorial Trophy. Gabriel's ballet instructor, on the other hand, is still caught up in the stereotypical approach to Natives. The "ghost-pale" Miss Churley when correcting Gabriel's posture cannot resist making a churlish remark regarding his ethnicity: "And your palm is down, not up. You can do your praying to the *Gitche Manitou* when class is over" (152). Not only does Miss Churley speak Cree badly but she also assumes that Gabriel is a follower of Native religion. Her statement ironically exposes the preconceived notions of non-Natives regarding Natives, and the lack of accurate knowledge regarding their history. The representative of Euroamerican scholarship at the college level is Herr Schwarzkopf who teaches European history to Jeremiah's class. Jeremiah scoff's at Herr Schwarzkopf's accent, which "so grated on Jeremiah he wanted to hold the old man's mouth in place" and at his "Hanseatic nostrils" that honked so loudly that "Jeremiah envisioned a flotilla of boats in Danzig harbour" (122). Highway is unmerciful in his portrayal of Herr Schwarzkopf and why he chooses to make the teacher a German will be considered later in Chapter Six.

The non-Native representatives from the field of Western art forms are Gabriel's lovers, Gregory Newman and Robin Beatty. Gregory Newman, "guest choreographer and teacher" at Gabriel's school is his first long-term lover (200). The apparent implication is that Gabriel enters this relationship because he sees Newman as "a mentor, a professional associate who offered him possibilities" (202). However, this premise is shaken when Jeremiah accidentally catches a glimpse of the two of them "against the bedroom wall, black on white, Gregory Newman hung nailed to his brother, by the mouth" (204). Eventually, this relationship fractures the fraternal bond particularly when Gabriel starts living with Newman. While Highway does not elaborate on the various aspects of the Newman-Gabriel relationship, it is obvious that Newman calls the shots. The incident which confirms this is Gabriel's inability to attend Jeremiah's piano competition because of Newman's inflexibility. The reference to the note, which Gabriel never received, and Newman's stringency in not letting Gabriel change his ticket is full confirmation of Newman's domination. Highway clarifies this through the following image: "A jet of cigarette smoke [from Newman's Gitane] enveloped, then swallowed, then obliterated Gabriel" (210). It is, however, unclear whether the domination is a replication of the inequality of power in the non-Native-Native equation, or simply an enactment of the domination inherent in the mentor-neophyte relationship. Highway seems to suggest that it could be both through Gabriel's acts of insubordination/rebellion against Newman's monogamic diktat by indulging in multiple homosexual encounters.

Robin Beatty "the lanky jazz singer" is Gabriel's last lover and not realized as a character at all (277). Aside from encouraging Gabriel before his performance and cradling his head in his arms in the final moments of Gabriel's death, Beatty has nothing

to offer in the novel. However, the fact that both of Gabriel's lovers are White artists appears to say something about the open-mindedness of the art world. Stan Dragland sees the representation of non-Native artists and art forms as "an exercise of the power to welcome the imperializing culture's art and to ridicule its politics" (44). This rather simple-sounding statement is problematic to say the least: Is it possible to welcome the imperializing power's art and stop its politics at the door? It seems to me that they are joined at the hip, and inviting one would necessarily mean sharing the table with the other. In fact, it would not be far fetched to claim that the use of the imperializing power's art is a political act, and combining it with Native art is an act of (counter) appropriation. This is reflected through the efforts of the Okimasis brothers who mold Western art forms to serve Native ends. In doing so, Kiss of the Fur Queen provides an instance of stealing the horses: Abraham Okimasis' advice to his sons that "[t]he world has become too evil. With these magic weapons, make a new world," is fulfilled by them when they make Western art forms carry the burden of their own cultural experience (227). Consequently, when Jeremiah plays the piano at the competition, "he play[s] the loon cry, the wolves at nightfall, the aurora borealis in Mistik Lake . . . the wind through the pines, the purple of sunsets, the zigzag flight of a thousand white arctic terns, the fields of mauve-hued fireweed rising and falling like an exposed heart" (213). Similarly, Jeremiah's music in Gabriel's choreography transforms the piano in to a "pow wow drum propelling a Cree Round dance with the clangour and dissonance of the twentieth century" (267). The dramatic productions on which the brothers collaborate, such as "Ulysses Thunderchild" and "Chachagathoo, the Shaman," also make use of Western art forms and instruments to convey a uniquely Cree experience.

Capitalism, the third entity in the triad, is introduced through the city and the mall, which are also representative of Euroamerican culture in the novel. The city is cold and distant as its occupants and a place where "stars don't shine at night, trees don't speak" (104). At one point in the novel, Highway sums up the city through the mélange of odours which it produces: "The smells all mingled into one: of carbon dioxide, seventeen intensities of perfume, aftershave, cologne, breath of steak, chicken liver, onions, garlic, teeth gone bad, minty mouthwash, unkempt clumps of armpit hair overhead" (104). This tidy list exposes the subterfuges that the denizens of the city employ to mask their malodorousness, aside from also revealing the decay which lurks beneath the refreshing veneer. The list also hints at the culture of mass consumption which is elaborated in the description of the mall. The utilization of religious imagery to describe aspects of the mall intimates the usurpation of the church by the religion of consumerism in North American society: for example, the central promenade of the Polo Park Shopping Mall is described as "[t]he chancel of a church for titans," the imagined hundred violins that play in the mall "slid[e] shamelessly into 'Ave Maria'"; the brothers mistake the" 't' of 'Eatons' for a crucifix, and the suits and shift dresses remind them of "priestly gatherings" and "nuns divorced from God" (116-17). Heather Hodgson notes: "The dominant culture, presented here as spiritually malnourished, seems intent on filling its emptiness with all the wrong things, running after and acquiring new addictions" (5). The mall itself is depicted as a beast and the food court as the belly of the beast where an unending orgy of devouring is enacted:

> Never before had Gabriel seen so much food. Or so many people shovelling food in and chewing and swallowing and burping and shovelling and chewing and swallowing and burping, as at some apocalyptic communion. The world was one great, gaping mouth, devouring ketchup-dripping hamburgers, French fries

> glistening with grease, hot dogs, chicken chop suey, spaghetti with meatballs, Cheezies, Coca-cola, root beer, 7-Up, ice cream, roast beef, mashed potatoes, and more hamburgers, french fries...The roar of mastication drowned out all other sound.... (119-120)

Eventually, the brothers depart from the mall which "Grey and soulless . . . loomed behind them, the rear end of the beast that, having gorged itself, expels its detritus" (121). The mall becomes an emblem of the consumptive greed of Western society, which in turn is mirrored in the conversation between the businessmen that the Okimasis brothers overhear at the New Year's Eve Gala. The subject of their exchange is the forthcoming exploitation of Northern Manitoba, which is the "last frontier" that needs to be conquered because it may yield diamonds, uranium, and natural gas (141).

I would argue that the opposition which is apparent in the text between two forms of culture and of apprehending the world is established from the very beginning: the epigraphs which precede the novel, one taken from Duncan Campbell Scott's letter and the other from the translation of Chief Seattle's (Duwamish and Squamish) speech, testify to the repressive strategies of the colonizer and the resilient spirit of the colonized. While the quotation from Scott's letter "sent out as a circular on December 15, 1921" is authentic (n.pag.), the same cannot be said of Chief Seattle's statement. The speech from which the statement is taken was published in the *Seattle Sunday Star* in 1887—thirty-three years after the actual utterance—as a translation by Dr. Henry A. Smith ("Chief Seattle's Speech(es)"). Jerry L. Clarke notes that, "according to several local historians of Seattle, Dr. Smith was fluent in the Duwamish tongue and thus was able to transcribe Seattle's words verbatim" (par. 12). Nancy Zussy, librarian at the Washington State Library lists at least four written versions of the speech: the first version is by Dr. Smith "who makes it clear that his version is not an exact copy, but rather the best he could put

together from notes taken at the time"; the second is by poet William Arrowsmith in the late 1960s, which was an attempt to put the text into more current speech patterns. This version follows the first one closely in content. The third version, perhaps the most widely known, was written by Professor Ted Perry as part of a film script called "Home" produced in the United States by the Southern Baptist Convention. Zussy notes that "the makers of the film took a little literary license, further changing the speech and making it into a letter to President Franklin Pierce, which has been frequently reprinted." No such letter was written by or for Chief Seattle. Version four appeared in an exhibit at Expo '74 in Spokane, Washington, and is a shortened edition of Perry's script. Of these four versions, the Perry scripts are regarded as the fraudulent ones, while the one by Dr. Smith is so far the most authentic of the four. Given its controversial history and the dubiousness attached to it, one can only wonder why Highway chooses to quote from it. A possible answer is provided by Clarke who states that the oration, "supposedly spoken by an Indian chieftan in 1855, has surfaced in today's world and has been used to justify and fortify current attitudes regarding the treatment of the first Americans and the natural environment in the United States" (par. 2). Moreover, it is a speech with which most Americans are familiar and it strikes a cord in all who hear it. Unlike Perry's script which was a white construction, Dr. Smith's translation has not yet been proven false. While its oratorial style is more Victorian than Duwamish or Squamish, the gist could very well be attributed to Chief Seattle. It is also unclear why the date in the epigraph for Chief Seattle's speech is 1853, while most historian's date it as 1854-55.

The two quotations display the Manichean terms that both parties use when referring to each other, which is, "Indians" and "White man." In addition, both Scott and Seattle

refer to the spiritual beliefs of Native peoples: the former ordering their suppression and the latter affirming the spiritual link which even the dead have with the land. Unquestionably, the epigraphs point to the issue of spiritual beliefs and their vital connection to Native culture and tradition, which figures prominently in this novel. Highway, as he does in Dry Lips, does not try to displace this Manichean construct, and in not doing so comes across as equally polemical in his reading of Whites as do the Whites in their reading of Natives. In other words, as "Indians" are to Euroamericans, "Whites" are to Natives. It is difficult to think of even one White character for whom we as readers feel even an iota of sympathy. Highway's polemical stance appears to owe itself to personal experience; in the interview with Heather Hodgson Highway states that "he may spend the rest of his writing life trying to sort out his anger at the Catholic church, the compulsory English language, and European cultural imperialism in general" (3). The writing of this novel is also a therapeutic exercise for Highway as "keeping such a story inside results in the return of the repressed, in haunting nightmares—perhaps daymares too—that eventually induce sickness. Telling is healing" (Hodgson 3).

Returning to the contention that Highway is not as interested in subverting the existing paradigm of domination as he is in exposing its effects on Native peoples, Kiss of the Fur Queen falls into the same category as Dry Lips, which is that of a counterwriting text. One obvious instance is that Natives are made to excel in their respective fields as opposed to those in non-Native texts who as a norm either give up or are not good enough to win. For example, Abraham Okimasis wins the dogsled race unlike the Native musher in Kroetsch's Gone Native who throws the race on the verge of winning it. The novel is also a counterwriting text in its foregrounding of Native characters, their

problems, their beliefs, their stories, and the unique experience of being Native in a non-Native country.

However, Highway fails to demolish completely the notion of Indians as victims, and his inability is related, in my opinion, to the characterization of the non-Natives as the exploiters. Whether it is the Native community, children, women, religion, or history, the frame of reference is always Euroamerican society. Nevertheless, Highway can never be accused of romanticizing Native experience in a non-Native society, which is always a temptation for a writer in his position. The Native musher might win the race and the Native pianist the trophy, but the scale by which they are measured is always a non-Native one. This, unfortunately, is one of the pitfalls of the counterwriting text: a realistic representation of society by the Native writers cannot bypass the unequal power structure to present a picture of utopian egalitarianism.

In contrast, Richard Wagamese's Keeper'n Me finds a way around this difficulty: Wagamese's use of Native humour may not succeed in presenting a picture of Native utopian egalitarianism, but it certainly succeeds in dispelling the popular notion of Natives as victims defeated by the injustices of an unequal society. No one dies an unnatural death, families understand each other and accommodate wayward cases, alcoholism is conquered, the horses are stolen and the Native rides out toward a real sunrise.

(c) Keeper'n Me

Garnet, the prodigal Raven who returns home to White Dog Reserve after a period of twenty-two years, has this to say about Native humour: "Reason no one minds the

welfare so much, or the government's empty promises, or the lack of lots of things, is on accounta they always find some funny way of looking at it. They find a way to laugh about it. Keeper says that it's the way they've survived everything and still remained a culture" (87). The centrality of humour[8] in Native culture and literature is evidenced in the presence of the Trickster figure in the works of Tomson Highway, Thomas King, and Daniel David Moses, who admit that the humour in their writings is culturally influenced.[9] Louis Erdrich in an interview with Laura Coltelli delineates the life-affirming nature of humour in Native societies: "It's one of the most important parts of American Indian life and literature, and one thing that always hits us is just that Indian people really have a great sense of humour and when it's survival humour, you learn to laugh at things" (46). Similarly Linda Hogan sees humour as an essential aspect of her culture:

> [W]here I come from, in my family, and in my particular tribe [Chickasaw], people are always funny and joking around and teasing, using very rich language....There's just a lot of humour all the time. Things are funny. It's a survival technique, too. People who are in poverty, people who are in very difficult situations and in pain, have to develop humour or die of despair.[10] (Coltelli 77)

By and large humour is cited as the quality that has enabled Native culture to endure and overcome the ravages of colonization, and is the lynch-pin of Wagamese's first novel. Heather Hodgson's comment on the healing nature of humour in Native society is also revealing: "Historically, and since before the arrival of Christianity, Native peoples did

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[8] For book-length studies of Native humour see Lincoln; Ryan.

[9] Wanda Campbell interviews Daniel David Moses; Heather Hodgson interviews Tomson Highway; Robert Enright interviews Tomson Highway; Jennifer Andrews interviews Thomas King. See Works Cited list for bibliographic details.

[10] Interview with Laura Coltelli.

not feel a sense of shame associated with jokes about the body, and they often use humour to dull the pain, thereby creating an opening through which the wounds of life can be healed" (3).

Keeper'n Me falls in the category of counterwriting texts because it offers a critique of Western institutions like the other works in this category, and challenges stereotypical ideas regarding Natives through a stereotyping of the non-Natives. The oppositional structure of the novel generates much of the humour that we find in it. However, Wagamese's treatment of non-Native culture works as a double-edged sword. While on the one hand he critiques Western society and exposes its lack of values, on the other he emphasizes the need to adopt aspects of non-Native culture for the betterment of Native society; in other words, the need to steal the horses. While this treatment might appear to be working at cross-purposes, attention needs to be paid to the concept of "balance": As Keeper says, "*We gotta steal them horses and use them to get us movin' again. Can't be hidin'behind our Indyun ways all the time now. Gotta find balance between two worlds to survive*" (137).[11] Keeper's comment indicates that Native peoples need to move beyond being victims of Euroamerican oppression, and one of the ways of doing this is to adapt and appropriate non-Native ways to serve Native ends. The following comment also demolishes the myth of authenticity, which demands that a Native has to look Indian, speak Indian, and live like an Indian in order to be an Indian: "*The truth is that most of us are movin'between Indyuns. Movin' between our jobs and the sweat lodge. Movin' between school and powwow. Movin' between English and Anishnabe. Movin' between*

[11] Keeper's soliliquies and those sections in which he addresses the reader directly are italicized in the text.

1990 and 1490. Most of us are that kinda Indyun" (137). According to Keeper, the fact that colonization has changed Native lifestyle in a variety of ways is something that needs to be acknowledged and accepted. However, using Western means does not imply that one has to give up being Native: "*Do what the world asks you to do but do it with the spirit of the teachin's. You'll never get lost that way. Never. You can go and be whatever. DJ, hockey player, businessman, lawyer, anything as long as you carry them traditional teachin's with you wherever you go. That's balance*" (138). As Keeper sees it, Native peoples in White Dog can either shut themselves up from the world and become the proverbial frog in the well, or they can "bring the world to White Dog" (123).

As mentioned in the introduction, one of the major differences between works that are set on the reservation as opposed to those that are set in the city is the lack of convincing non-Native characters in the former. Works such as Dry Lips and Keeper'n Me tend to critique Euroamerican institutions and provide generalized views about non-Native assumptions regarding Natives. The non-Natives are presented as a nameless and faceless multitude and condemned at large for their racism and bigotry. However, Keeper'n Me differs from Dry Lips in its humorous take on non-Native assumptions and prejudices. Broadly speaking, the novel presents two types of non-Natives: those who promote assimilation, regard Natives as a "problem," and consider them a thing of the past and those who try to fill the void within by resorting to New Age Indian spiritualism and end up misinterpreting Native spirituality in the process. The tourist, in particular becomes the butt of Native humour. Tourists are found in good numbers in White Dog which attracts them on account of good hunting and fishing. As Keeper tells us, these rich American tourists "*come up here round now with their guns and rods and reels, big*

boats and Kodaks makin' lotta noise, botherin' ev'ryone" (1). Of course, the real concern of these American tourists is with getting their pictures taken as they "*[o]nly fish for the photographs...*" (1). This characterization of Americans as noisy, bothersome, rich, and stupid is not simply an exaggerated effort at stereotyping; it also symptomatic of a culture that is preoccupied with surfaces. These visitors who periodically descend on the reservation—whether in search of pickerels with which to take photographs or to learn the ancient spiritual rituals of the Indians—are the slice of the non-Native population with which White Dog residents are familiar. It is not surprising therefore that their general opinion of Whites is based on this marginal contact, much like the generalization of Indians which is made on the basis of the knowledge of a few. Such is the relation between the tourists and the residents of White Dog that tourist gullibility has become a part of the rez stories, like the one Garnet's uncle Gilbert is fond of repeating. The story is an example of the "'bait the tourist' game that's the highlight of fishing and hunting season" (83). What is revealed through this story is the thirst for knowledge regarding the Natives that plagues the non-Native population and the assumption that knowledge can be bought for a fistful of dollars. Garnet observes, "Americans always wanna be knowing all about Indians. Especially us bush Indians. Get them out in a boat or around a fire deep in the bush and they start asking questions" (83). Not surprisingly the first thing they want to learn is the "cuss words" as they "wanna be going home and cussing out the boss, the wife or the dog in Indian. Get a big charge out of that" (83). When paid closer attention the stories about the tourists and the analyses of their motivations smack of the Native anthropologist studying his non-Native subject.

As mentioned earlier, the assimilationist type of non-Natives are represented through the governmental agencies and foster homes. These are the people who actively promote assimilation and consider Indians themselves responsible for their present plight. Keeper'n Me undercuts this misrepresentation by illustrating how the plight of the Native is related directly to the oppressive practices of non-Native society. By doing so, the novel displays another dimension of the counterwriting text. The "rescue operation" undertaken by the Ontario Children's Aid Society is tantamount to kidnapping in Native terms. The incident where Garnet and his siblings are whisked away by the Society without the knowledge of their parents is an example of the misunderstandings that arise when the terms of cultural comprehension are different. As Garnet tells us:

> Now, Indians got a whole different way of looking at things like family. When you're a kid around here everyone's always picking you up, feeding you and generally taking good care of you. Sociologists call it the extended family concept. When you're born you got a whole built-in family consisting of ev'ryone around. So it was natural in parents' eyes to leave us with the old lady when they were out trying to make a living. But the Ontario Children's Aid Society had a different set of eyes and all they seen was a bunch of rowdy little Indian kids terrorizing a bent-up old lady....We were being raised just fine, but it wasn't long before they showed up with a plan for all of us. (10)

The plan is to take the children away from their natural parents and place them in non-Native group and foster homes. And if this were not bad enough, siblings are separated and grow up far away from each other as in the case of Garnet and his brothers and sisters. Garnet's education in the foster homes consists of being bombarded with negative images of Natives that are always present around him. The three-way assault on him through the media, the academy, and popular stereotypes are sufficient to disrupt his sense of identity. The media is complicit with the dominant society in imparting knowledge about Indians: "The most popular way of learning about Indians was

television" Garnet recalls, and the images which he remembers are those of the Western[12] (12). Indians are characterized as "Injuns. Scary devils. Heathens," and these images do little to make Garnet feel proud of his heritage (12). Later in the novel Keeper comments on the gap between the images shown in movies and the reality of being Native: "*Sure, in them movies us Indyuns are always runnin' off with children and raisin' them up savage....But in the real world it's the White people kept on sneakin' off with our kids. Guess they figured they were doin'us a favour. Only thing they did was create a whole new kinda Indyun*" (36). Likewise, school history books never mention Indians except as "guides for the brave explorers busy discovering the country" (12). Popular literature follows suit and Indians are represented as "either heathen devils running around killing people or just simple savages who needed the help of the missionaries in order to get straightened out and live like real people" (12-13). In addition, popular consensus brands Indians as "lazy, no account, drunken bums, living on welfare, mooching change on street corners and really needing some direction" (13). In an awful lesson which his foster father teaches him, Garnet is taken to the Indian section of the town and told "See. Those are Indians. Look at them. If you don't start shaping up and doing what you're told around here, that's what you're going to become!" (13). In the face of such negative constructions, Garnet can only feel alienated from his heritage:

> I was embarrassed about being an Indian and I was afraid that if I ever met a real one I wouldn't know what to do or say. So I started trying to fit into that white world as best as I could. I decided that I would try to learn to be anything other than what I was. I didn't want to be compared to any of the images I had of my own people, of myself. (13)

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[12] The influence exerted by the Western on Natives is explored more extensively in the chapter on Green Grass, Running Water.

Should one think that the agenda of assimilation is a thing of the past, Keeper highlights the new strategies which the government employs to draw Native youth away from their traditional ways:

> *Nowadays the whiteman comes in lotsa diff'rent ways. Oh, they still come with their schools and their foster homes, but we got some of our own teachers and social workers now, so kinda gettin' better there. But they still come for the kids. They come with their TV, money, big inventions and ideas. They come with big promises 'bout livin' in the world, with their politics and their welfare. They come with their rap music, break dancin' and funny ways of dressin'. All kinds of shiny things. (38-9)*

Garnet's subsequent alienation from his sense of being Native and the subterfuges that he employs to distance himself from this sense forms one of the themes of the novel, which is that of the "wannabe."[13] Keeper'n Me appears to dispute the popular American belief that you can become whatever you want to become. On the contrary, it seems to be saying that you can only become what you are and you need to work hard at finding yourself. Garnet runs "a lotta games past people" pretending to be Hawaiian, half-Chinese, Mexican/Apache, and even Black, and these episodes are recalled with humour (15). This humour takes the edge off what is a heartbreaking case of self-hate.

The New Age non-Natives are mentioned in passing by the characters. Keeper refers to them when he is talking about culture: "*Lotsa white people doin' our culture too now and they're never gonna be Indyun. Always just gonna be lookin' like people that can't dance*" (38). This reference to the inability to dance well is reminiscent of the comment made by Tootoosis about Grey Owl's dancing in Ruffo's Grey Owl: "An Indian can tell who's Indian / Grey Owl can't sing or dance" (128). A more contemporary New Age reference is to Iron John. Garnet gives Keeper a copy of Robert Bly's book and Keeper's

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[13] The phenomenon of the "wannabe" is discussed in detail in Chapter 3.

comment on the philosophy of the book provides an understanding of how Native spirituality is misunderstood and applied out of context. According to Keeper, Iron John's agenda of getting rid of "*womanish things*" and getting in touch with the wild man within through drumming is "*missin' the real teaching of the drum*" (114). A reworking of the Grimm Brothers' fairy tale of Iron John, Bly's work, subtitled "A Book about Men," is evidently an exhortation to "*man*kind" to assert their masculine side in opposition to the feminine. Recognised as one of the primary figures of the mythopoetic men's movement, Bly "helped found the men's movement in the wake of his father's death and a period of failure in his career as a poet" (Torgovnick, Primitive 163). Modeled on the feminist movement but closed to women, the men's movement, according to Torgovnick, "encourage[s] contact and communication among members of a sex that perceives itself as beleagured....Men, the movement seems to imply, have become overly dependent on women; women have made enormous strides in recent decades, getting ahead of men unfairly" (Primitive 157). Not surprisingly then most men are drawn to the movement when they experience a crisis in life. Torgovnick observes that in her interviews "men often said that initially they found the dancing or drumming that precedes and follows discussions of male identity 'silly' or 'embarrassing' but that it ultimately helped them 'really let go.' According to movement participants, activities like drumming or dancing 'somehow put [men] in touch with another center' and are valued because they lead to 'powerful mystical experiences'" (Primitive 165). The drumming and the dancing, drawn from Native culture, are (mis)read as masculine activities by the men's movement. Similarly, Iron John in Keeper'n Me either misreads the significance of the drum in Native culture or simply appropriates it to suit his own

masculinist agenda. Whatever the case maybe, according to Keeper, "*guess there's lots buyin' into it but they are missin' the real teaching of the drum. Beatin' away on them drums, gettin' wild, but missin' out on the teachin's that'll keep'em alive forever*" (114). Through Keeper's critique of non-Native appropriations of the outer forms of Native spirituality, without an understanding of its deeper meaning, Wagamese privileges the Native viewpoint over non-Native interpretations. This strategy of the counterwriting text exposes how the non-Native perspective on Native subjects is flawed, and undermines its reliability.

A more caustic appraisal of the Men's Movement is offered by Ward Churchill who regards the movement as a "strange brew consisting of roughly equal parts Arthurian, Norse, and Celtic legend, occasional adaptations of fairy tales by the brothers Grimm, a scattering of his [i.e. Bly] own and assorted dead white males' verse and prose, a dash of environmentalism, and for spice, bits and pieces of Judaic, Islamic, East Asian, and American Indian spiritualism" (209). While Churchill finds Bly's lectures "frequently tedious, often pedantic, [and] pathetically pretentious in both content and elocution," he is amazed by the white males' attraction to ideas such as "'reclaiming the primitive within us…attaining freedom through the use of appropriate ritual…[and] the rights of men to transcend cultural boundaries in redeeming their warrior souls'" (209). Churchill's reaction to this kind of blatant appropriation of spiritual rituals is revealing; while he does not consider the use of rituals, such as those of the Druids, by people who know little or nothing about them appropriate, he sees this use as relatively harmless as compared to the use of Native American rituals. His reasoning is based on the fact that while the Druids, being dead and gone, "are thus immune to whatever culturally

destructive effects might attend such blatant appropriation, trivialization, and deformation of their sacred rites by non-Druidic feel-gooders," such is not the case with the Native Americans who are still "living, ongoing entities" (212, 215). As a result, "Native American societies *can* and *do* suffer the socioculturally debilitating effects of spiritual trivialization at the hands of the massively large Euro-immigrant population" (216). Native objections to such plastic shamanism are well known; there is even a Native website, which hosts a list of traits by which a person can identify if s/he is a wannabe or a "twinkie." A similar website requests the public to report what it calls "Native American Culture Fraud" (Ponder, "Plastic Medicine Men"). According to Paula Gunn Allen this sort of New Age thinking

> substitutes white-think for Native philosophical/spiritual thought, attributing white assumptions and thought processes to us and our ancestors—without a hint that white cultural assumptions are neither universal nor necessarily shared. Thus continues the horrifying process of colonization, only now it's New Age shamanic thought masquerading as Native American in order to annihilate the Native mind. (96)

The novel also offers a critique of Euroamerican culture through an assessment of values, technology, history, and colonization from the Natives' point of view. Keeper identifies the Western world as "shiny and fast," a world that has got carried away with its inventive powers. As a result "*they lost touch with the rhythm of the earth, left their drums behind long time ago, forgot their old songs, their old teachings and got lost in the speed of things*" (3). It is this sense of lack, according to Keeper, which attracts the non-Native to Native culture. Notwithstanding all the progress that Euroamerican society stands for, it is also plagued by a spiritual hollowness that it constantly craves to fill. As mentioned earlier, Keeper sees Western culture as obsessed with appearances, with surfaces, and he cites this as the reason for cultural misunderstanding. For example,

when he refers to the Indian ritual of praying he says, "[t]alk about sweetgrass or smokin' the pipe to some people and they think us Indians are gettin' high all the time," and he locates this misconception in the cultural misunderstandings of the past:

> *[T]hem missionaries when they came here saw all these Indyuns ev'rywhere prayin' real strange. Strange to them anyway. Had big pipes they were passin' aroun' and sittin' there passin' smoke over themselves offa burnin' grass, moss and partsa trees. Some were going into sweat lodges. Prob'ly looked like little smokin' tents to them missionaries. Guess they couldn't figure out what was goin' on so they decided we all needed helpin' in a big way. Called us savages, heathens, pagans.* (74-5)

Keeper corrects this misapprehension by observing, "so when you see us Indyuns passin' that smoke over ourselves it's not getting' high, it's getting' deep" (78). Garnet talks about pre-Columbian Native history that never gets mentioned in any mainstream history book and observes, "Funny thing about them white historians is they always figure North American history started when Columbus landed here. Us we know better. The Ojibway people have been bush Indians forever and kinda settled into Northern Ontario long before Columbus even hearda Columbus" (6).[14] Keeper exposes the complicity between religion and colonization through his comic depiction of the dispossession of Native land:

> *Get on your knees an' pray, they [the missionaries] said. So those Indyuns back then they got on their knees outta respect for their visitors' ways. Us we do that. And they prayed and they prayed and they prayed....Wanted all their problems to disappear. When they looked up from all that prayin' they discovered all their land was gone. Up to then us Indyuns never figured the land was a problem but accordin' to the Great Book it musta been on accounta it was the first thing to disappear. Salvation and real estate been workin' hand in hand ever since that time Heh, heh, heh.* (75)

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[14] Keeper's observation interrupts the grand narrative of colonization and the discourse of "manifest destiny" by indicating the presence of Natives before the beginning of "history" in North America.

Keeper's depiction of the non-Natives who came as "visitors" but became the owners of the land through cheating the Native inhabitants counters the myths of *terra nullis* and *terra incognita*. Garnet underscores the importance of land in Native culture by pointing out the spiritual connection that Natives have with the earth:

> The reason the Indians want all these land claims settled is on accounta they wanna protect their connection with the land. It isn't on accounta they want all of North America back like some people believe. Keeper says nobody in their right mind wants something back that someone else has already wrecked. They just wanna protect their connection. Land is the most sacred thing in the Indian way of seeing. (156)

The cant of progress, which is the hallmark of Western civilization, is cited as inimical to healthy living; Garnet's mother regards the arrival of technology as an "electircal [sic] invasion" which has split apart too many families (6). Even Garnet, the city boy, after living for five years in White Dog has "learned more about things than I woulda if we had electricity and TV. You get to know each other pretty good when all you got is each other for entertainment" (7). The most damning critique, however, of the effect of non-Native culture on Natives is portrayed through Garnet himself: "Growing up in all-white homes, going to all-white schools, playing with all-white kids can get a guy to thinking and reacting all-white himself after a while. With no one pitching any information I just figured I was a brown white guy" (12). His early disassociation from the Native way of life and his subsequent growth as an "apple" gives rise to the peculiar scenario in which a Native sees his own people through the lens of the colonizer.[15] The description of his arrival at White Dog with his Afro, his smart clothes, and his White views about Natives raises grave identity issues despite its hilarity.

Aside from correcting mis/representations of the past, Keeper'n Me goes one step ahead by deploying these for the benefit of the mis/represented. One such example is right at the beginning of the novel when Keeper relates how he uses the dumb Indian act to protect his privacy and his wise Indian act to make money: "*I just play dumb Indyun and they [the tourists] leave me alone....I don't talk so romantic anymore 'less some of them rich Americans are ready to dish out cash to hear a* real *Indyun talk 'bout the old days*" (2). The act of (counter)appropriation is effected when Garnet tells us about the popularity of the Miracles, the band that defined the Motown sound in the 1960s and 70s, among the residents of White Dog and that "the rumour around here now is that the Miracles are actually an Indian group on accounta they got such good rhythm. The way it's told is, they got their name misspelled on their album covers. It's really the Maracles, like Chief Dan Maracle and his family from Shoal Lake" (117).

A discussion of the representation of non-Natives in this novel would not be complete without a mention of Dr and Mrs. Tacknyk. The only Whites in White Dog, aside from the transient school teachers who never last more than a year, the Tacknyks are a Ukrainian medical team. They arrived in White Dog ten years before Garnet, and what has made them stay on is not revealed.[16] All we know about them is that are the only

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[15] "Apple" is a derogatory term in Native circles and as Keeper tells us "Call'd them Apples on accounta they're red on the outside and white on the inside" (36). This term surfaces as well in the discussion of In Search of April Raintree.

[16] It is possible that the Tacknyks decision to stay on has something to do with the unfair treatment of Ukrainians by the Canadian government. "During World War I and after, between 1914 and 1920, the Canadian Government used the War Measures Act for the first time to intern over 8,000 men, women and children, the majority of whom [sic] were Ukrainians. This act also declared over 80,000 persons to be 'enemy aliens,' forcing them to register with authorities, carry identification documents, report to police on a regular

ones who have made an attempt to live like the rest of the residents and that they get invited to a lot of houses for supper "on accounta Doc's got a lotta pretty funny stories about his years as a medic in Korea and Mrs. Doc gets along good with the ladies" (81). Evidently, the Tacknyks have been embraced by the White Dog community because they have made an effort to be a part of it. In addition, the Doc's ability to tell stories and generate laughter integrates him with the community. Regardless of the fact that the Tacknyks are White, Wagamese does not intend to depict them as representative of a majority: the Tacknyks are exceptions which prove the norm. The presentation of Whites on the rez is a reversal of the presentation of Natives in the city: Natives in the city are a marginalized section of White society who usually end up in skid row or hang around bars, and are generally shunned by the inhabitants of the city. On the rez, however, the Whites are integrated into the community and made a part of it. Of course, the effort is two-sided, but rez society appears to be open to anyone who comes in good faith.

Humour, which is identified as an indispensable aspect of Native life, is rarely ever mentioned in non-Native narratives about Natives. The capacity of the Natives to endure their lot cheerfully, against all odds, is an index of their optimism. Wagamese's picture of rez life and his take on assimilation are different from those of Highway, but like the other novels in this chapter, Keeper'n Me emphasizes the importance of community in relation to identity. Despite approaches that distinguish her from Highway and Wagamese, questions of identity and assimilation form the core of Beatrice Culleton's In Search of April Raintree.

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basis and refrain from travel outside the country" ("Barbed Wire Solutions"). The internees were also used as forced labour to develop Canadian infrastructure.

(d) In Search of April Raintree

In Search of April Raintree is another counterwriting text that discusses the question of assimilation into White society, or rather the impossibility of it. Through the novel Culleton asks questions such as: What propels the Native toward assimilating into White society? Does it solve the "Native problem" or the Natives' problems of living in a White society? Does it imply equality of treatment? Does a Native have a third choice aside from assimilating or becoming a drunken Indian? Kenneth Lincoln notes that "[p]ressures on Indians to assimilate date further back than southwest mission ruins"[17] and that "[a] more insidious oppression threatens Indians today under melting-pot policies of assimilation: direct and indirect federal coercion of tribes to adapt to mainstream American culture" (86). Through a recounting of the lives of April and Cheryl Raintree Culleton shows how the Native gets the short end of the stick, irrespective of whether s/he chooses to assimilate or rejects it as a viable option.[18] According to Trinh T. Minh-ha, "All admittance of 'them' among 'us' is a hoax; a false incorporation that leaves 'them' barer than ever, if 'them' allows itself to nibble at the bait of Lies" (67).

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[17] The American commissioner of Indian Affairs in 1889 has this to say about the choices that Native peoples have in North America: "The Indians must conform to 'the white man's ways,' peaceably if they will, forcibly if they must. They must adjust themselves to their environment, and conform their mode of living substantially to our civilization. This civilization may not be the best possible, but it is the best the Indians can get. They can not escape it, and must either conform to it or be crushed by it" (qtd. in Lincoln 85).

[18] Margery Fee in the opening sections of her article "Upsetting Fake Ideas: Jeannette Armstrong's Slash and Beatrice Culleton's In Search of April Raintree" makes a similar observation and calls assimilation a "fake idea" (168).

Much like Keeper'n Me in its presentation of Children's Aid Societies, foster homes, unkind foster parents, and a hostile non-Native society, April Raintree differs from the former in its dark vision of what it means to be a Métis in White society. The Métis were the product of the miscegenation between Natives and Europeans in western Canada. More specifically, "the Métis were the offspring of the French Canadians in the North West Company and Indian wives; the country born were the descendants of English or Scottish and Indian marriages" (Miller 126). Consequently, the Métis developed a unique culture that was neither wholly Native nor entirely European. However, this resulted in their becoming "a group poised between the white and the indigenous societies and belonging to neither" (Giraud x). Despite their lack of affiliation with the Natives, the Métis shared grievances with them and this brought them closer to their Native half. Also, the presence of a common aggressor motivated these two nations to combine forces that resulted in well-remembered historical events, such as the Northwest Rebellion of 1885. April Raintree voices this sense of identity in her exchange with Roger Maddison where she tells him that she is Métis: "But what have the Métis people got? Nothing. Being a half-breed, you feel only the short-comings of both sides. You feel you're a part of the drunken Indians you see on Main Street. And if you inherit brown skin like Cheryl did, you identify with the Indian people more" (157). April Raintree also differs from Wagamese's novel in its lack of a healing community, and to a degree it is this lack that is responsible for the fractured lives of the two Raintree sisters and April's crisis of identity. Unlike Highway's two works, which focus primarily on the effect of Christianity on Natives, Wagamese and Culleton's novels are more concerned with the negative influence of other aspects of White society on Native peoples. These

two novels also underscore the effects that negative stereotypes have on Natives who live in cities and away from their communities, and how these lead to self-hate and alienation. By doing so, these writers participate in the assigning of blame, which is an important function of counterwriting texts. Rick Harp in "Native by Nature?" notes, "it is when Aboriginal peoples feel compelled by their colonial condition to, in effect, internalize its discourse about who we are, that we embark on what can only be described as a form of institutionalized self-hatred" (49). Keeper'n Me and April Raintree also share the theme of the "wannabe" and are engaged with finding the causes that create this need. April Raintree is about images, appearances, and surfaces and how these affect the choices that the characters make. While I am aware of the fact that Beatrice Culleton Mosionier is Métis, as are the Raintree sisters, as opposed to the other writers in this chapter who are Native, it is my understanding that most Métis identify more with the Natives and their socio-political history has significant similarities with that of the Natives. Métis writers such as Maria Campbell, Marilyn Dumont, Emma Laroque, Gregory Scofield, Jordan Wheeler, among others have consciously chosen their Native heritage over the non-Native, and works by them attest to their sense of identity with Native causes and commitment to Native peoples. Not surprisingly, therefore, Louis Riel is cited in the novel as the leader of both the Natives and the Métis given their identical grievances against the Canadian government.

The childhood of the two Raintree sisters, April and Cheryl, is fairly happy but marred by alcoholism. A father suffering from tuberculosis and a mother who is plagued with health problems represent the tip of the iceberg of troubles for the Raintree family. In addition, their financial troubles are compounded by the frequent drinking bouts of their

parents, who, while they are affectionate when sober, are not the most responsible of people. At this stage the intervention of the Children's Aid to remove the girls from home and put them in an orphanage seems to be a necessary evil. However, Culleton informs us that Alice, their mother, was "raised in a residential school and worked as a housekeeper for the priest in her home town" and Henry, their father, had contracted tuberculosis, which "had caused him to lose everything he had worked for"(10-11). While Alice's stay at the Residential school is not delved into, the inclusion is definitely not superfluous given its history of the abuse of Native children. The oblique suggestion is that the deplorable condition of the Raintrees is caused by living in an unsympathetic society. Living off welfare, unable to find jobs, and moving from one rundown house to another, the Raintrees enact the stereotypical trajectory of dysfunctional Natives in the city. It is the squalor of her childhood that makes April connect affluence with Whiteness, a connection for which she pays dearly. In addition, half-known truths about the reasons for removal from their family, and an innate desire to have no connection with the past propel April further toward the world of assimilation. Her sister, Cheryl, on the other hand is caught up in the romanticized notions of Native culture, which is also a White construct because she gets most of her information from books, and is devastated when faced with the bitter truths about Natives.

The world of April Raintree appears to have two kinds of Whites—the kind and the wicked. Their kindness and their wickedness are assessed on the basis of their interaction with the Raintree sisters. And so, we have the Dions, Mrs. MacAdams, the Steindalls, Mr. Wendell, and Roger Maddison who fall into the category of the kind, while Mrs. Semple, Mrs. DeRosier and her children, Bob and Mother Radcliff, and the men who

rape April fall into the category of the wicked. This division of characters into "good" and "evil" does seem rather reductive and simplistic; however, the logic of the novel demands the presence of such characters to explain successfully the choices that the two sisters make in the novel.

Culleton goes to great lengths to establish that the main reason behind the divergent choices that April and Cheryl make is the kind of people they interact with at an impressionable age. As most of these people are White, their choices are motivated by the common stereotypes about Natives in society. And so, April who is subjected to the negative stereotypes rejects her identity as Native and resolves to have nothing to do with it, while Cheryl who has been brought up on the sentimental ideas regarding Indianness adopts it with gusto and blocks out the reality of being Native in a non-Native society. In short, while April gets too much of the reality of being Native, Cheryl gets too much of the Imaginary Indian. Therefore, the observations which the sisters make regarding Natives smacks of White influence. For example, April's comment regarding alcoholism and Indians reveals the extent to which she has internalized the rationalizations of the dominant culture: "It seems to me that what I'd read and what I'd heard indicated that Métis and Indians were inclined to be alcoholics. That's because they were a weak people. Oh, they were put down more than anyone else but then, didn't they deserve it?" (49). Her list of what it means to be Native is a litany of deprivation and negation: "Being a half-breed meant being poor and dirty; It meant being weak and having to drink. It meant being ugly and stupid. It meant living off White people. And giving your children to white people to look after. It meant having to take all the crap white people gave" (49). While April sees the effects, she is blind to the causes. Her list is composed partly

from experience and partly from what she has been repeatedly told by Mrs. DeRosier. While she disagrees with Mrs. DeRosier's assessment of half-breeds when it comes to herself, she agrees with the description in general. Jodi Lundgren notes that "the only time April refers to herself as a half-breed is 'to spite' the DeRosier children when they have done poorly at school" (64). Her taunt, "Hey Maggie, you told us that half-breeds were stupid. Well, if we're stupid, you must lack brains altogether" (57), while it challenges the stereotype, also "reiterates the terms of the original putdown: 'we're stupid'" (Lundgren 64). This again exposes the limitation of the counterwriting text, because it fails to destabilize established hierarchies of power. April's way out of this dilemma is to renounce her heritage and "pass for a pure white person" (49). Contrary to what April thinks, the decision to assimilate is not a simple change in lifestyle: it involves the rejection of culture, history, and family, and the internalization of "the belief in her own 'Native' nature as inferior in a way that maintains and reproduces the power of the dominant elite" (Fee 176). The extent to which she does this is apparent in her treatment of Cheryl once they start living together.

Cheryl, on the other hand, immerses herself in the history of the Métis, writes articles, and makes presentations that correct the images of mainstream history.[19] However, her radicalism gets her into trouble at school when she challenges the images of the colonizer's history book:

> 'If this is history, how come so many Indian tribes were wiped out? How come they haven't got their land anymore? How come their food supplies were wiped out? Lies! Lies! Lies! Your history books don't say how the white people

[19] Cheryl's efforts to intervene in the *grand recits* of history and her challenge to the Imaginary Indian are, perhaps, not that effective because she is hemmed-in by a two-fold structure of domination: one is the history written by the colonizer and the other is the institution, which is created to disseminate the history.

> destroyed the Indian way of life. That's all you white people can do is teach a bunch of lies to cover your own tracks!' (57)

For her fearless opposition to history's lies she is strapped not only by the principal but also by Mrs. DeRosier. However, Cheryl tends to romanticize the past and this is ultimately responsible for her disintegration as an individual. For example, when it comes to her parents, Cheryl envisages them in the following manner: "I always think of Dad as a strong man. He would have been a chief or a warrior in the olden days, if he had been pure Indian. I'd sure like to know what kind of Indians we are. And Mom was so beautiful to me she was like an Indian princess" (91). As the reality of the skid row sinks in, Cheryl observes in her diary:

> *The more I see of these streets, the more I wonder if April isn't right. Just maybe. Better to live that empty life than live out on the streets....Sometimes I can't help it, I feel like April does, I despise these people, these gutter-creatures. They are losers. But there is a reason why they are the way they are. Everything they once had has been taken away from them. And the white bureaucracy has helped create the image of parasitic natives.* (215-16; original italics)

The discovery that her father is also a "gutter creature" and not an Indian warrior is the last straw for her (218).

April's decision to assimilate brings up the issue of appearances and images: April can choose to pass as white because she has pale skin, unlike Cheryl who is dark. This lands April in the second dilemma, which is how is she going to pass herself off as White when her sister looks every inch the Indian. Moreover, April's decision shows the influence of images on her. She has accepted the negative images at face value without investigating the causes behind them. As the novel progresses, this aspect of April's nature influences her decisions, some of which prove to be disastrous.

Culleton establishes the negative effect of social constructions on Native children from the very beginning of the novel. The White characters with whom April comes into contact express stereotypical ideas about half breeds which influences April's decision to reject her heritage; for example, in the orphanage her hair is checked for bugs and the nun tells her "Don't gulp your food down like a little animal" (19). April is sent away to live with the Dions while Cheryl goes to live with the MacAdams. While her stay in the foster home of the Dions is a pleasant experience, April is soon relocated to the DeRosiers. April's situation in the DeRosier household is akin, as April herself remarks, to Cinderella (43). Her education in stereotypes regarding Natives begins the moment she sets foot in the DeRosier household: Mrs. DeRosier informs her on arrival, "I know you half-breeds, you love to wallow in filth" (39). From then on April is abused, physically and mentally, and such is the hold of stereotypes that no one is prepared to believe her side of the story. If the Dions were the proverbial angels in human form, then the DeRosiers outdo the devils. Culleton is unmerciful in her characterization of the DeRosiers who do not appear to possess one iota of goodness or one feature that would mitigate their outright lack of humanity. As a result the DeRosiers come across as the stereotypical members of White society who see the Natives as nothing more than a problem. This negative portrayal of non-Natives follows the counterwriting strategy of allocating blame. And so, Culleton's characters hold White society responsible for their predicament.

It is from Mrs. DeRosier that April learns that half-breeds are dirty, sexually loose, alcoholic, irresponsible, stupid, and lazy. On the contrary, Mrs. MacAdams, who is herself Métis, teaches Cheryl to be proud of her culture and her people. Mrs. DeRosier's

lessons are supplemented by Mrs. Semple's lectures to the two sisters. Mrs. Semple is the social worker assigned to April who determines where April is to be relocated once Mrs. Dion is declared unfit to take care of her. Mrs. Semple is unsympathetic to April's complaints about the DeRosiers and she outrightly rejects her pleas as lies. Instead she gives the two sisters a lecture on the "native girl syndrome":

> "It starts out with the fighting and the running away, the lies. Next come the accusations that everyone in the world is against you. There are the sullen uncooperative silences, the feeling sorry for yourselves. And when you go on your own, you get pregnant right away or you can't find or keep jobs. So you'll start with alcohol and drugs. From there, you get into shoplifting and prostitution and in and out of jails. You'll live with men who abuse you. And on it goes. You'll end up like your parents, living off society....If you don't smarten up, you'll end up in the same place as they do. Skid row !"[20] (66-7)

In an uncommon instance of insight, April notes that "if those other girls had the same kind of people surrounding them as we did, I wouldn't blame them one bit" (67). Mrs. Semple's take on the "native girl syndrome" is that the girls themselves are responsible for their state. Mrs. Semple's speech can also be read as a veiled threat to the girls to assimilate if they want their future to be secure. The fact that these girls come from broken families, live with people who would rather not have them around, and are inundated with negative stereotypes seems to escape her notice. Predictably, Mrs. Semple sees the effects but not the causes. The causes are revealed through the trajectory of Cheryl's life, which more or less follows the course of the syndrome. This revelation serves to humanize the victims of the syndrome and assign blame where it is due. The

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[20] According to Mike Wright Skid row "is a term that apparently began in Eureka, California, where a trail of greased skids was used to haul logs to the saw mills. Skid row, or 'skid road,' as it was sometimes called, became that district in any town containing brothels and saloons catering to the wants of loggers and lumbermen. Today, it's a general term for any down-and-out section of town" (113)

pre-written script which Native girls are to enact is provided by the dominant culture.[21] The script also serves to foreground the difficulty of being Native in an insensitive society and provides the catalyst for April's decision to assimilate.

Rick Harp notes that "colonialism had a fundamentally pernicious impact on the way most members of the dominant Euro-Canadian society see and act toward Native peoples, but, more insidiously, on the way Native peoples look upon and act toward one another" (47). Garnet Raven and April Raintree are Natives who have internalized the stereotypes about Natives and joined the ranks—if only temporarily—of the non-Natives to condemn their own. Their decision to disown their Nativeness is forced upon them by a society bent upon erasing Native culture. Both novels show how White society makes life for a Native difficult in order that s/he may capitulate and assimilate. However, assimilation is no guarantee for egalitarian treatment, as April finds out during her sojourn at the Radcliff mansion.[22] Bob Radcliff, April's "Prince Charming" appears in her life one fine day and sweeps her off her feet (109). Bob is unconcerned about April's ancestry and April-Cinderella's story appears to be following the fairy tale course till she encounters Mother Radcliff. It soon becomes evident that Bob has eloped and married April against his mother's wishes. Before we as readers can pat him on his shoulder for such progressive behaviour, we are told that Bob married April to get back at his mother for not letting him marry the girl of his choice, Heather Langdon. Mother Radcliff disapproves of April but accepts her nevertheless into her household. The situation

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[21] Jodi Lundgren notes, "white society projects the narrative of the 'native girls' syndrome' on to Cheryl and April" (74).

becomes perilous when Mother Radcliff realizes that her son has married a half-breed. Not only has her son gone against her wishes but has compounded the ignominy by breaking the rules of racial purity. Mother Radcliff's preoccupation with surfaces is revealed when she invites Heather home and quizzes her about her future plans. Mother Radcliff is prepared to let her son marry Heather because she does not want a half-breed for a daughter-in-law. As she tells Heather: "'Didn't you notice her sister? They're Indians, Heather. Well, not Indians, but half-breeds, which is almost the same thing....That's the trouble with mixed races, you never know how they're going to turn out. And I would simply dread being grandmother to a bunch of little half-breeds!'" (126). High society comes off in a very poor light when Cheryl is introduced into it. Its shallow and callow observations about Indians are based on established stereotypes. Culleton uses the following incident at the party to expose the patent attitude of Whites with regard to Natives: "Then two men came over and one asked Cheryl what it was like being an Indian. Before she could reply, the other man voiced his opinion and the two walked away, discussing their concepts of native life without having allowed Cheryl to say one thing" (116-7). The silencing of the Native woman's voice and the voicing of a White male's opinion in its stead brings up important questions of race and gender. Not only are the two men not interested in what Cheryl has to say in response to their question, they already know the answer they want.

The non-viability of assimilation for April is made apparent on two accounts: the first is the episode with the Radcliffs, which has already been discussed, and the other is her

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[22] April's change in social status, which is effected by a use of tools that Euroamerican society provides, is a partial example of stealing the horses. It becomes complete at the end of the novel when she resolves to use these tools to serve Native ends.

rape. As her assailants violate her she is called "bitch," "squaw," "little Indian," "little cunt," "little savage," and it is amply clear that the violence being performed is not only against a woman but specifically against a Native woman (140-43). The conjecture is strengthened by the inside knowledge the primary rapist claims to have regarding the sexual preferences of Native women: "These squaws really dig this kind of action. They play hard to get and all the time they love it" (143). Not surprisingly, the rapist in his statement claims that he believed April was a prostitute and so he thought it was all right to have sex with her. The most remarkable aspect of this episode is April's reaction to it. Just after she is abducted she wonders if the men "knew I was part Indian? Just because I had long black hair?" (140); and later she wonders "for the hundredth time why they had kept on calling [her] squaw. Was it obvious?" (161). She is also surprised that she was "mistaken" for a Native (161). April assumes that her passage into White society will be eased by her skin colour; however, the events in the novel show that having the same skin colour is no barrier against racism. April through the rape is re-inscribed into the category from which she wants to escape, which is the category of Native. As the fakeness[23] of assimilation sinks in, "April finally constructs her identity, like so many colonized people, through a reaction. She is not allowed to be white; she refuses to be that native constructed for her by white discourse" (Fee 176).

April Raintree presents the fates of the assimilating and the resisting Native caught between the limited options and prewritten script provided by the dominant society. Like the other texts in this section this novel also strives to present the damaging effects of Euroamerican culture on Native peoples through a critique of Western institutions and

[23] To borrow a term from Margery Fee.

attitudes. The most effective way to do this, which all three writers seem to favour, is to make a Native character an "apple" and expose the hollowness of stereotypes through the character. The most remarkable aspect of Culleton's novel is the explosion of the myth of assimilation which is often the carrot dangled before the Native. Far from resolving all problems, April Raintree shows how assimilation creates a set of new problems for the Native.

The four counterwriting texts in this chapter are all heading toward the same goal of exposing the motivations behind the stereotypes about "Indians" which have had a profound negative influence on Natives. The writers, while they tackle the dreadfulness of the colonial past and present, look forward to a better future, symbolically presented through the presence of a child toward the ending. The nightmarish sequence of events in Dry Lips ends with a tableau in which Zachary Keechigeesik, his wife Hera, and their infant daughter are sitting together as a family. According to the stage directions, "the last thing we see is this beautiful naked Indian man lifting this naked baby Indian girl up in the air, his wife sitting beside them watching and laughing. Slow fade out . . . . Finally, in the darkness, the last sound we hear is the baby's laughing voice, magnified on tape to fill the entire theatre" (129-30). Similarly, April Raintree ends with April's encounter with Henry Liberty Lee, Cheryl's son, and her promise that for Henry and herself "there would be a tomorrow. And it would be better" (228). In this, these texts are not without hope or the optimism for a better future. However, in their attempt to configure Euroamerican society as the culprit, these writers tend to re-inscribe the Native in the position of the victim. In addition, the dominant society makes the calls in the stories, which appears to re-instate the colonizer-colonized dyad. However, as discussed

in the introduction to this chapter, this is one of the pitfalls of using the Self-Other paradigm. Whether Native writers are able to tackle this weakness in other texts remains to be seen in the following chapters. The next chapter deals with the phenomenon of "wannabeism" and its treatment by Native writers. Unlike the texts discussed in this chapter, which are serious in their approach, with the exception of Keeper'n Me, the texts in the following chapter are inflected with humour and tackle yet another act of cultural appropriation. This is, of course, not to say that the humour necessarily makes everybody laugh. However, it does upset the established power structure through the undercutting of its Euroamerican characters.

Chapter 3: The Euroamerican as Wannabe

The "wannabe" is a symptom/manifestation of the "going Native" syndrome. In Shari M. Huhndorf's view, "Over the last century, going native has become a cherished American tradition, an important—even necessary—means of defining European-American identities and histories" (2). Going Native/primitive has been and is a popular form of denial for Euroamericans: a form of disassociating themselves from the colonial history of North America. This phenomenon "expresses European America's anxiety about the conquest and serves in part to recast this terrible history by creating the illusion of white society's innocence" (Huhndorf 21). By emulating/imitating the Native the Euroamerican seeks to keep Native culture (or those aspects which are of interest), if not the individual, alive and thus make it a part of North American (read "White") culture. According to Oneida scholar Pam Colorado, "The process is ultimately intended to supplant Indians, even in areas of their own culture and spirituality. In the end, non-Indians will have complete power to define what is and what is not Indian, even for Indians" (Churchill 216). Other Native critics such as Wendy Rose (Hopi), Jimmie Durham (Cherokee), Ward Churchill (Greek/Cherokee Métis), Russell Means (Oglala Lakota), and Vine Deloria Jr. (Standing Rock Sioux) have written against "wannabeism," which for them is a blatant act of cultural appropriation or theft. To stop this, the American Indian Movement passed a resolution in 1984 "condemning the laissez-faire use of Native ceremonies and/or ceremonial objects by anyone not sanctioned by traditional indigenous spiritual leaders," and the Lakota Nation made a "Declaration of War Against Exploiters of Lakota Spirituality" in 1993 (Churchill 217).

Intriguingly, the premise behind emulating the Indian has seen radical changes in the last century. Huhndorf in her captivating account Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination traces the change in the phenomenon of going Native in North America. She starts with an account of the World Fairs of 1876 and 1893 and identifies the representation of Native Americans in the exhibits, with regard to the Euroamerican public, as the opposition between primitivism and civilization. In her words,

> [T]he exposition promised that the dominance of (white) civilization over (Native) savagery was an inevitable part of the 'universal law of progress,' the 'manifest destiny' of white Americans. By indicating that progress (rather than European-American acquisitiveness) underlay the conquest, the exhibits also conveniently deflected difficult ethical questions about centuries of slaughter of Native peoples and usurpation of their resources. (31)

On the contrary, the twentieth century New Life Expo tours, "a descendent of the nineteenth-century expositions," suggest that the relationship between Native America and European America has changed during the last century (Huhndorf 162). In the New Life Expo, "rather than displaying Natives as the West's inferior others, New Agers claim that colonized peoples, including Natives, are in many respects fundamentally superior to their Western counterparts" (Huhndorf 162). Irrespective of how they may be viewed, the Natives' position as the exploited undergoes little or no change.[1] Whether the propounders of scientific evolutionism hold the fort or the New Agers, the Natives are imperilled by colonization from both avenues. Marianna Torgovnick cites the anxiety with "the spoilation of the earth" as the "single concern that validated the Indian perspective and made the white perspective suspect," in addition to other political events and social movements taking place in North America in the 1970s (Primitive Passions

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[1] This refers back to the claim about sympathetic representations by non-Natives, and proves that even non-negative representations can be injurious for the Native. (Refer to fn. 10 in Chapter 1).

138). The phenomenal growth in the number of Americans claiming Native descent between 1970 and 1990 is attributed by both Torgovnick and Huhndorf to anxiety specifically related to ecological imbalance and more generally to survival itself. The collective nostalgia for the Native/primitive was also fuelled by the media which "played an important role in the emergence of Indian pride and White sympathy for Indians" (Torgovnick, Primitive Passions 138). It is intriguing to note that both Torgovnick in Primitive Passions (1997) and Huhndorf in Going Native (2001) choose to discuss Kevin Costner's 1990 blockbuster Dances With Wolves as a film that is responsible for promoting the idea of White Americans as inheritors of Native culture and not just its destroyers. While both critics agree that Costner's depiction of Indians counters the stereotypical negative imagings, they also highlight the disturbing manner in which the categories of "white" and "Indian" are blurred. According to Torgovnick, the film

> include[s] men and women who are coded "Indian,"either by adoption and long acculturation, or else by their instinctive sympathies. These whites share the Native Americans' strong, emphatic response to nature. What's more, and very important, the whites are allowed to stand at the movie's end as inheritors and perpetuators of Indian ways after the actual Indians are dead or as good as dead. (139)

The term "wanna-be" is etymologically of recent birth; the Merriam Webster Dictionary locates 1981 as the year of its coinage—a shortened form of "want to be"—and defines it as "a person who wants or aspires to be someone or something else or who tries to look or act like someone else." While wannabes abound in day-to-day life, the term takes on a very specific resonance when used in relation with Native America and Native Americans who have had their share of wannabes in Grey Owl, Buffalo Child Long

Lance, Forrest Carter, Hyemeyohsts Storm, and Lynn Andrews[2] among others. While superficially undistinguishable from the phenomenon of going Native, "wannabeism" is less scrupulous in its motives and dictated more by individual fancies and requirements. The only other nation I can think of which has held a spiritual fascination for the West is India,[3] which has had its own share of spiritual leaders and charlatans but never in the history of spiritual gurus has a non-Indian claimed to be one. This phenomenon, so peculiar to Native America, has been studied by Native and non-Native critics under the headings of "going Native" (Shari M. Huhndorf), "whiteshamanism" (Geary Hobson),

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[2]Grey Owl (1888-1938), or Archibald Stansfeld Belaney, an Englishman by birth and a self-proclaimed Apache, was a noted Canadian conservationist. Famous for his articles and books on wildlife, Grey Owl was a controversial figure in his lifetime and in death. His masquerade was discovered after his death in 1938. He remains a fascinating and unusual historical figure.
Buffalo Child Long Lance (1890-1932) was born Sylvester Clark Long in North Carolina, USA. His parents were of mixed white, native and possibly black ancestry. In 1922 he was adopted by the Bloods and given the name Buffalo Child. From 1923 on he presented himself as a Blood. His autobiography, Long Lance, describing himself as a Plains Indian, was published in 1928. His imposture was discovered only after his death in 1932.
Forrest Carter (1925-79), also known as Asa Earl Carter, became famous as the author of the autobiography The Education of Little Tree. The book purportedly was an autobiographical account of growing up in Tennessee with Cherokee grandparents. First published in 1976, it was considered by many to be an instant classic of Native American literature. After Carter died, it was revealed that he was a white supremacist, a Ku Klux Klan member, and that his "autobiography" was a work of fiction.
Hyemeyohsts Storm (1933-) is a self-acclaimed Cheyenne. He has been widely criticized by Indian activists who consider him a false teacher and an ersatz Indian who has commercialized and distorted Native spirituality through his books and seminars.
Lynn Andrews, a Beverly Hills actress and self-appointed shaman, claimed that she had served as an apprentice to a Cree medicine woman, Agnes Whistling Elk, who had taught her about Cree spiritual traditions and medicine. Her series of five books beginning with Medicine Woman earned her fame, though she also became the center of a controversy regarding the exploitation of Native spirituality. Her name along with Storms frequently appear in activist blacklists.

[3] A fact recently corroborated by the Hollywood production titled The Guru (2002) which deals with Euroamerica's fascination with the mystical East.

"playing Native" (Rayna Green), "going primitive" (Marianna Torgovnick), and "Indian hobbyists" (Ward Churchill). According to William McLaughlin,

> Wannabes are people who have not had significant personal exposure to a Native American culture, but who imagine themselves to be participants in that culture and/or its worldview. The belief is usually based upon what they have been taught in various books, seminars and workshops, conducted by Indians and non-Indians alike. At present, the nations most widely imitated by Wannabes are the Lakota and Cherokee. This is probably due to a spate of recent films like A Man Called Horse series and Dances with Wolves in the former instance, and the large number of people claiming Cherokee descent in the latter.

The definition provided by McLaughlin highlights two things: first that wannabes are creations that have no basis in first-hand experience but are textually generated, and second, a wannabe works on the assumption that "Indianness" is something that can be acquired and requires no prerequisites. The wannabe generates yet another stereotype of the Indian in the process of emulating Indianness, aside from maintaining the accepted and popular stereotypes regarding Natives; the most popular Indian in wannabe circles is the ecological-mystical Indian. The paramount irony of this espousal is that the wannabe considers him/herself a friend of the Indian, and proceeds to show his/her friendship by speaking for the Indians and about the Indians, instead of letting the Indians speak for themselves. Wannabes also "help" the Indians by keeping the age-old ideas about them current by disseminating information about the "idyllic" Indian past. In other words, the wannabe is no different from the non-Native connoisseurs of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, who went about collecting and preserving Indian artifacts for posterity, but did nothing to save the Indians themselves. Wannabes come in all shades and intensities depending on the level of their involvement with being Indian. While the standard and most popular wannabes are the plastic shamans, spiritual gurus, spurious medicine men, and tribal elders, all of whom are incidentally found on the internet, the

less acknowledged ones are those who hang dreamcatchers in their cars, collect "Indian" artifacts, have a private totem or a medicine pouch, or claim to have a Native American ancestor, among other things.[4] In some cases they are harmless but in others more harmful than imaginable. One of the injurious effect of wannabeism is the proliferation of "experts" on Indian matters who purport to know more about Indians than the Indians themselves.[5] Lakota scholar Vine Deloria Jr. notes:

> The realities of Indian belief and existence have become so misunderstood and distorted at this point that when a real Indian stands up and speaks the truth at any given moment, he or she is not only unlikely to be believed, but will probably be contradicted and 'corrected' by the citation of some non-Indian and totally inaccurate 'expert.' More, young Indians in universities are now being trained to see themselves and their cultures in terms prescribed by such experts rather than in the traditional terms of the tribal elders. (Rose 404)

Wannabes figure in one way or the other in most works by Native writers. Arguably, the textually-generated wannabe can be seen as the Native rejoinder to the Imaginary Indian, with the caveat that the wannabe has more of an investment in reality than the Imaginary Indian. Native writers use the wannabe as a stereotype in much the same way that non-Native writers use the Imaginary Indian. Such usage evokes the concept of stealing the horses by showing the Self as it is seen through the eyes of the Other. Of course, the Self finds neither comfort nor praise in the revelation. The definition of the wannabe, as already discussed, is a fluid one with osmotic boundaries. It would not be amiss to state that a wannabe could be any non-Native who possesses set notions about Indianness and considers them as definitive. A wannabe could also be a person who

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[4] http://www.geocities.com/shabak_waxtju/twinkie.html is an excellent webpage for sizing up who qualifies as a wannabe. It is fairly apparent after a reading of the descriptions that most Americans are wannabes in one degree or the other.

[5] Deloria's comment echoes Keeper's critique of non-Native misappropriations of Native spirituality in Wagamese's Keeper'n Me. Refer to pp. 128-29.

believes that a Native person by virtue of being Native has certain innate qualities that can be shared by living with or marrying him/her. The most popular example of the wannabe in Native literature is the tourist.[6] Aside from this figure most Native texts have characters which expose certain traits that classify them as wannabes. Colleen and Dale in Drew Hayden Taylor's alterNatives (2000) and Karen and George Morningstar in Thomas King's Green Grass, Running Water (1993) are examples of wannabes. It is, however, George who exhibits the worst traits of wannabeism through his blatant disrespect for Native culture and his gross objectification of Native spirituality.

(a) alterNatives

In Taylor's play Colleen is characterized as a Jewish professor of Native Literature in her mid-thirties who has a budding romantic relationship with Angel Wallace, a twenty-four year old Native writer. The play is a dramatization of the events that occur when Colleen invites two of her friends and two of Angel's to a dinner party at her house. Predictably, her friends, Dale and Michelle, are white academics and his, Yvonne and Bobby, are "alterNatives."[7] Dale Cartland, a vegetarian computer programmer in his early forties, is Michelle Spencer's "partner" (19). Michelle is a vegetarian veterinarian in her mid-thirties and a good friend of Colleen's. Aside from the usual stereotypes regarding relationships where the man is comparatively younger than the woman (Colleen is accused by Yvonne of mothering Angel), the Colleen-Angel relationship also presents the stereotype of the non-Native "suggesting" how the Native should lead his/her

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[6] This topic has been discussed in the previous chapter.

[7] The play offers a definition of "alterNatives" which is "a new breed of warriors who have an allegiance to the truth, rather than tradition" (57).

life. The play attacks also assumptions about Native peoples and exposes the alacrity with which these assumptions are elevated to the level of truisms. Through the interchanges between the characters Colleen divulges her wannabe traits as does Dale. However, the irony of the matter is that neither sees him/herself as a wannabe while both consider themselves "friends" of the Natives. It is fairly evident that Colleen regards herself as the superior half of the relationship in terms of years, education, and experience. However her knowledge about Indians is textual, as Angel obliquely suggests when he offers to teach her "an old Indian trick," and tells her that she "should hang out with more old Indians" when she tells him that she has never heard of it (12-13). Colleen's preoccupation with all things Native is illustrated through Angel's remark "[t]hat can be said of so many things in your life" when she opts to "start off with a red [wine]" (12). Her solution to the rejections from publishers to whom Angel sends his science fiction stories is "you should write something about your experiences in the Native community and I can guarantee that will get their attention" (16). Yvonne hits the nail on its head, rather forcefully, when she exposes Colleen's complicity in the academy and accuses her of "ghettoizing" Native writers: "So you, as a white university Native Lit professor, want our Angel, a Native writer to write specifically about Native people and the Native community. Sounds a bit like ghettoizing. Do you think Jewish people should only write about Jewish things?" (104). The charge seems justified in the light of Colleen's preceding remark to Angel: "You have such potential, you could create the great Canadian aboriginal novel, but instead you want to squander it away on this silly genre [science fiction]" (102).

Colleen's insistence that Angel should "broaden his horizons" takes the form of her providing him with books to read about Indians (37). In doing so, Colleen assumes the position of the "expert" who knows more about Indians than the Indians themselves.[8] The titles of these books, such as The Dispossessed and How a People Die, show that these books deal with the dying, vanishing Indian theme. As Angel succinctly sums it up: "All these books you keep giving me have either some quaint legend or contain yet another adventure in an oppressed, depressed, and suppressed Native village" (37). Ironically, Colleen assumes that Angel will "enjoy" reading these books (37). Colleen's evident surprise when Angel tells her that he has no clue about how to cook moose further exposes Colleen as a wannabe. Her politically correct and rather hilariously articulated question "What kind of Native Aboriginal First Nations Indigenous person are you?" illustrates her primary interest in Angel, which is that he is Native. Her preconceived notions about Angel and her concern with authenticity prove her obsession with all things Indian. The stage directions which include "*a well-stocked bookshelf, and various Native knick-knacks [that] are scattered throughout the house*,"[9] and Angel's observation that "I see a dreamcatcher but no Star of David or Menorah [in the house]" further attest to the above (9, 112). Colleen romanticizes her relationship with Angel in an attempt to invalidate the age difference between them and her expression of it has a distinct touch of New Age spiritualism: "I like to think that I have a young soul and Angel has an old one, so somewhere in the middle we meet up" (33).

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[8] Colleen's position in the play resonates with Vine Deloria's assessment of experts on Native matters mentioned earlier.

[9] Italics in text.

In addition to Dale's unwittingly perceptive remark regarding Colleen's wannabe proclivities, "Colleen's Native books, her moose. It almost makes you wonder who's the Native here" (71), Colleen is certified as a wannabe in the conversation between Angel, Bobby, and Yvonne:

> Bobby: Hey Angel, nice collection of books. Yours?
> Angel: What do you think?
> Bobby: I don't think so.
> Angel: Colleen's.
> Yvonne: Wannabe?
> Angel: Literature professor.
> Yvonne: Almost as bad. Native Lit?
> Angel: Yeah. (45-6)

While Angel does point out that Colleen is "better than most" the peremptory manner in which she is dismissed as a wannabe by the Native characters is a reminder of the Natives' lack of tolerance and objections to wannabes. McLaughlin provides this graphic example as a plausible reason for the objections:

> [I]magine finding yourself beset by a gang of, say, ten large men while walking down the street with your family. Further suppose that, in addition to robbing you, they begin beating you with an assortment of baseball bats, blackjacks, etc. As you cry for help, desperate in your fear that your family was going to be killed or maimed, a person happens by who is from another country. Instead of calling for help or attempting to rescue you and your family, he begins asking questions about the nature of the Roman Catholic Wedding Mass.
> In addition to doubting the person's sanity, would you not be justified in a bit of frustration and anger at his unwillingness to even acknowledge your desperate situation? This is how many living in Native communities feel about Wannabes. Seekers love "Native culture" when it's in the form of the feel-good narcissism of a New Age sweatlodge or weekend retreat, but are strangely absent when it comes to a fight to preserve Native land from destruction or theft, or a blanket drive for old folks freezing on reservations. (n. pag.)

Marianna Torgovnick makes a similar critique when she observes that "With regard to Indians...the New Age typically imitates certain ceremonies, rituals, and attitudes; it does not, to sketch a different kind of possibility, support determined efforts to return the land

of what is now the United States to its original owners" (Primitive Passions 187). The lack of a political agenda in the New Age and an excessive focus on spiritual matters permits the appropriation of Native culture while distancing it from Native problems. Yvonne, who is playing a game of tug-of-war with Colleen over Angel, is especially harsh in her appraisal of Colleen. When the conversation turns to German fascination with Natives, Yvonne mentions W.P. Kinsella, a non-Native writer who has come under fire from Native writers who object to his stereotypical and negative characterization of Native peoples in his novels, and Colleen replies, "We won't even get into that. I'm a hundred percent on your side about him" (51). As Yvonne is quick to highlight, Colleen is working on the assumption that she knows Yvonne's point of view, which is bound to be that of the majority of Natives:[10]

> Yvonne: My side? How do you even know what side I'm on?
> Colleen: Well...uh...I assumed because of the controversy surrounding his work...And you are First Nations...
> Yvonne: Yes?
> Colleen: Perhaps I'm getting ahead of myself here. What is your position about Kinsella?
> Yvonne: Exactly what you think. I just find it interesting that you can assume an opinion of mine just by the culture I come from. (51)

Colleen's attraction to Native culture is diagnosed as a disease suffered by "a woman in search of a culture" (112). According to Yvonne this "explains you [Colleen] teaching Native literature. It's almost like you want to establish a connection to a culture to fill a vacuum" (112). This connection is fulfilled by Angel whom Colleen sees "as her personal link to Indianness" (Robinson 154). Also, Colleen's savage retort to Yvonne's

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[10] Kathryn W. Shanley observes in this regard: "As nearly as I can tell many Indians love to read the fiction of W. P. Kinsella and Tony Hillerman, regardless of how stereotypical or inaccurate the cultural characterizations may be, perhaps because to see themselves depicted - even as renegade winners or "comical" losers - feels good for a change." (682).

premise is revealing: "Listen to me you arrogant, theory-obsessed bitch. I am a Jew. I am proud of that. My personal connection to my people and religion are my business and are not subject to your sophomoric psycho-babble" (113). Dewar considers the arguments put forth by the Native characters against Colleen's appropriation of Native culture as "flimsy logic" (62). The moot question is that if Collen's connection to her people and her religion are only her business, then what business does she have in making assumptions about Native peoples and their culture? Yvonne's guess is substantiated when Angel asks Colleen to say three phrases in Ojibway. After she has done so he asks her to the say the same phrases in Hebrew or Yiddish. Her silence and the following exchange establish Colleen as a wannabe beyond any doubt:

> Angel: I think that [her silence] says it all.
> *Beat.*
> Colleen: Is it so wrong to want to share?
> Angel: I don't think that's sharing. You want to be more Native then [sic] I do. (138-39)

Dewar takes exception to this line of questioning and finds the connection Taylor makes between language and culture fallacious. Arguing from his location as a person of mixed blood, he finds Taylor guilty of perpetuating yet another stereotype regarding authenticity in the process of questioning the existing one (63). The importance of language in a culture which has a powerful oral tradition has been discussed by nearly all Native writers in one capacity or the other, and in Acoma Pueblo poet Simon Ortiz's words:

> We come from an ageless, continuing oral tradition that informs us of our values, concepts, and notions as native (sic) people, and it is amazing how much of this tradition is ingrained so deeply in our contemporary writing, considering the brutal efforts of cultural repression that was not long ago outright U.S. [as well as Canadian] policy. We were not to speak our languages, practice our spiritual beliefs, or accept the values of our past generations; and we were discouraged from pressing for our natural rights as Indian human beings. In spite of the fact that there is to some extent the same repression today, we persist and insist in living,

> believing, hoping, loving, speaking, and writing as Indians. This is embodied in the language we know and share in our writing. We have always had this language, and it is the language, spoken and unspoken, that determines our existence, that brought our grandmothers, and grandfathers and ourselves into being in order that there be a continuing life. (37-8)

Ortiz regards language as the life-blood of a community, an embodiment of its history, a repository of memory, and a symbol for the future. Needless to say, language is a controversial topic and its importance in any discussion regarding Native culture cannot be ignored. Having said this, I am reluctant to dismiss Dewar's objection, simply because to do so would be to ignore the dilemma which many Métis/urban writers face in their writings. In addition, I would be re-enacting, albeit on a much smaller scale, the divide-and-rule policies of the dominant culture which have caused damaging rifts in Native societies.[11]

In his introduction to the play Taylor expresses a sense of foreboding when he says, "While writing this play, I was fully expecting to become the Salman Rushdie of the Native community, for I'm sure there is something in this play to annoy everybody. Part of my goal was to create unsympathetic characters right across the board" (n. pag.). Needless to say his characters, Native and non-Native alike, represent the most clichéd extremes of both societies. If in Colleen he presents the all-knowing, somewhat domineering academic, in Dale he gives us the well-meaning and credulous non-Native.

While Dale and Michelle are not the kind of New Agers who would want Angel to "bless their crystals," as Angel fears, they exhibit certain wannabe traits, which are accentuated by the witty rejoinders of the Natives at the gathering (20). Dale and

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[11] I am referring to the blood quantum requirement, the non-inclusion of Native women who marry outside their nation in band lists, and the constitution of the Indian Act among others.

Michelle's credulity is illustrated right from their first exchange with Angel: Michelle's query regarding the origin of Angel's name receives a rather expected answer from Angel who relates it to a vision quest which his father had before his birth. The story is questionable but passes without comment from either Dale or Michelle. From here on Dale unleashes a series of stereotypical notions that non-Natives have about Natives, which include what "tribe" Angel comes from, if he knows his first wife, Benita, who was also a Native (all Natives know each other or are related), how is Angel preparing the moose, and so on. However, it is in the exchanges with Bobby—an alterNative—that Dale becomes the stereotypical non-Native. The following exchange is a good example of Dale's role:

> Dale: Listen guys, I have a question…
> Bobby: I loved *Dances with Wolves*.
> Dale: (surprised) Oh. Okay, how about…
> Bobby: It would take far to [sic] long for me to go into my opinion of what happened at Oka.
> Dale: Wow. (47)

Bobby's anticipation of Dale's questions and Dale's evident surprise goes to show that these are standard questions asked of Natives. Bobby baits Dale again when he tells him "Did you know that a moose roast in a pan, if placed in a tub of water, will automatically point North?!"; the fact that Dale is practically hanging on to every word coming out of Bobby's mouth is evinced by his credulous answer "Really?!"(72). Dale's claim that he is "supposedly part Indian….On my grandmother's side. Way back" elicits an ironic "How lucky for you" from Yvonne (63), and a speech short of a harangue from Bobby:

> Ever since I left the Reserve, I have heard hundreds, maybe even thousands of white people share with me the fact that they sympathize, empathize, and even care about what we Native people have been through. Simply because somewhere in their distant past, they happen to have a few ounces of supposedly Native blood flowing in their veins. Just because someone had a great-great grandmother that

> was boffed by some Indian a century ago, doesn't give them the right to call themselves Native or share our experiences, or claim heritage. (118)

While what Bobby says is a valid enough reason for getting agitated, it is important to note that Dale is a very different kind of wannabe as compared to Colleen. He does not claim to know what the Natives think nor does he assume that he can speak for them; however, he does have set expectations about Natives. Angel makes an important distinction toward the end of the play between Natives—the people—and Indians—the stereotype—when he tells Colleen, "You were expecting three Indians to come to dinner, instead you got us" (135).

(b) Green Grass, Running Water

Thomas King's Green Grass, Running Water also has its share of wannabes. Karen and George Morningstar present two types of wannabes and King's treatment of them is more sympathetic than Taylor's. Eli meets Karen in his second year at the University of Toronto. Karen's obsession with Indians is revealed when she starts "educating" Eli by lending him books about Indians: "These are about Indians, Eli. You should read them" (136). Much like Colleen, Karen dominates her relationship with Eli and much like her she dictates his choice of literature. While Angel's favourite genre was science fiction, Eli has no objections to reading "a Western or another New Woman novel" (136), but "[m]ost of the books that Karen brought by were about Indians. Histories, autobiographies, memoirs of writers who had gone west or who had lived with a particular tribe, romances of one sort or another" (136). Eli is amazed at the unending supply of books about Indians, not necessarily by Indians. Karen's fascination for things Indian is not limited to books and soon she and Eli move in together; as King tells us,

"Karen liked the idea that Eli was Indian" (137). This loaded statement collapses the fact of Eli being Indian with Karen's "idea" of an Indian. It is unclear whether Karen falls for the man or the idea, though the extent to which Karen romanticizes Eli's Indianness is evident on the first night in bed when Karen calls Eli her "Mystic Warrior" (138). The particular Western, which tells the love story of Annabelle and Iron Eyes (Ironize?),[12] alternates with the Karen-Eli story and provides intriguing parallels and contrasts with the latter. Unlike in the Western Karen and Eli consummate their relationship; Eli chooses to stay with Karen as opposed to Iron Eyes who sends Annabelle back to her people; like Karen Annabelle falls in love with an Indian and does not want to go back to her own people; Iron Eyes is also known as the "Mysterious Warrior," which is a verbal echo of Karen's name for Eli.

When Eli relents and finally takes Karen to the Sun Dance, her first reaction to the scene is "That's beautiful. It's like it's right out of a movie" (169). Books and films are evidently the sources from which Karen garners her information about Indians. The following comment, "It's like going back in time, Eli," exposes her preconceived ideas about Indians as existing in the past (169). The fact that Karen comes to the Sun Dance with set notions regarding Native ritual, most of which come from books, is revealed when she sees a lone bird in the sky and assumes that it is an eagle when it is actually a vulture. On their return Karen tells all her friends about the trip and "for months afterward, she found ways of working the Sun Dance into the conversation" (220). As a result Eli becomes the target of the usual uninformed questions about Indian spiritual

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[12] "Iron Eyes=Ironize" serves to accentuate King's strategy of reworking the popular genre of the Western to serve Native ends.

practices and Karen's father regards the trip as "one hell of a vacation" (221). According to Horne:

> In telling her friends about it, Karen transforms the Sun Dance into a cultural artifact. When she first sees the tepees on the horizon, she romanticizes First Nations, perceiving the tepees as a journey into a past world and time. She is incapable of acknowledging that the tepees, and their inhabitants, exist in the present. This form of cultural appropriation, while perhaps more an indication of Karen's naiveté and ignorance than of deliberate malice, is just as destructive as the appropriation of rituals and religious ceremonies to suppress, or annihilate, First Nations and their cultures. (267)

It is fairly obvious that Karen requires Eli to be as authentically Native as possible in order to realize her wannabe ideas. There is also a suggestion that Eli's reluctance to go home is in part dictated by Karen's over-enthusiasm about going to his home. Marianna Torgovnick in Gone Primitive: Savage Intellectuals, Modern Lives observes that "the metaphor of finding a home or being at home recurs over and over as a structuring pattern within Western primitivism. Going primitive is trying to go home to a place that feels comfortable and balanced, where full acceptance comes freely and easily" (185). While Karen seems fairly content with the home that she has made with Eli, her insistence on returning to the Sun Dance and participating in it with Eli's family conveys the idea that Karen feels at home with the primitive. It is important to emphasize here that Karen regards Eli's family as something that belongs to the past.

Like Karen, George Morningstar is also characterized as a wannabe in his search for authentic Natives. Not surprisingly, Latisha—Eli's niece—meets George when he comes over to the reserve for Indian Days. After asking her if she was born on the reserve, George tells her that he is pleased that she is a real Indian. Latisha is taken in by his gentle manners, his readiness to listen, and his vulnerability. She likes his name because it sounds Indian, though it is useful to know that "'Son of the Morningstar' or 'Child of

the Stars' was the name given to [General] George Armstrong Custer by the Arikaras in Dakota territory" (Flick 146). Six months into the marriage Latisha realizes that "the reason George wondered so much about the world was because he didn't have a clue about life" (113). The marriage goes sour and after two children, and one coming, George jumps ship and disappears. After a while Latisha starts receiving letters from him, which are replete with New Age clichés about life and matters of the spirit such as "'I feel my spirit grow each day more clear and powerful'" and "'How I yearn for the simplicity of the west and the perfect clarity of sunrise and sunset. I remember you [Latisha] always as my sunrise and know that you will forever be a part of my heaven'" (209). When George resurfaces, it is at the Sun Dance as a photojournalist for a magazine (not surprisingly) called *New Age*. Claiming status as family, George tries to infiltrate the sacred and take forbidden pictures of the Sun Dance. George appears to be working under the assumption that by marrying a Native woman he has somehow inherited her culture and the right to it. Geary Hobson, speaking about people who belong to the same ilk as George remarks: "The assumption seems to be that one's 'interest' in Indian culture makes it okay for the invader to collect 'data' from Indian people, when, in effect, this taking of the essentials of cultural lifeways, even if in the name of Truth or Scholarship or whatever, is as imperialistic as those simpler forms of theft, such as the theft of homeland by treaty" (101). When non-Natives are admonished for plundering Native culture in this manner by Natives, the "good" Indians become the superstitious, backward, and "bad" Indians.

Unlike Karen, George is a wannabe with a monetary motive. In some senses George is no different from the plastic shamans who claim to have been adopted by a Native tribe

and offer spiritual enlightenment, the Native way, for a price. In the argument George puts before Latisha to convince her, he draws a parallel between Christianity and Native religion: the argument exposes the demystification of church rituals in the twentieth century, which reflects the insignificant position of religion in Western society and its consumption by the media as yet another event. George's contention that non-Natives are curious about Native spirituality because they know little about it and so should be told all reflects the lack of respect for Natives and their beliefs. What George wants has less to do with knowing the whys and the hows of the Sun Dance and more to do with converting it into a cultural artifact that can be peddled. This supposition seems to carry weight when applied to George's abusive and offensive statements, which he makes when restrained from taking pictures at the Sun Dance: "Come on! It's the twentieth century. Nobody cares about your little powwow. A bunch of old people and drunks sitting around in tents in the middle of nowhere. Nobody cares about any of this" (321). King's parting shot at wannabes is the exchange between "I" and Coyote in the "Hawkeye" episode:

> 'Hawkeye?' says Coyote. 'Is that a good Indian name?'
> 'No,' I says. 'It sounds like a name for a white person who wants to be an Indian.' (329)

King is also quick to point out that the process is uni-directional: a non-Native can become a Native but when a Native tries to become a non-Native s/he is likely to suffer the fate of Old Woman who is imprisoned, not for killing Nasty Bumppo[13] but "[f]or trying to impersonate a white man" (330).

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[13] "Nasty Bumppo" is King's variation on James Fenimore Cooper's Natty Bumppo, also known as Hawkeye. Cooper contributed greatly to sustaining the Imaginary Indian

Clearly, Colleen and Dale in alterNatives and Karen and George in Green Grass, Running Water are used as stereotypes of non-Natives by the writers. The less than gratifying portrayal of the non-Native as wannabe conveys the sense of the Native taking control of the production of images. By displaying the inner workings of wannabeism, both Taylor and King expose the easy Euroamerican assumption of the ready availability of another culture for appropriation. It is worth noting that neither writer probes the reasons behind this appropriation; it is possible that both consider the reasons obvious and not worth elucidating, or are completely baffled by this phenomenon. The latter seems rather far-fetched, however, given the insight these writers show regarding other matters. Wannabeism, while it takes on the hues of another culture, notably one that is considered "inferior" to one's own, is immune to the racial baggage that accompanies it. In other words, wannabeism enables members of the dominant culture to experience elements of Native culture without actually walking in their shoes, and without forsaking their own socio-political affiliations. Wannabes, the writers indicate, are members of the oppressive culture who have access to the oppressed culture, and their interaction with it is strictly on a pick-and-choose basis. In addition, wannabes might claim that their adoption of Native garb and customs is a reflection of the empathy they feel for the Natives, but in reality this claim is limited to concerns that are unlikely to redress the social or political condition of the Natives. As both writers show, their wannabe characters do not find it difficult to switch tracks when confronted with the impropriety of their act. Whether it is in search of a culture or for profit, wannabeism embodies a mechanism of cultural appropriation which is perhaps more pernicious than the other

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through a series of frontier novels, known collectively as Leatherstocking Tales (1826-41).

appropriations practiced by the dominant culture. To compound matters, the lack of respect which this kind of cultural thieving involves contributes to the worsening of Native-Euroamerican relations, a point that has been brought up time and again by Native peoples.

To assume, however, that all Natives think of all non-Natives in an unfriendly manner would be to underestimate not only human nature but also artistic creativity. Friendly relations between Natives and non-Natives have been documented in letters, memoirs, diaries, and autobiographies and attest to the capacity for compassion and affection between two races whose meetings have not always been congenial. Such congeniality is rare in fiction and to find it in a work by a Native writer even rarer. However, the texts discussed in the next chapter indicate that this aspect of Native-non-Native relations has not been overlooked by Native writers who do not back away from treating their Euroamerican characters with more sympathy than usual.

Chapter 4: Sympathetic representations

The works by Native writers which have been discussed so far give the impression that the writers function solely on the principle of measure for measure. The representation of non-Natives in these texts is largely unsympathetic and critical, as the writers are occupied with conveying the injurious effects of non-Native culture on Native culture, and exposing the vested interests behind apparently beneficial governmental and cultural policies. While the selection of texts for this thesis might have something to do with this impression, it would be misguiding to assume that this is true for all Native writing. There are Native writers who take a more clement view in their writings and see their non-Native characters in a sympathetic light. Armand Garnet Ruffo's Grey Owl: The Mystery of Archie Belaney and David Daniel Moses' The Indian Medicine Shows are two texts that treat their non-Native subjects with compassion. This is not to suggest that these writers turn a blind eye to the culpability of their protagonists; on the contrary they find a way to balance perspectives without losing sight of the grave ramifications of their presentation.

Both Ruffo's Grey Owl and Moses' The Indian Medicine Shows make use of the most controversial tool of representation: speaking from within the Other. Such use of characters as mouthpieces by the dramatist, especially when s/he belongs to another race, is an exercise of power. It is an assertion of supreme knowledge with regard to the inner-workings of the mind and a presumption of its transparency.[1] This strategy is a worthy example of stealing the horses as not only do Native writers "create" non-Native

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[1] This statement evokes the Foucauldian formulation of Power/Knowledge as Native writers participate in the production of knowledge with the intention of displacing those who have been in control of it.

characters but also establish the terms of engagement. Euroamerican writers have long since indulged in getting under the skin of their Native characters with disastrous results for the representation of Native peoples. Typically, one would think that the use of a similar strategy by Native writers would result in equally incriminating presentations: however, both Grey Owl and The Indian Medicine Shows indicate that such representations can be put to other ends. Ruffo's drawing on the familial and imaginative history of Grey Owl and Moses' use of an incident—both personal and experiential—buried in the subconscious,[2] give rise to works that are sensitive in their approach and fair in their assessment. Even Moses, who confesses to a fleeting feeling of satisfaction in seeing his White characters suffer, commiserates with their untenable condition and sees the plays as tragic.

It is notable that both Grey Owl and alterNatives feature characters in search of a culture. What differs, however, is the approach taken by the authors when dealing with their non-Native characters. Ruffo's approach is guided by a desire to understand the motivations behind Archie's choices; Taylor, on the other hand, is dealing with surfaces. His commitment to presenting Colleen Birk in an unsympathetic light is at the cost of realizing her as a full-fledged character. Needless to say, Taylor's "white baiting" is meant to be read against the backdrop of controversial issues, such as racism,

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[2] Moses recalls toward the end of his article, "A Syphilitic Western: Making 'The Medicine Shows'": "In adolescence, one day in about 1963, the boy I thought of as my best friend, a White boy named Billy, started a fight with me. How could I know then, what I suppose now, that he was trying to prove his new and fragile masculinity? I was puzzled and hurt and wouldn't fight back and would only protect myself, which frustrated him. He wanted a fight. He left me flat on my back on the ground and walked away, muttering what exactly I don't remember. But let's admit to the process of fiction that memory is enough to imagine the words were 'stupid fairy' which would not be anachronistic and would be right for this story" (166).

appropriation of voice, and stereotyping; and his White characters reveal much about their biases through their responses to his Native characters (Dewar 58).

(a) Grey Owl

One of the main reasons why Ruffo's poetic biography of Grey Owl was not discussed in the chapter on wannabes is that his treatment of Grey Owl differs greatly from the usual portrayals. Grey Owl has either been feted as the great Canadian conservationist, who was one of the first to draw attention to the need for conserving natural resources, or has been denounced as a white man who went Native, a charlatan who duped his own people and was guilty of appropriating Native voice and beliefs. A mysterious figure in his lifetime and a controversial one after his death, Grey Owl continues to fascinate and invite people to deliberate on his seeming masquerade. The rudimentary facts of his life are well-known. He was born Archibald Stansfeld Belaney on September 18, 1888 in Sussex, England. Abandoned by both parents, Archie grew up in an exclusively female household run by his grandmother and two spinster aunts. He was educated in the Victorian manner and was fascinated by animals and Indians. Stifled by Victorian England and his possessive aunts, Archie escaped to Canada in 1906 supposedly in search of his father, who had disappeared in America, and the Red Indians, who had occupied his imagination and whom he intended to emulate. From 1907 to1925 he spent time learning the ways of the Ojibway and earning a living as a trapper and guide. In addition, during this period, he married two women, fathered a child out of wedlock, abandoned all three women, and acquired a reputation for drinking and brawling. This was also the time when he started colouring his hair and tying it in braids, along with

dyeing his skin to a darker colour. His life changed when he met nineteen-year-old Gertrude Bernard in 1925: it is her outlook that influenced Archie's attitude toward Nature and the need to conserve it. Also, she provided the impetus toward the making of Grey Owl, the conservationist. After eschewing trapping, Archie started writing as "Grey Owl" about his adopted beavers, Nature, and his life in the North in general. These writings brought him the fame and popularity which enabled him to disseminate his message and take active steps to preserve the decimated beaver population. As the author of popular books such as Men of the Last Frontier (1929), Pilgrims of the Wild (1935), and Tales of an Empty Cabin (1935), he toured North America and England dazzling his audience with his brilliant speaking till his health deteriorated and he abruptly terminated his tour. He passed away on April 13, 1938, a few months shy of his fiftieth birthday.[3]

Much has been written about Archie Belaney the man and Grey Owl the conservationist; while the man is often ridiculed for his imposture, the conservationist is always celebrated for his commitment to the cause. Given this background Ruffo's biography of Grey Owl differs in its attempt to see the transition from Archie Belaney the Englishman to Grey Owl the half breed and finally Native American as a transformation brought about not so much by Belaney himself but by his environment. The irony of a Native poet writing the biography of one of the most notorious wannabes of the twentieth century is palpable; what is not so obvious is that such a feat can be accomplished without resorting to irony. For an understanding of why Ruffo chooses to write about

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[3] For this biographical sketch of Grey Owl, I referred to the following articles: Brian Bethune's "Truth and Consequences: Archie Belaney's Life of Deception brought his Cause to the World," Albert Braz's "The White Indian: Armand Garnet Ruffo's Grey Owl and the Spectre of Authenticity," and Carrie Dawson's "Never Cry Fraud: Remembering Grey Owl, Rethinking Imposture."

Grey Owl one needs to delve into Ruffo's past. Toward the end of the book, in the "Credits and Acknowledgements" section, Ruffo recalls: "As a child I had a photograph hung on the wall beside my bed of Grey Owl and my great-uncle Jimmy drumming together in Biscotasing, northern Ontario, Grey Owl's 'home town.' This image, along with the stories of Archie which have been a part of our family for as long as I can remember, I carried with me through childhood" (213). It is worthy of note that Ruffo when talking about the subject of his poem refers to him as both Grey Owl and Archie. It is evident that in the writer's mind these names belong to the same person and the poem is an embodiment of this conviction. The connection with the Espaniels, from whom Archie Belaney learnt much of the ways of the Anishnabe, is what connects the poet to his subject.[4] While this might be a sound reason to write about Grey Owl, the next question that arises is why Ruffo chooses to represent an acknowledged imposter in a sympathetic light. Does Ruffo not consider Archie Belaney guilty of masquerade and appropriation? Is there is a deeper significance to the polyphony of voices that he employs in the poem? To what end is the poem directed? How do we as readers approach the poem—as an exoneration or an indictment? Is it possible for a poem of this nature to be free of irony, however unintended?

Needless to say, Ruffo's approach to Grey Owl is hinted at in the title itself: Ruffo includes both of his subject's names in the title and disrupts any attempt at neat conclusions by inserting a loaded word such as "mystery" in it. The connotative value of this word removes any sense of epistemological certainty with regard to the subject of the

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[4] Ruffo's mother is an Espaniel. His grandmother is Jane, who is mentioned in the biography. His great-grandparents, also mentioned in the poem, are Alex and Annie Espaniel.

poem. This enables Ruffo to create the story of Grey Owl anew and the form that he chooses "enables [him] to emphasize language as a medium through which we constantly re-create ourselves" (Dawson). The epigraphs to the poem underscore this view with their emphasis on "idea": is Grey Owl "an idea, a symbol of self-sacrifice and deathless determination" (n. pag), and is the "Indian" an essence, in Momaday's words, "an idea which a given man has of himself. And a moral idea, for it accounts for the way in which he reacts to other men and to the world in general" (n. pag)? Is Grey Owl an expression of the realization of this idea? Notwithstanding the complication of regarding the Indian as an essence, Ruffo appears to favour the idea when applied to Grey Owl. By doing so, according to Albert Braz, "Ruffo intimates that Grey Owl does not necessarily have to be a fraud" (174). The poet declares his alignment with Grey Owl by identifying with the object of his meditation. The "you" and the "yourself" merge in the mind's eye and the subject becomes one with his object. The eight stanzas that preface the poem present the bare bones of Archie's life and his transformation into Grey Owl. The last stanza establishes the connection between the writer and his subject, past and present, and the inevitability of the project from which "there is no retreat" (n. pag).

The poem is divided into four sections, titled "Beginning," "Transformation," "Journey," and "No Retreat," and each section moves progressively toward intensifying the mystery of Archie Belaney-Grey Owl. Ruffo's evocation of Archie's childhood is geared toward establishing that Archie is a misfit in that world and is constantly imagining ways of escape from the "white starched world he cannot understand" (2). The absence of the father and the lack of a father figure are responsible for Archie's dreams of reuniting with "a long-lost father / who in Archie's mind is living somewhere

out there [America] / among the Red Indians" (2). Archie's conviction that "his real life will begin when he joins his father / and like him is also adopted by the Apache" is not entirely untrue in retrospect (2). Part of the reason for Archie's migration to North America is to search for his father. The other half is the need to escape from the stifling and smothering Victorian world of grandmothers and aunts. From the very beginning becoming an Indian is connected in Archie's mind with freedom and savagery, and his idea of Indianness is drawn from books such as "*Great Chiefs of the Wild West* and *Two Little Savages*" (2). In other words, Archie configures the Indian world as one of masculinity and belonging and the Victorian world as one of effete femininity and exile. His feelings of abandonment and isolation cause him to make up stories and in one he tells "the boys at school" (not "friends") that "he has Indian blood" and they call him "Squaw Man" (7). The extent to which Archie believes what he says and convinces others of his beliefs is apparent in the comment made by his friend McCormick when he sees Archie talking to one of the Red Indians in Buffalo Bill's Wild West Show:

> To see them chatting, one would have thought they were mates,
> or better yet, brothers. Blood brothers! You know
> like in the westerns. (9)

McCormick's comment also sheds light on the potent influence of the genre of the Western, and on the appealing fiction of the Imaginary Indian. Once in Canada Archie searches in vain for his father and decides in the end: "When they ask I will say / you're in Buffalo Bill's show. / I can say what I want/ they can't possibly know" (11). Thus begins the active concealment of Archie's past and Ruffo seems to attribute it to shame attached to having a never-do-well father who was never there for his son. The move to

the North in 1906 is the turning point, so to speak, for Archie who resolves to remake his past through his imagination:

> In the north
> a man's past
> is his imagination
>
> Archie relishes
> the possibility
> to be (12)

Archie's reluctance to talk about his home and eagerness to learn the ways of the bush, as recalled by Bill Guppy, are the first discernible markers of the desire to erase the past. However, as Ruffo informs us, who Archie denies is himself and those marks in him which draw attention to his foreignness: "These old-timers can tell I don't have any experience—it's / my accent[5]—the moment I open my mouth to ask for a chance, / they roll their eyes like this ship. One way or another / I'll get rid of it, if it's the last thing I do" (15). He gets his first break from the Tema-Augama Anishnabe who name him "Ko-hom-see, Little Owl" and he "learn[s] their language, their lore, the stories / he will later use to remake himself" (18). Just in case the word "use" should interrupt the sympathetic pose that has been built so far, the poet observes how the Anishnabe"welcome him and his interest" and dispels any notions of intrusion or theft (18). Braz notes that "Ruffo never presents Belaney's metamorphosis as frivolous, an action of a pampered member of an empire who feels that civilization gives him the divine right to appropriate anything he covets, including other people's culture" (174). In addition, the woman who becomes his first wife is aware of his need to belong "and says she understands and will help /

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[5] Archie's intentions of getting rid of his "cultural accent" resembles Jeremiah's discomfort with his Indian accent in Kiss of the Fur Queen. The difference is that

make him / one with them" (19). Archie is a quick learner and soon can "curse, drink, dance, make love, throw knives, and generally raise hell with the best of them" (21). In his attempts to become one of them he "stick[s] close to the old timers, the Rivermen, / and pick[s] their brains, learn[s] as much as [he] can from them" (21). Notwithstanding the fact that Archie uses all this information and knowledge to re-fashion himself in the image of an Indian, Ruffo establishes the authenticity of his sources and the first-hand manner in which the knowledge has been gained. Archie's conversion from pure-bred Englishman to half-breed is accelerated by the trouble he gets into and the outbreak of the First World War when he enlists in the army:

> Escape and join the Army. (Besides it's my patriotic duty.)
> It's the way out. The way to lose myself,
> while setting myself loose,
> like a canoe roaring down a funnel of water.
> Someone who knows how to shoot,
> whose mother was an Apache,
> whose father was a Texas Ranger, can be useful in the Army.
> At least that's what I tell them. (22)

The war has a devastating effect on Archie, both physically and mentally; on his return to Biscotasing "Archie's demon's ran wild" and the first signs of his concern for Nature are revealed (31). Bill Draper's observation that "[t]he war in Europe was over. The war here had just begun" rings true in the context of the vicious and concerted effort of lumber companies to make as much profit as possible and in the process wreck the land in Canada (32). Archie's adoption by the Espaniels, who literally nurse him back to sanity, provides Archie with a family and he takes to calling Alex Espaniel "Dad." This is also the time that Archie starts dyeing his skin and his hair; in Ruffo's poem it is Jane

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Jeremiah succeeds in creatively transforming his accent, and empowers himself in the process.

Espaniel, Ruffo's grandmother, who dyes his hair. Jim Espaniel refers to him as "part of the family" and Archie learns how "to make a clean kill" and the rules for trapping from them (35-36). The "Beginnings" section closes with anecdotes told by the Espaniels about Archie and his War dance, and Jack Leve's observation about Archie's skill as a speaker: "Archie's incredible. His speech hushes everyone, / going on about how badly Indian people have been treated, the decimation of the animals, the destruction of the land" (39). Jack Leve's observation about the content of Archie's speech coupled with Annie Espaniel's recollection of how Archie creates a "costume" for himself provide an insight into the authentic concern of the message and the *sui generis* nature of its messenger.

What Ruffo conveys in the first section of the poem is the picture of a man tortured by his origins, the accident of his birth, and the inability to be what he really wants to be. What begins as masquerade on a physical level changes to something deeper and more resilient. Even the masquerade is a device to evade the past and questions about it. Ruffo suggests that while Archie's motives in going Native are self-serving, they are not a result of a whim or a fancy. His masquerade cannot be classified unproblematically as that of a plastic shaman or a Native hobbyist. Archie's masquerade enjoys the advantages of the costume without the disadvantages of the race. In spite of imitating an Indian Archie is almost but not quite like an Indian; the English-speaking Indian conservationist whom people flock to listen to is betrayed by his own body, by his startling blue eyes. In other words, Archie's body becomes a palimpsest from which earlier inscriptions have not been/cannot be erased. While his reasons for adopting the physiognomical features of the Native are personal and psychological, the masquerade

eventually proves to be expedient for disseminating the message of conservation. Archie is convinced that in order to get people to listen to him he needs to "dress up." It is precisely this masquerade that proves to be his undoing. Archie regards Indianness as an essence, much like Ruffo, that can be extracted and consumed. However, a good question to ask is whether Archie's masquerade minus his message and his ability for effective communication would be enough to make Grey Owl a legendary figure. While there is an overt suggestion in the poem that the large turnout at Archie's lectures is more for the "spectacle" of an "Indian" delivering an "authentic" Indian point of view, there is also the fact that while the garb draws the crowds it is an effective way of spreading awareness among the non-Natives (191). From this point of view the masquerade becomes a means to an end:

> I say if they want romance
> give it to them.
> If they expect beads and braids
> give it to them.
> Butter the facts.
> Spread it thick.
> The point is
> to get the message
> across,
> isn't it? (110)

The personal angle to the masquerade, however, complicates it and separates Grey Owl from the other wannabe Indians. David Chapin's remark in the article "Gender and Masquerade in the life of Grey Owl" is informing: "Belaney's Indian dress had nothing to do with a conservation message. Rather it represented his hostility toward what he perceived as a feminized civilization."

The nature of Archie's attraction toward the Native is reminiscent of what Marianna Torgovnick refers to in Gone Primitive as the "lure of the oceanic" (165). The "oceanic"

according to her is an experience in which "the boundaries of self and other, subject and object dissolve in a feeling of totality, oneness, and unity" (165). In a notebook entry, dated 1937, Archie expresses a feeling which resembles the "oceanic":

> The whole landscape seems to engulf me
> so that I am a part of it and it of me.
> I am no longer in
> but of the forest. (187)

Similarly, in the piece titled "Wa-Sha-Quon-Asin: He Who Walks By Night" the poet's voice unites with his subject's in celebrating the feeling of being at home in Nature:

> Night is forever
> It's a feeling
> vast as Lake Biscotasing
> high as a white pine
> It's a moon that cares for you
> Stars that escort you
> Beasts that watch
> It's the edge
> the private. (101)

The consolation that Archie derives from being in Nature has to do with finding a home and with belonging. This seems to echo Torgovnick's description of the impulse to go primitive, which is "trying to 'go home' to a place that feels comfortable and balanced, where full acceptance comes freely and easily" (185). Archie's feelings of alienation in the city, his sense of entrapment, and his desire to "return home to my beaver, to the wind / in the trees and all the other voices of the woodlands / who have accepted me without reserve or judgement," confirm the above statement.

The "Transformation" section introduces Gertrude Bernard, also known as "Pony" and "Anahareo," and chronicles the courtship and marriage of Archie and Gertrude. The effect that Gertrude has on Archie is evident in the poem titled "How do you know?" in which Archie observes, "Because this is the woman who somersaults your life / who

can't bear to watch you club beaver to death. / Who makes you see, as she sees, / the suffering you inflict" (49). Ruffo, after establishing Gertrude's credentials as a square shooter, makes her the eyewitness to how the Natives approach him to speak on their behalf:

> We were going to get married, or as Archie says spliced,
> when this short thickset Indian comes up to us,
> introduces himself and says Archie's the man he wants.
> His people need Archie's help. (50-1)

How frequently this happens is recorded by Gertrude as "Stops and starts. Shifts / of direction that after a while it seems we hardly know where / we're going" (51). Their paths are directed by the needs of the people around them who say "it's you I need, and / then everything changes, everything, and before you know it / you're off" (51-2). Archie does all that in his power to help the people who come to him, but "while doing it realize[s] the utter futility of it all, / like trying to patch a rotten canoe/ instead of just building a new one" (53). Unwittingly, as it were, Ruffo suggests, the Natives provide direction to Archie and he finds the path to becoming Grey Owl. Archie's aversion to his work is made evident in the poem titled "What you see" in which the poet observes, "What is it [senseless destruction] all for? / a livelihood? a quick / buck? What kind of men are these? It makes / you wonder" (55). The real change in direction for Archie occurs with the adoption of McGinnis and McGinty, the two beaver kittens destined for destruction but saved through attachment. In 1928 he decides to quit trapping and the dream of a beaver colony is born:

> I know the idea of a beaver colony sounds far fetched.
> But maybe it's time I at least try to give something back
> after all my years of taking—that's what Gertie says.
> Anyway as far as trapping goes, it's over, it's dried blood. (59).

However, the dream has its practical financial problems and the Belaneys have to relocate to Birch Lake. The poet describes the hardships of the journey and all Archie has is "only your dream, the warmth / of your single vision sustaining you" (61); by the end of the journey the man is governed by his mission to create a Beaver People Society. It is to this end that he starts writing articles for wildlife magazines, and as Jean Noel tells us, "I don't know what to say / first time I ever heard of an Indian who can write....But me, I'm wondering what kind of Indian is he?" (63). It is obvious that Archie's story about being a half-breed has gone unquestioned so far because it was irrelevant. With fame comes the burden of identifying oneself as this or the other, and it is at this point that questions regarding Archie's past start becoming important.

What kind of Indian is Archie is a question that starts figuring in the poem from this point onward; Dave White Snow observes the irony of "[t]he Indians go searching for gold, / ready to tear up Mother Earth, and Archie stays behind / to take care of the animals" (66). Of course, Ruffo does not comment on why the Indians have to resort to such measures, but the effect of the comment places Archie in a position where his actions are closer to those of the mythical Indians as compared to the Indians themselves. This gives rise to a puzzle—"Indian, can't say he is, can't say he isn't"—and so begins the mystery of Archie Belaney. It is important to note that Ruffo never conceals Archie's origins, so the mystery is not about where Archie came from; the mystery is why Archie chose to be known as Grey Owl, what his motivations were, what the choices he made were, and what the effects of those choices were. Ruffo makes it amply clear that Archie has never had to question his own decision to go Native; this is why when he is asked to write a book for *Country Life* Ruffo describes him as questioning his identity:

> Grey Owl?
> Wa-Sha-Quon-Asin?
> Archibald Stansfeld Belaney?
> Whiteman? Redman?
> Who's speaking? You yell
> as you now break your pledge and stand and rush
> to the mirror and make your Indian face.
> Who are you speaking as? Who are you
> speaking for? (68-9)

The last two questions posed by the poet are important in the context of identity and appropriation of voice; the use of free indirect speech works in both directions—these are questions that can be asked of both the poet and his subject. The subject, however, is granted insight, as it were, by Nature to go ahead and do his task:

> Around you pines sway in their untouched whiteness;
> above, the sky dances the dead;
> below, its shadow, the lake swims alive.
> This is what it is all about.
> Why worry about who you are
> when you already know
> you are but a moment
> of this harmony, little
> more than a snowflake of it
>
> What you must do is simply act, and be. (69)

Ruffo's use of free indirect speech provides a layered reading of this passage as what is said could be read as an example of Archie's persuasion of himself about the importance of the end regardless of the means; contrarily, it could also imply that the poet is abetting Archie in his decision to "simply act, and be" (69). The unprecedented rise in his popularity compels Archie to officialize his self-invention and he begins by signing his name as Grey Owl. And then "before I know it, I have Apache blood. / Finally I'm calling myself an Indian writer" (71). While he is aware of the possible avenues for exposure from his family in Brandon, his wife Angele, and the various people who know

him as Archie Belaney, he continues with his story though at first he is "hesitant" (72). Ruffo maintains a delicate balance between praising Archie for his endeavours and exposing the dubiousness of his intentions; his decision is presented as a combination of self-aggrandizement and unscrupulous practical consideration:

> But the thrust of self-promotion is upon me,
> and head first into it, I hear myself
> convincing myself that nobody's going to listen
> to an immigrant ex-trapper from England,
> promote an indigenous philosophy for Canada.
> And if this is the only way
> to get Canadians to listen,
> then I'll do it, and more
> if I have to. I'll be
> what I have to be.
> Without hesitation. (72)

While the reasoning appears to be sound, the fact that Archie needs "convincing" throws a shadow of doubt over his deployment of indigeneity. Should the reader think that s/he has finally nailed Archie, Ruffo provides a startling soliloquy of self knowledge and honesty in which Archie refers to himself as "one of the worst bastards / who ever walked this good Earth," and is repulsed by the idea of "wearing a white robe / with a halo around my head" (73). Refusing to be canonized he stresses what has not been mentioned by the press:

> They neglect to mention I didn't say ban hunting
> (or fishing for that matter).
> A beaver kills a tree to live. In nature
> life and death fit together like teeth,
> or maggots in meat left to rot.
> All I am advocating is respect.
> Stop the barren greed,
> the parade of slaughter. (73)

Ruffo's presentation of Archie's soliloquy and his intention behind doing so seems akin to Shakespeare's in Macbeth: the primary maneuver by which Macbeth gets away with

murder and still retains the stature of the tragic hero are his soliloquies which expose the inner turmoil, contradictory impulses, and self-knowledge that preface and follow his actions. Archie's awareness of his actions and yet his decision to go ahead with them for a worthy cause makes him a recipient of sympathy. The theatrical element in Archie has been observed by his viewers,[6] and this is partly what enables Archie's transformation from Englishman to Native American, so much so that after watching him perform on stage Gertrude observes:

> On the podium Archie is a natural. A transformation occurs
> and he is no longer merely Archie the reformed trapper
> but someone he calls Wa-Sha-Quon-Asin, Grey Owl—
> He Who Walks by Night—who speaks and acts
> like the great Indian orator of old. (75)

Not only the audience but also Gertrude, who perhaps knows Archie better than all, is taken in by his performance to the extent that she has to correct herself when referring to him: "The accolades come pouring in, and Archie, I mean Grey Owl, / drinks them up feverishly" (75).

Ruffo makes it clear that while Archie might feel like an Indian about Nature, he definitely does not look like one; so, he gives us a checklist (perhaps Archie's) of defining features that are required "To be a Red Indian," which include Red skin, Black hair, piercing eyes, feathers, beads, moccasins, braids, slouching, never smiling, and saying "How-Kola" (76). The list, of course, is a collection of physiognomical features usually attributed to the Imaginary Indian. This brings up the question who is Archie dressing up for? The answer comes from Lloyd Roberts, who sees Archie as "a true wilderness man, an Indian in the flesh who fits / every image you have ever had of what

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[6] By Jack Leve (38) and Colonel Wilfred Bovey (64).

an Indian should be…" (81). Archie's popularity comes from two sources, one is his message and the other is the novelty of hearing an educated Native American speak "in well-enunciated English" (52). In a certain sense Archie is a curiosity for the non-Native population who see in him the Indian of their fiction come to life. Not surprisingly then the English press sees him as "half-primitive, half-complex… / the modern, the literary Hiawatha," and refers to him as "a Canadian Indian [on]…a pilgrimage / undertaken on behalf of his people" and as "the famous Red Indian author and naturalist" (109). Ruffo's Archie is well aware of this and in one of his soliloquies rationalizes how he gets away with "it":

> How do I get away with it? Again, a simple answer:
> you see, it's not me they see at all;
> it's the face in their mind,
> the one they expect (of me),
> born out of themselves,
> in their own image. (84)

I am compelled to ask if the face Archie sees (and makes) is the face that he sees in his mind and expects of himself; by locating the durability of the masquerade outside of himself, Archie admits that his masquerade is not self-sustained but requires the audience to perpetuate itself. This dependency amplifies the influence the Imaginary Indian has over the non-Native spectators. By physically embodying and performing the Indian of popular imagination, Archie is able to satisfy both his audience and himself. The recurrent variations in the text on the idea of playing confirm this notion.[7] Ruffo provides input from people who have known Archie since his days in England, and what comes across is the ready acceptance of Archie's attempts to go Native. For example,

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[7] Some good examples of Archie playing the Indian can be found on the following pages: 70, 75, 102, 106, 135.

Margaret McCormick, Archie's "childhood friend" finds that "[h]e looks more Indian than ever" (17); her brother George, on meeting Archie in 1913, is convinced that "[u]ndoubtedly, by this time he has gone Indian, / shoulder-length hair, a large felt hat, buckskin / jacket, moccasins" (23). In addition, this and subsequent soliloquies stress the condition of the split self within Archie. Archie admits to having two halves—one Indian and the other not-Indian—though he feels that the latter half is "also slowly darkening" (84). His Janus-faced condition finds expression in other pieces such as "Why I Retreat (When Anyone Comes Too Close)" in which he attributes his positive qualities to his Indian face (90), and in "Grey Owl 1935" where he declares the death of "some Englishman named Belaney / who died and was reborn" (96). This intrinsic split is visible to some of his viewers, like the dubious Mort Fellman, who feels "it's as though there are two different and distinct / people, the Englishman who abandoned his Indian family / and this Indian man looking intently out the window. / Something no longer fits" (158). Evidently Archie is caught up between being, seeming, and becoming Indian: his overt claim to being Indian because "I feel as an Indian, think / as an Indian, all my ways / are Indian, my heart is Indian" (83) is counterpoised by the insecurity regarding his identity as Grey Owl: "A name I've earned, / which no one can take away from me. I don't need her, or / anyone to tell me who I am. The Indians know. Alex knows. / I have no need to defend myself. My work speaks for itself" (98). This insecurity finds expression in the nightmares in which he is unmasked by someone who knows his past,[8] and the pervasive fear of exposure which dogs him throughout his trip in England. Notwithstanding all the vexations attending his identity, what is never in question is his

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[8] See Ruffo, Grey Owl 104.

allegiance to the cause: notes to himself such as "Money? Jobs? Progress? / What's life without Nature? / Wildlife? Solitude? / But two hands wrapped around / your throat" (108), and his total commitment to his work at the cost of his family and his self, gain him the admiration of not only the reader but also skeptics such as Mort Fellman who meet Archie with the intention of exposing him but find that they "actually admire the man, his / commitment, what he stands for" (157).

Ruffo's intention in writing Grey Owl is surely not to offer an apology for the man or even provide answers to the myriad questions regarding Grey Owl: this accounts perhaps for the presence of contradictions inherent in and adventitious to the persona of Grey Owl in his poem. It is worth noting that the authority, so to speak, that Archie invokes to substantiate his claim to Indianness are the Indians themselves. The Indians, however, neither contradict nor denounce Archie's choice; they find in him a worthy spokesperson, who can act as an intermediary for them, and accept him as such. There is no doubt in their mind regarding Grey Owl's ethnicity as is revealed in John Tootoosis' observation when he first meets him:

> An Indian can tell who's Indian.
> Grey Owl can't sing or dance.
> But he's doing good
> and when we meet
> I call him Brother. (128)

Tootoosis makes it amply clear that if Grey Owl had merely used his claim to Indianness for personal advancement his reaction would have been markedly different. When Archie is asked to speak before the Native council Tootoosis recognizes his sincerity:

> His words are straight and fly directly into the sun
> and we cheer when he is finished. He wears himself with skill;
> he has done a good service for his people.
> We know Wa-Sha- Quon-Asin is not born of us, and we say nothing.

> For us it is of no importance. We do not waste our words but save them, because we know in this struggle of generations they are our strongest Medicine. This man flies for us true and sharp, and we are thankful he has chosen our side. (145-6)

The ambiguity of "his people" and "our side" distances Archie from the Natives, who for the Natives is evidently not "one of us." But the Natives seem to consider the means insignificant, as does Archie, and value the results. If Archie proves to be useful to the Natives, the non-Natives are not too far behind when it comes to exploiting him as is evident in Archie's appraisal by the Commissioner for National Parks, James Harkin:[9] "Potential is as good a word as any to sum up what Grey Owl means/ to the Parks Branch....Asset, an even better word" (77).

The image of the ecological Indian has been evoked by preservationists, conservationists, and environmentalists alike, and the environmentally conscious Indian often acts as the foil to the greedy and destructive White. Clearly, as Marianna Torgovnick and Shepard Krech have pointed out, this image is also a creation deployed to suit non-Native ends. As Torgovnick observes in Primitive Passions: Men, Women, and the Quest for Ecstasy: "[T]he idea of the Indian as ecologist may suit some whites more than it does some Indians. It may even be a factor in whites' resistance to change and difference among Indians. Some whites expect Indians to remain models of specific 'traditional' values. But not all Indians want perfect continuity with the past" (154).

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[9] In his article "Grey Owl's wild goose chase," John Hayman says the following about Harkin: "A practical civil servant as well as a visionary, Harkin recognised that the Parks Service had been established in 1911 in order to develop tourism in the Rockies as much as to preserve wilderness. As he was later to explain: 'The providing of a position for Grey Owl was entirely to serve our purposes of securing publicity for the National Parks and for wild life conservation by using Grey Owl's beaver and Grey Owl's personality as a spear-head in that connection'." History Today. 44.1 (1994). 42-49.

Shepard Krech in his thought-provoking book-length study The Ecological Indian: Myth and History questions the myth of the Native American living in perfect harmony with nature, and provides the for-and-against arguments regarding the myth in relation to the Pleistocene extinctions of the mastodons and the mammoths, the disappearance of the buffalo, and the near extinction of the deer and the beaver in North America. In relation to the beaver Krech observes that to regard the approach of the various Nations, toward the trapping of beavers for food and trade, as uniform is a mistake; while the Natives hunted beaver for food even before the arrival of the Europeans, it is the trade value of beaver skins that escalated the near extinction of beavers as early as the seventeenth century. While the Hurons and the Iroquois were by far the most zealous hunters, others like the Northern Algonquians, the Innu, and the Cree practiced conservation methods such as not hunting in winter, rotating hunting areas, and observing the boundaries of "family hunting territories" (179). However, as both Krech and Torgovnick agree, it is difficult to determine whether the efforts for conserving the beaver existed prior to the arrival of the European traders or were instituted post-arrival. While there is "ample evidence that Indians did not always behave in ways that conform with current notions of ecology and balance," there is also the possibility that "Indians learned how to treat nature through experience, trial and error. They encountered bad effects from certain practices, such as overfarming and overhunting. Then, because they were dependent on the environment, they tended to alter their practices in a manner that today seem ecologically sound" (Torgovnick 153-154). Torgovnick's argument is validated by N. Scott Momaday (Kiowa) who also differentiates between the "Paleo-Indian hunter" and his "latter-day" Native successor:

> [T]his latter-day man, unlike his ancient predecessor, is only incidentally a hunter; he is also fisherman, a husbandman, even a physician. He fells trees and builds canoes; he grows corn, squash, and beans, and he gathers fruits and nuts; he uses hundreds of species of wild plants for food, Medicine, teas, and dyes. Instead of one animal, or two or three, he hunts many, none to extinction as the Paleo-Indian may have done. He has fitted himself far more precisely into the patterns of the wilderness than did his ancient predecessor. He lives on the land; he takes his living from it; but he does not destroy it. This distinction supports the fundamental ethic that we call conservation today. In principle, if not yet in name, this man is a conservationist. (32)

Given this background, Archie's claims of feeling and thinking like an Indian are somewhat clarified. What emerges from this, however, is the realization that the "Indian" that Archie emulated was one of his own making: an image that was an amalgamation of his own romantic imagination, his audience's expectations, and an acute sense of what would sell. This is the image that Ruffo presents in his poem, which seems to suggest that Grey Owl probably did more good than harm as far as the Natives are concerned. The clippings from newspapers that note Grey Owl's passing away stress the importance of his message and not his ancestry, for example, the Manchester Guardian observes:

> Whatever his origins, he devoted his life
> to the understanding of nature and the considerable
> fortune his writing and lecturing brought him
> to the relief of the suffering animals. (207)

Similarly, Ruffo's obituary note for Grey Owl, "Between Birth and Death Waussayuah-Bindumiwin," signals the importance of the journey undertaken between life and death. He sees Grey Owl's life as "a vision whose meaning is complete" and perceives the transformation from Archie Stansfeld Belaney to Grey Owl, Wa-sha-quon-asin as a search for a meaningful life (209).

It is a notable fact that Ruffo's Grey Owl gives the Natives a more prominent place in the narrative than is usually accorded them, and suggests that they are instrumental in the

making of Grey Owl. This insertion of Natives into narratives of the West that tend to either marginalize the Natives or make use of them at the expense of historical and social veracity is equally noticeable in works such as Thomas King's Green Grass, Running Water and Monique Mojica's Princess Pocahontas and the Blue Spots. These writers subvert the existing genres of fiction, drama, and poetry, and make them tell some Native truths that have been unwittingly forgotten or willfully suppressed.

(b) The Indian Medicine Shows

The inclusion of Daniel David Moses' The Indian Medicine Shows in this chapter, which is concerned with the sympathetic representation of non-Natives in Native works, is guided by the compassionate treatment some of the non-Native characters receive in the two plays.[10] The rubric of uniqueness is applicable too, given that the cast of the first play, "The Moon and Dead Indians," is entirely White. While Ruffo is able to present Grey Owl unironically, Moses' play is a paradox of emotions that the playwright feels for the characters. The choice of the genre of the Western is partly responsible for this paradox. Unlike his contemporaries, who turn the genre of their choice inside out to serve the needs of the Native point of view, Moses' approach to the genre is complicated by the clash of sympathies which his portrayals evoke. In his article "A Syphilitic Western: Making 'The...Medicine Shows" Moses asks a few intriguing rhetorical questions regarding his decision to write a play modeled on the Western:

> But wasn't that part of the challenge for me, an Indian, to write about Cowboys, perhaps surprisingly or with a bit of irony or even some political pleasure, claiming

[10] The Indian Medicine Shows comprise of two one-act plays, which are, "The Moon and Dead Indians" and "Angel of the Medicine Show."

> or reclaiming or just re-telling a frontier story from my own "Other" point of view? And wasn't I also puzzled, wanting to figure out what those settlers thought they were doing out there in the middle of what for them was nowhere? Just what were those characters running towards? Why was the new life they saw ahead so much better than the old one left behind? And just what did they think about the mess they had gotten themselves into, Indians and all? (158)

In "The Moon and Dead Indians" Moses gives us the fag-end of the glorious days of the Wild West, the last hours of the hey-days of the cowboys, and the dawning realization that the frontier is not a paradise but a desert. Moses is intent on dismantling the myth of the frontier and of its men, and exposing it for what it really is, albeit from the Native point of view. The first he achieves by setting the play in New Mexico, 1878, and portraying the frontier as a realm of deprivation, suffering, and hopelessness; the second by undercutting the masculinity of the man of the frontier, the cowboy, in the figure of the notorious Billy the Kid.[11] Moses' frontier is a disputation of the frontier theses of Frederick Jackson Turner and Buffalo Bill Cody presented at the 1893 World Exposition in Chicago. Turner attributed American development to the existence of the frontier and cited it as the crucible in which the American character is forged;[12] Cody on the other hand regarded the bullet as "the pioneer of civilization" (White 9). The difference in approach of the two theoreticians was underscored by the manner in which they contradicted each other: "Turner's history was one of free land, the essentially peaceful

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[11] Moses in his article "A Syphilitic Western: Making 'The… Medicine Shows'" connects the play with an earlier play that he had written about Billy the Kid called "Billy the Kid Shoots for the Stars." In The Moon and Dead Indians, Bill Antrim introduces himself as "Billy Antrim." Also, Ma Jones, Angela, and Jon often call Bill "Billy."

[12] The Turnerian thesis: "The existence of an area of free land, its continuous recession, and the advance of American settlement westward, explain American development." ("The Significance of the Frontier in American History." Annual Report of the American Historical Association for the Year 1894.)

occupation of a largely empty continent, and the creation of a unique American identity. Cody's Wild West told of violent conquest, of wresting the continent from the American Indian peoples who occupied the land" (White 9). It is important to keep in mind that Cody's American Indians were hostile savages who posed a threat to the newly-arrived pioneer, and so the elimination of the savages was merely an expedient measure. White is perceptive in noting that "Buffalo Bill offered what to a modern historian seems an odd story of conquest: everything is inverted. His spectacles presented an account of Indian aggression and white defense; of Indian killers and white victims; of, in effect, badly abused conquerors" (27). As Moses demonstrates in his plays, the frontier was neither empty nor its occupants wild savages: on the contrary, he sees it as "a story of strange visitors who overstay their welcome and take over the house" (Moses, "Syphilitic Western" 156). Moses seems intent on contradicting the fondly constructed myths about the frontier such as the belief that the frontier was settled and not conquered. The "settling" of the West implied exercising control over both Indians and the wilderness; however, Moses shows that the conquering of the Indians was tantamount to exterminating them, and the wilderness could never really be conquered. In addition, Moses also undercuts some tropes of frontier myth and iconography, such as "white victimization"[13] and "Indian aggression" aimed specifically at White women and children, by creating a landscape free of Indians but illustrative of the aggression of the White characters (White 29).

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[13] "White victimization" which portrayed the white man as victim outrageously outnumbered by aggressive Indians was a transformation of the conqueror into victim in order to achieve what Richard White calls "Joaquin Miller's 'kingdom won without guilt/Of studied battle'" (White 27).

The plays, seen from this angle, become an ironic commentary on and a questioning of the westering impulse. So, where is the place for sympathy in such a scenario? The sympathy, paradoxically, emerges from the reality of life on the frontier. It comes from the setting of isolation, loneliness, disease, and paranoia which besets its White characters. The essential tragedy arises from the quintessential clash between civilization and the wilderness that surrounds it; from the veneer of civilized behaviour which is nothing more than hollow gestures; from the ghost of the Other which is present in its absence; and from the fear of nameable and unspeakable terrors that lurk, supposedly, outside the palisaded property. N. Scott Momaday captures the Euroamerican's bewildered reaction to the frontier and to its inhabitants in these words:

> For the European who came from a community of congestion and confinement, the West was beyond dreaming; it must have inspired him to formulate an idea of the infinite. There he could walk through geologic time; he could see into eternity. He was surely bewildered, wary, afraid. The landscape was anomalously beautiful and hostile. It was desolate and unforgiving, and yet it was a world of paradisal possibility. Above all, it was wild, definitively wild. And it was inhabited by people who were to him altogether alien and inscrutable, who were essentially dangerous and deceptive, often invisible, who were savage and unholy—and who were perfectly at home. (91)

The typical ingredients that go to make a Western are brave explorers, unrelenting pioneer-farmers, sharp-shooting cowboys, incredible hardships, and hostile Indians. The world of the Western is a typically masculine world of white male-bonding and camaraderie, strengthened by the paucity of available women and the pressing need to eliminate Indians. Moses exploits this aspect of the Western and dwells on the unspoken yet dormant suggestive possibilities of homosocial interaction. Since no Western can be complete without a clash between the White settlers and the Indians, which is its *raison d'etre*, Moses' play explores the situation that arises when all the Indians have

disappeared and there are no more Indians to kill. What we see is the channeling inward of the fear and violence reserved for the Indian, which results in tragedy for the characters. Not surprisingly, most of the sympathy elicited in the play is for the women characters—Ma Jones in "The Moon and Dead Indians" and Angela in "Angel of the Medicine Shows."

Most critics of the Western have observed that the frontier is a man's world; women are present but not an integral part of it. This is not to imply that there were no women on the frontier. In most cases, women were the bait and the motivation for the White cowboys to hunt Indians. With a few exceptions, such as Calamity Jane, Annie Oakley, or Dr. Bessie Efner, women were by and large dependent on their men for protection and survival. Mary Ellen Jones in The American Frontier: Opposing Viewpoints observes that on some frontiers, such as those of the fur trade and the gold rush, white women were initially peripheral and the women found in such societies were either Native or prostitutes. She goes on to note, "[i]n sharp contrast, on some frontiers, specifically those of the homesteader and farmer, women were far more integral" (145). Life for the frontier women, however, was not easy and she was often cited as the foil for "the pampered woman back east" (Jones 145). The centrality of women in "the agrarian West" as opposed to "the Wild West" is seen as responsible for the ascendancy of the outlaw/gunfighter figure in America's self-imaging. According to Ann-Janine Morey-Gaines, the frontier

> involves two distinct but interrelated zones, the wild West and the agrarian West.The geographic qualities of each zone are applied to the human beings who live in the West and a metaphoric reasoning from place to person produces at least two kinds of American heroes, the farmer and the gunfighter. While both types of hero are for a time visible in the agrarian and wild West, only the gunfighter gains cultural ascendancy. The popularity of the gunfighter and the obscurity of the

> farmer are heavily influenced by the literal and metaphoric location of woman in each zone. The agrarian West, more associated with woman, seems unable to sustain its male hero. The wild West, defined in part by its defiance of woman, produces our lasting cultural heroes. (133)

Not surprising then is Moses' use of the archetypal figures of the frontier, and his undercutting of both in the presentation of Bill and Jon. Ma Jones, prior to the arrival of Bill Antrim, the representative of the wild West, is paranoid about the arrival of the Indians. Her sense of insecurity is heightened by her concern for Jon, who she thinks is as vulnerable as her. Her fears vanish with the arrival of Bill, whom she regards as a competent and civilized protector. Her misplaced trust in Bill gives rise to the central irony in the play, when the protector turns violator.

The two linked plays in The Indian Medicine Shows share characters and relationships. The first play has an actual historical character, Billy the Kid, who epitomizes the outlaw figure in the Western. Moses' play intertwines fact and imagination to explore an acknowledged yet not much discussed aspect of the Western—homosexuality. While Moses admits that his suggestion of homosexuality in relation to Billy the Kid has no basis in fact, the suggestion is not as outré as it appears.[14] Given the atmosphere of the frontier, the development of a homosocial relation with sexual overtones does not seem like an impossible occurrence. According to Keith Garebian "[t]he immensity of the West circumscribes a loneliness that demands love; its 'ghostliness' in Moses' work symbolizes the disavowal of the conventional that makes possible tabooed versions of love" (35). What is important to note is Moses' insistence on

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[14] Arthur Penn's film The Left-handed Gun (1958) explores this eclipsed dimension of Billy the Kid's personality by suggesting that Billy was a repressed homosexual. Also, Penn's version undercuts the mythological figure of Billy as a cold-blooded killer by presenting him as an unstable, emotionally-confused, trigger-happy teenager.

the prevalence of violence conveyed through the guns that Ma Jones and Billy the Kid carry with them, and the fear of the Other that plagues Ma Jones. The guns evidently signal the lack of "civilization" in the West, a point that is reiterated through comments like "A man didn't need to have a gun in Boston," and "No civilized man needs a gun" (23, 25). The irony of Ma Jones' fearful prediction about the approaching Indians, "It's the sound of death coming, Jonny," is borne out when the gunshot is succeeded by the entrance of Bill Antrim: Bill is an outlaw who has murdered his "friend" Frank Grady and is now on the run. In the context of the play, he is a harbinger of death who is partly responsible for Ma Jones' suicide.

"The Moon and Dead Indians" explores three relationships—Ma Jones and Jon's, Ma Jones and Bill's, and Bill and Jon's. Ma Jones, the only female character in the first play, is a farmer's widow who has internalized the frontier construction of the Indian as murderous savage. Glenda Riley's Women and Indians on the Frontier 1825-1915 is an instructive study of the effect of negative constructions on impressionable minds; in her assessment of the attitudes of pioneer white women toward Indians, Riley sees the unmistakable influence of the negative constructions of Indians. Indians were presented to these women in the conflicting modes of the good and the bad Indian, and as a result these women set out on their Westward journey with set notions drawn from personal accounts related by survivors and dime novels. Riley observes in this regard:

> As a consequence of their long exposure to American and European thinking about the contradictory nature of American Indians, most westering women struck out for the trans-Mississippi West with their minds conjuring apparitions of inferior Native peoples, who were hostile, vicious, and evil, interspersed with enigmatic visions of superior Native beings, who were friendly, kind, and courageous. Because the likeness of the 'bad' Indian was usually dominant, however, most female migrants' expectations tended to be negative rather than positive. When they finally reached the trail, their nerves were taut with fearful

> anticipation; they were ready for the worst of fates at the hands of the American Indians. (83)

In this light, Ma Jones attribution of all her losses and hardships to the "sneaky" Indians is understandable (17). Her reaction, according to Riley, is representative of that of most frontier people who "readily blamed American Indians for any misfortune or irregularity that occurred. Indians automatically became the villain of virtually any mishap" (90). More Indians populate her imagination than they do the desert land of New Mexico, and the absurdity of her fears is highlighted in the exchanges with her son Jon. The spectre of the savage Indian waiting for ambushing the settler was a popular topic among fearful women; everywhere they looked they found marks left by the Indian, "lurking beside the trail, hidden in every bush and tree, outlined along the horizon by the rays of the rising or setting sun" (Riley 83-4). However, the "ghosts," to which Jon refers in the play, are not only the ghosts of dead Indians but the ghosts of white guilt and knowledge of wrongs done to the Indians. By putting statements such as the following in Jon's mouth, Moses incriminates his White characters: "They's all rounded up, Ma. Rounded up or shot," "There's no Apaches round here no more. You know that. No Apaches, no Comanches, no more God damned wild Indians," and "They's exterminated" (17-18). This strategy is perhaps more effective dramatically than having a Native character, yet again, list White atrocities against Natives: the guilty are damned by their own words. Should this indictment seem somewhat harsh, Moses gives us the sympathetic figure of Ma Jones, a lonely widow who is suffering from consumption, and whose only solace comes from the reluctant company of her son. The complication, mentioned earlier, arises from this clash of sympathies for the suffering settler and the dead Indians: while the visual suffering of

the White characters is on the level of the individual, the suggestive suffering of the Indians is on a greater scale, as is the sense of loss attached to it.

Ma Jones is rounded, as a character, with the arrival of Bill Antrim. Her stab at maintaining a veneer of civilization in the midst of wilderness is signaled by her unsuccessful attempts at fixing her hair before receiving her uninvited guest, and the polite conversation in which she engages with Bill. Ma Jones' reminiscences of Boston society, her offer of tea, her notions of propriety, and the baking of the "hermits"[15] belong to another world, and are evidently meant to function as a foil to the frontier. There is a suggestion, however muted, that Ma Jones may have been an "unwilling victim" of her husband's "westering drive." Not all women were enthusiastic about giving up a life of gentility for the Wild West, and Jones cites the famous example of James Fenimore Cooper's mother who had to be physically placed in the wagon, rocking chair and all, when she adamantly refused to move to the West (143). The evocation of Ma Jones' world sharply contrasts with the frontier and establishes it as a liminal realm where the rules of civilized society do not apply. Moses seems to suggest that just as there exists a script for the "Indian" in narratives of the West, there is one for the non-Indians as well. Crossing the boundaries of this script is tantamount to entering a tragic arena where familiar social rules become dysfunctional. There is also the suggestion that the narratives of the West can have tragic outcomes for both Indians and Whites.

Bill's entrance (which is with a bang and not a whimper) and his subsequent exchanges with Jon hint at the existence of a secret. Jon's discomfort at being left alone with Bill and the latter's suggestive comments intensify the charged atmosphere of the

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[15] A spiced molasses cookie.

play. However, it is not only Ma Jones who is plagued by the fear of the Other; Bill also feels threatened by the absent-presence of Angela, a girl with whom both Bill and Jon were supposedly in love, in Jon's life. Having brought the racial and the sexual Other into the picture, Moses reveals the homosexual nature of Bill's attraction to Jon. I mentioned earlier that this aspect of the play may not be as outré as it appears, though it is evidently a topic that is reluctantly addressed; a contention supported by Mitchell Lee Clark's observation about how the Western through the exposure of the male body enhances its desirability:

> [N]ot only is the Western a genre that allows us to gaze at men, this gaze forms such an essential aspect of the genre that it seems covertly just about that: looking at men. To state the issue so starkly already suggests how problematic that process has always been, and it is no surprise that the hesitations, distortions, and evasions that accompany this male-centered "look" are customarily interpreted as a deep-seated nervousness over homo-eroticism. (159)

Similarly, Wendy Chapman Peek in her article "The Romance of Competence: Rethinking Masculinity in the Western" underscores the specifically male-oriented stance of the genre:

> [B]ecause Westerns are primarily about men, masculinity becomes a more fluid and flexible term. By limiting participation of women and their concerns...Westerns become a 'safe space' in which to raise questions about masculinity, to perform different kinds of masculinities, and to explore the pleasures and perils of male bonding, with its flagrantly erotic rituals and homosocial dynamics. Although women do threaten men in the Western, serving as sources of critical judgement, sexual distraction or emasculation (these three usually working as a triple headed monster), these gender conflicts are played out in the confines of a genre that virtually guarantees male success" (210).

Reading Bill's vilification of Angela's character in the light of the above quote indicates that his insinuation may not be just an expression of heterosexual jealousy or misogyny. Bill's reaction to the fact that Jon corresponds with Angela can be interpreted as that of a

jealous lover, as can his effort to dissuade Jon from joining her by reminding him of the promises they made as teenagers.

The playful camaraderie is exposed for what it really is, as is its relation to violence in the past. Blake Allmendinger in "The Queer Frontier" discusses Leslie Fiedler's claim that "the Western glorified pure, same-sex love" (225). Allmendinger argues that "[i]f platonic friendships were examples of 'innocent homosexuality,' as Fiedler maintained, then sexually consummated relationships must be guilt-ridden, impure, and debased by comparison" (225). He goes on to note: "Westerns, which are concerned almost exclusively with the actions and feelings of men, by definition possess homosocial and homoerotic components. Actual homosexual behaviour, however, appears only in Western send-ups and parodies" (233). Needless to say, the homosocial relationship of Bill and Jon is guilt-ridden—at least for Jon—and definitely not innocent; this would, in Allmendinger's estimation, make "The Moon and Dead Indians" a "send-up" or a "parody." Garebian's assessment of "parody" rings true in the context of Moses' play:

> Parody can be an esoteric code, a badge of identity, especially for a subculture. To patronize it as a facile, vulgar exercise (as many people do) is to patronize an aspect of sensibility and sense. There can be intelligence and taste in parody, for parody is a mode of aestheticism: it is a way of seeing the world, not in terms of refined beauty, but in terms of stylization and artifice. (36)

This reading does seem congruous with Moses' use of stock types of the Western[16] in the plays. His intention of undercutting the masculinity of the Western is clarified when one takes into account the feminization of the Other—in this case, the Indian—in order to subjugate and control. The violent act of emasculation that is performed on the

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[16] For Example, the Mother, the Good Son, the Outlaw, the Handsome Stranger, the Sweetheart, the Indian Servant, and the Male Beloved.

effeminate Indian boy in the play by Bill is consistent with Allmendinger's reading of how violence cements the same-sex relationship in the Western. In other words, two men who are attracted to each other collaborate in an act of violence which draws them deeper into what is typically a love-hate relationship. While Bill and Jon do seem to share a love-hate relationship, what with Bill pointing a gun at Jon and wanting to kill him and then wanting to kiss him, the act of violence perpetrated on the Indian boy is not a collaborative act. It comes across as more of a ritual initiation into manhood, one to which Jon responds by voiding the contents of his stomach. The irony of the scalping and the emasculation is that all the violence that is attributed to the Indians in the play is enacted by the Whites. The literal emasculation of the Indian resonates with the figurative emasculations of other Native characters in works by Tomson Highway and Thomas King.[17] Scene seven of the play is the climax where the ghosts that haunt Ma Jones are revealed to have sources other than the Indians. Ma Jones' shooting of herself is not an exorcism of the Indian ghosts but of the ghosts of the frontier. Her act is initiated by the actualization of her dormant fears and the fear of social taboos.

While the tragedy of MA Jones' death closes the first play, its homosexual concerns are carried over to the next play, "Angel of the Medicine Show," which is supposedly the "comic" counterpart to the first play. Much of the comedy in the second play arises from Moses'use of elements from the medicine shows of the nineteenth century. I would like, therefore, to draw attention to the main features of the medicine shows. According to Brooks McNamara the medicine show was "a unique and complicated theatrical form, a wedding of the ancient European mountebank's show and nineteenth-century American

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[17] I am referring to Big Joey in Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing and Amos in

popular entertainment" (xvi). Though it is difficult to determine the exact date of the entry of mountebanks in American colonies, experts concur that by the eighteenth century they had become a common sight. So prolific were the mountebanks and quacks that New Jersey in 1772 and Connecticut in 1773 passed Acts for suppressing them. The pitchman made his entrance in the nineteenth century and was a descendant of the "street sellers of drugs and ointments who arrived with the first colonists" (McNamara 19). A pitch is defined as sales talk to the crowd, and the function of the pitchmen was to draw crowds with incredible stories and then sell them the "medicine." While the pitchmen operated locally on makeshift tables that could be whisked away at the sight of a policeman, "the Medicine showman was essentially a theatrical producer, packaging shows that were interrupted periodically for sales pitches and the sales themselves. About one-third of most shows was given over to lectures, demonstrations and sales, and the rest to entertainment, most frequently some sort of variety show" (McNamara 46). The Indian medicine shows were devised as an exotic approach to the business around the turn of the nineteenth century. These shows were a combination of a scaled down version of the Wild West shows, vaudeville, and blackface minstrelsy. In the entertainment-starved rural areas which had no television or theatres for amusement, the medicine shows were hugely popular and people would travel great distances in search for entertainment, new songs, and miracle cures for ancient ailments. The Indian medicine shows typically had a token Indian in their troupe in order to authenticate their claims of possessing secret Medicines known only to the Indians. McNamara observes,

> It was the belief among many white Americans that the Indian was a natural physician, endowed with an iron constitution because he possessed secrets of

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> healing unknown to the white man. This view was reinforced by the fact that a number of Indian botanicals had been adopted by white physicians and because the Indian had become a popular symbol of the strength and purity of the New World. Quacks and patent Medicine men, recognizing the possibilities of such a powerful emblem, borrowed the Indian and made him their own. So-called Indian doctors—many of them white practitioners of what was loosely termed Indian Medicine or 'Medicine according to Indian theory'—could be found in most large towns or riding country circuits. (85-87)

The polarized view of the Indian as the noble child of Nature and the bloodthirsty savage was reinforced in the Indian medicine shows which alternated episodes from the Wild West shows[18] with sales pitches about Indian medicine. It is worth mentioning that medicine shows were not received warmly and enthusiastically in all areas. In some rural areas the shows played to empty chairs and no medicine would be sold. The United States, as compared to Canada, was considered a more amenable place to perform by show managers, owing to the apparent ease with which the Americans could be persuaded to sample medicine, as opposed to their neighbours. Moses incorporates elements of the actual medicine shows such as the comic skits, the Susie routine, and the sales pitches. The sales pitch that advertises "Doctor 'Osage' Oswald's Omnipotent Elixir" is taken verbatim from an actual speech recorded in William Lee Provol's The Pack Peddler (1933). The character of Susie, calico dress and all, is drawn from the standard "Toby and Suzy" pieces that "[featured] a carrot-top rustic named Toby and a gangling country girl with a calico dress and pigtails, known as Suzy or 'The Silly Kid'" (McNamara 132). Moses' intention in using elements of the medicine show is to generate comedy; the form of "Angel of the Medicine Shows, " according to Moses,

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[18] These episodes typically related to aspects of Indian life, such as the buffalo hunt, the war dance, and making Medicine, among others. There were other episodes that featured bloodthirsty savages attacking defenseless white pioneers, and clashes between brave cowboys and cowardly Indians.

"blends conservative narrative theatrical conventions with the vibrant, vulgar shtick of the Medicine show to create an almost surreal narrative that allows for both aesthetic and narrative outs and real but unsteady reconciliations. It is in that sense a comedy" ("Syphilitic Western" 165).

The events of "Angel of the Medicine Show" take place in New Mexico twelve years after the "The Moon and Dead Indians" ends with Jon going away to join Angela with the intention of assisting her with the Medicine show, and with Billy returning to Lincoln County. Evidently, in the twelve years that have elapsed since the ending of the previous play, a lot of things have changed. When we see Jon in the second play, he is no longer the reluctant and quiet son going about his mundane job of being a farmer; on the contrary, he is the most flamboyant of pitchmen and a hard taskmaster responsible for managing the medicine show. Angela Carruthers, who was the bone of much contention even in her absence in the previous play, shows up as one of the performers, in addition to David Smoke, a Mohawk, who is the show's Indian. The Indian medicine show featured in the play is a troupe that seemingly has done well for itself, but has fallen on hard times as their last performance did not go down well with the audience. Such was the wrath of the viewers that the performers had to make a run for their lives, and David Smoke almost lost his life to the irate mob intent on hanging him. The mob, it appears, was incited when David tried to defend "Doctor Oscar 'Osage' Oswald's Omnipotent Elixir" from charges of ineffectiveness. According to Angela, "One look at [David] made them mad enough," and his countering their accusations resulted in the ensuing violence (89). The following exchange between David and Angela in Scene two illustrates the influence of representations on people in general:

> David: I wanted to help. My people—
> Angela: —All look like the devil, wild or tame.
> Can't blame them yokels for not knowing how tame
> you're supposed to be. (89)

Angela makes it clear that David should have stuck to his script to avoid any problems. However, as we are told later in the play, it is not merely David's appearance that ignited the uproar; the town was suffering from starvation and as Angela observes: "They didn't want to hear no Indian from back east talk about how to cure their dyspepsia" (97). The play shows the ensuing attempt of the manager to regroup the show's performers and hit the road once again, much against the wishes of Angela who wants to take a break from it all.

The format of plays within the play justifies the collective title given to the two plays, but raises questions about the title itself. The Indian medicine shows were commercial ventures that combined entertainment with a business proposition. This proposition involved the exploitation of the Indian in yet another form by white society; the Indian was commodified and packaged in a manner that would appeal to the audience and promote sales. The shows were aimed toward usually attracting rural white folk, but this was not always the case. Moses' Indian Medicine Shows is definitely not aimed toward the provincial; if this is so, then what is the intention behind the title, and what medicine is Moses trying to sell? Is Moses trying to gull the audience by raising false expectations about entertaining them and then presenting a play that raises uncomfortable questions? Is he selling his ideas—from a Native point of view—about how the West was settled, or is he distributing *gratis* a huge dose of white guilt?

The dead Indians mentioned in the first play make an appearance in the guise of David Smoke, who ultimately does a vanishing act, in keeping with the theme, one might

suppose, of the vanishing Indian. His recent traumatic experiences followed by his shooting by Angela make him the obvious recipient of heartfelt sympathy. This palpable object of pity has the pregnant Angela as a co-rival for the sympathy of the audience and the affections of Jon. In making them co-sufferers, Moses appears to be making a point about women and Indians being at par in white society. Their relationship, however, is a complex affair of affection, concern, violent emotion, and awareness of racial inferiority. On the one hand, Angela treats David with genuine concern and even spoon-feeds him, while on the other, she refuses to provide him with a comfortable bed and uses racial slurs to address him. The difference lies, however, in the treatment of homosexuality in the two plays; unlike Ma Jones who prefers to kill herself than witness the performance of a social taboo, Angela is aware of Jon's relationship with David and takes it in stride. There is even a suggestion of jealousy on her part with regard to the affection and attention that Jon gives David. Jon's relationship with David is both emotional and commercial: While David's concern for the "Doctor" seems genuine enough; Jon's concern for his Indian is tinged with economic considerations:

> Jon: Blazes, he looks pale. Poor little bugger.
> Angela: He's got to learn to behave. You spoil him.
> Jon: Mister Smoke's the one true reason we've had a show out here. Them yokels love to see a wild Indian dance for his keep. (96)

However, Moses complicates Jon's character by making him a carrier of white guilt. In response to Angela's question about why he "needs" David, Jon gives a rather unexpected answer: "I need him to forgive me. For what we did to the Indians" (123). This statement is not elaborated on but it seems to be a reaction to David's accusation regarding his own exploitation at Jon's hands. The sparseness of the dialogues in <u>The</u>

Indian Medicine Shows is complemented by the considered use of suggestive gestures and background lighting, which contribute to the enhancement of meaning behind certain scenes. For the same reasons the play is probably more powerful in performance than on paper.[19]

I would like, in conclusion, to touch upon one element of The Indian Medicine Shows that does not figure prominently in the classic Western, namely Christianity. Ferenc Morton Szasz in his article "Preparing a Way in the Wilderness" chronicles the contribution of clergymen in civilizing the frontier, and notes:

> Names like Buffalo Bill, Sitting Bull, Annie Oakley, Calamity Jane, and Wyatt Earp are almost synonymous with the West, while names like William D. Bloys, Daniel S. Tuttle, Charles Sheldon, Sheldon Jackson, and Brother Van Orsdel ring few bells. Yet if one looks at actual accomplishments, the situation might well be reversed. Most western communities owe far more to these unheralded clerics than they do to the high-profile outlaws or icons. (10)

This marginalization of clerics in the Western is a result of the iconoclastic nature of the genre in which each man/woman is a law unto him/herself. The role most often played by the cleric is to perform marriages and burials, the latter more frequently than the former. The paucity of references to religion, specifically Christianity, in scholarly writings about the frontier illustrate the lack of interest in and/or attention paid to the spiritual aspect of life on the frontier. Moses' use of this peripheral aspect of frontier life is definitely strategic. It is a well known fact that the colonizer came to colonize not only the lands but also the minds of the existing inhabitants; this fact is applicable to the settling of the frontier as well. The clerics who followed closely on the heels of the

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[19] Keith Garebian makes a similar observation in a review about the plays: "The psychosexual and metaphorical suggestiveness of Moses' short plays is strengthened by generally lean writing and by expressionistic lighting devices that, of course, need to be seen in performance rather than read as textual cues…." (35).

pioneers took charge of caring for the spirituality of their flock as well as the conversion of the Natives in the vicinity. David is one such convert whose fervent Christianity in the play exposes the lack thereof in the Whites and the complicity of religion with imperialism. David's description of what he saw when he died and went to heaven includes a reference to Catherine Tekakwitha, Lily of the Mohawks, who was beatified by the Pope on July 22, 1980 and has her feast day on July 14. Unlike the usual accounts of her life, which describe the hardships she underwent, her vow of virginity, and her impassioned piety, Moses' account describes how she is unacceptable in heaven because of the colour of her skin: the graphic and visceral image of "Angels of flame, tearing her brown skin, dirty meat, from her body" works in conjunction with David's comment to Jon, "They're just as hungry as you are, Doc…," to expose how religion works in conjunction with colonialism (121).

As has been noted earlier, both Ruffo's Grey Owl and Moses' The Indian Medicine Shows differ from the binary representation of non-Natives in the counterwriting texts, and the stereotypical depiction of wannabes in alterNatives and Green Grass, Running Water. The main point of departure is that they choose to speak from within their non-Native characters. The results, as we have seen, are very different from those produced by the similar use of Native characters by non-Native writers. The difference arises primarily from the compassionate treatment of non-Native characters in both Grey Owl and The Indian Medicine Shows. Thomas King's Green Grass, Running Water, which is the discussed in the next chapter, marks yet another departure from the counterwriting texts. King's nuanced exploration of Native and non-Native culture and society in

combination with his acute sense of humour makes the novel both entertaining and educative.

Chapter 5: Thomas King's Native Grinder: Green Grass, Running Water

In the texts discussed in the preceding chapters the writers use different strategies to represent Euroamericans and their institutions, the singular aim being the exposure of the colonizer's motives for what they really are. In doing so, the colonizer remains the focus of these texts and the colonized are perforce pushed to the periphery. While the dominant tone of these works is optimistic, there is also the realization that amendments will take both time and perseverance. Any shortcuts, however, will require the assistance of Hawkeye, Ishmael, Robinson Crusoe, Lone Ranger, Coyote, and of course, Thomas King.

Green Grass, Running Water (1993) is a text which should be approached with caution. The numerous traps that King devises, the plethora of literary allusions that he employs, and the self-reflexivity of the text can be rather intimidating for the unsuspecting reader. King juggles Western religion, media, canonical literature, politics, commercialism, lawyers, and law enforcers with consummate dexterity. While King is also grappling with some of the same issues as other Native writers, his treatment of them is markedly different. He prefers to address the issues of colonization, cultural genocide, and religion through a comic lens, which leaves the reader in a more uncomfortable position than does, for example, Highway's more solemn approach or Wagamese's didactic method. This is not to say that King's treatment alleviates in any way the graveness of the issues; on the contrary, it arrests the non-Native reader in the middle of a smile or a chuckle by making him/her conscious of the complicity of his/her culture. However, there is always the thick-skinned or visually-challenged reader who will skim the surface and miss King's honeyed barbs.

Humour in contemporary Native texts arises from at least two sources—from the worldview adopted by Native societies and from the incidents within a given piece of work, and one might argue that King's use of humour is similar to that of Wagamese; however, what needs to be taken into account is that the humour in Wagamese's Keeper'n Me arises from the conscious and obvious clash of Native and Euroamerican worldviews, and the Native view is offered as a corrective. King in Green Grass, Running Water offers a view of the history of colonization through Native eyes. And this history is not offered as a corrective or an alternative to mainstream history: it purports to be *the* history. This effects a paradigm shift as the colonizer is displaced from the centre of power and relegated to the periphery so that the Native occupies the centre. The strategies used by King seem to place him categorically in the ranks of stealing the horses. And the following comparison of his work with the counterwriting text confirms the scope of a concept such as stealing the horses. While the counterwriting text is more occupied with assigning blame and correcting mis/representations, the paradigm shift in King's novel breaks the existing status quo by refusing to allow the colonizer to be in control. Unlike the counterwriting text in which terms familiar to the colonizer are used, the terms of discussion in King's novel serve to confuse and estrange the colonizer from a known history; for example, Jesus is referred to as Young Man Walking on Water. Moreover, in the counterwriting text, the Self-Other relationship maintains the colonial binary as the object-position of the Native is either maintained or marginally remedied. This decentreing of the colonizer in King's novel is not meant to be interpreted in ethical terms; it is merely the privileging of the viewpoint of the Native. In comparison with a non-Native text about Natives in which "[the] representation of the world contains neither

a sense of historical becoming, nor a concrete vision of a future different from the present, nor a teleology other than the infinitely postponed process of 'civilizing,'" King's novel opens up the historical process to explore its possibilities (JanMohamed 88). King does not appear to view his novel as a competitive arena in which the non-Native view will be vanquished by Native. Rather, King's novel is an invitation see the world anew from the perspective of the Native. The development of the novel on two levels—the world of the four Indians and Coyote and the world of Blossom—is meant to illustrate the possibilities for and the realities of the Native situation.

Western religion has been and continues to be a thorny issue for most Native writers. Christianity with its patriarchal, monotheistic, misogynistic, and authoritarian edicts stands for all that is contrary to Native spirituality and culture. This is where King begins his story, or at least one of the beginnings of his story. Each of the four sections of the novel include one Biblical story, one Euroamerican canonized work of fiction, one historical event from the annals of colonial North America, and one Native creation story through which the first three stories are re/formed and retold. King describes this process as running the stories through a Native grinder, as Native stories have been put through a "North American grinder" (Gzowski 71). Aside from this the novel also targets stereotypical representations of Indians in the media and in popular literature, and compounds the effect by voicing these through non-Native characters. The self-serving nature of Euroamerican civilization also comes under fire whether in reference to land treaties or the Grand Baleen Dam. The value-laden inscriptions at the head of each volume taken from Cherokee culture, the cyclical structure of the novel, the use of oral techniques for telling the story, and the rejection of Western forms of storytelling place

this novel squarely in a tradition that is not non-Native. James H. Cox notes that the novel does not "adhere to the conventions of non-Native fairy tales, legends, or romances ventriloquized through wise sachems constructed in European/European North American imaginations" (224). King ransacks the warehouse of Euroamerican civilization for tools (events, characters—fictional and otherwise, and assumptions, among others) and deploys them to serve Native ends, in much the same way that Native tools were used to serve non-Native requirements. In a way King's take on revising North American history is more loaded than that of other writers because it is clothed in humour and play, which at times takes the edge off ominous associations; for example, Coyote's play on the name of Ahab's whaling ship the Pequod and the annihilation by white settlers of the Pequots, a Native people who occupied the Eastern woodlands.

King's focus in the novel is fairly apparent: the history of Western colonization and its effect on the Native inhabitants of North America. The manner in which King approaches the subject is not that readily apparent: the novel begins with Coyote's dream, which in time becomes GOD, and this upsets the established religious hierarchy which is the defining factor in Christianity. The fact that in the world of this novel the scales have been reversed is made apparent when the "*silly* Dream" measures itself against Coyote and finds that it is "almost as good as Coyote" (1, 56). This GOD is greedy, acquisitive, patriarchal, and bombastic, and HIS only aim in life is to exert control over anyone who is in the vicinity. This GOD is also one of Coyote's mistakes, as is every other Biblical and historical event, such as the Immaculate Conception or the coming of Europeans to North America. The first biblical story to go through the Native grinder is that of Genesis; not only is the Christian God displaced from His position of creator of the

universe but is also shown as the usurper of First Woman's Garden. GOD's possessiveness regarding his garden—"this is my world and this is my garden"—is undercut by First Woman's dismissive response—"You must be dreaming" (56). Thus, GOD becomes the first colonizer and this imparts biblical sanction to the act of colonization, which is invoked by every successive colonizer in King's history. Ahdamn's futile attempts at naming the animals and plants around him are a hilarious take on the naming impulse of the pioneers. The renaming of places and of people is a common consequence of colonization: A.A. Gabriel's recording of Thought Woman's name as "Mary" is an example of the disregard of Native names which were usually replaced by Christian ones. Jane Flick observes that King reverses this assimilative process by renaming Jesus as Young Man Walking on Water (160). The expulsion from the Garden is presented as an act of choice on the part of its inhabitants rather than a forced eviction, and this merges with the popular story of the Lone Ranger. First Woman's act of disguising herself as the Lone Ranger to prevent her arrest by the rangers who are looking for Indians further subverts the Western idea of a male adventure story: not only is the protagonist not White but also a woman. It is in this manner that King exposes the racist and misogynistic underpinnings of Euroamerican culture and religion: King also indicates that the mantle of superiority that White culture flaunts is built on the relegation of racial others and women to a subservient position.

These ideas are repeated in the novel, with different emphasis through the three other volumes which have similar structures. The second cycle of stories involves Changing Woman, Noah, and the American classic Moby Dick. As in the earlier story, Noah is the angry and excitable patriarch of the ark who can only see Changing Woman

as the vehicle for procreation. Aside from commodifying her, he objects to her talking to the animals on board. This brings up the prominent difference between Christian exclusivity and Native inclusiveness in relation to the creation stories in this sequence. In the Bible it is God who creates the world and all its beings and gives Adam complete sway over all; in contrast, in Native creation stories it is humans and animals together who create the world and agree to "mind [their] relations" (32). This story merges with Moby Dick and serves to expose what some have called the racist and misogynistic core of Melville's story. According to Cox,[1] "Moby-Dick [sic] is a narrative of domination in that Melville constructs his plot on a distorted and appropriated Native American history, and relegates Native American characters to romanticized and subservient roles in relation to the privileged European American characters" (232). In King's version, neither is the whale white nor male; in fact it is not Moby Dick but Moby Jane, the *black female* whale. Ahab's imperviousness to the crew's observations regarding the whale, with the emphasis on colour and sex, gives an unprecedented twist to our understanding of this classic. The crew shouts:
"Blackwhaleblackwhaleblackwhalesbianblackwhalesbianblackwhale" (164), but as this is not in the "book" it is disregarded. Margery Fee and Jane Flick observe that "[t]his inability to see blacks, females, lesbians as people explains why no one has noticed that the four old Indians are women; because they act like men, they have been mapped on to male mixed-race pairs that operate on [a] hierarchical model...." (135). This reliance on the written word and on the teleologic progression of narratives reflects the inflexibility of written as opposed to oral literature. The written world, as it were, looks for

[1] For a more extensive discussion see Cox.

certainties that are etched in stone, immovable, and static, much like the Grand Baleen Dam; the oral world, on the other hand is flexible, fluid, and dynamic like the water which finally demolishes the dam. If King wants this to be read as a parable, his meaning is well conveyed. The third cycle of stories, involving Thought Woman, Archangel Gabriel, and Robinson Crusoe, and the fourth, featuring Old Woman, Jesus, and "Nasty" Bumppo, both address the same issues evoked in the earlier cycles. The maltreatment of women and racial others is shown to be embedded in the fabric of Western civilization and religion, authorized by the Bible and promoted by its authors. The fact that the four women of the Native creation stories have to disguise themselves as men to survive in Euroamerican society is an apt illustration of this bias. The ease with which they use their disguises to fool non-Natives also proves the hold that these cultural myths exercise on their society.

Like canonized literature, another tool which is used in the creation of a national culture is, most certainly, the electronic media. As many critics[2] have observed, the Other is required to consolidate the Self against it. The idea of a nation is based on the presence of a factor that is inimical to the idea; in the case of North America this factor was the Indians. In Jacquelyn Kilpatrick's view, "[f]or an immigrant nation where the Euro-American is anything but homogenous, the Native became a clearly definable Other" (xvi). She goes on to note, "[w]hen we look at the writing of James Fenimore Cooper or the films of John Ford, we see this American self-definition repeatedly reinforced by its juxtaposition to the image of Native Americans" (xvii). The birth of the Western is the direct fallout of the attempts at self-definition: a premise supported by the

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[2] Fanon, Memmi, and Said, among others.

rather conventional storyline of the Western in which the Indians appear and massacre a few settlers only to be slaughtered en masse by the patriotic and righteously vengeful hero and his followers. The social effect of these plots "helped shape the way America thought about Indians then, and the stereotypes crystallized on the early screens are those with which we still live" (Kilpatrick 18). It is this stereotype of the Indian as stupid, dirty, lascivious, pronoun-challenged, pointlessly brave, and mired in paint and feathers that King is countering through his representation of contemporary Natives in the novel. In addition, he makes use of the stereotype to satirize non-Native expectations of the Native. Often in Green Grass, Running Water a non-Native character exposes his expectations of the Natives in the terms of the stereotype; for example, Clifford Sifton, the namesake of Sir Clifford Sifton, "an aggressive promoter of settlement in the West through the Prairie West movement, and a champion of the settlers who displaced the Native population" (Flick 150), who is the manager cum engineer of the Grand Baleen Dam, protests to Eli: "Who'd have guessed that there would still be Indians kicking around in the twentieth century" (119). In addition, Sifton exposes his own biases[3] when he tells Eli, "you guys aren't real Indians anyway. I mean, you drive cars, watch television, go to hockey games, Look at you. You are a university professor" (119). Sifton's mockery of the treaties, which he calls "a barrel load of crap" and his understanding that these were promises which the government never intended to keep, is an example of the popular reaction to Native issues (116).

This burden of reactions is shared by Bill Bursum, whose name is a composite of the names of two men "famous for their hostility to Indians": the first is Holm O. Bursum

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[3] Horne, Goldman, Wylie, and Johnson see this as King's "riposte to the exponents of an unreconstructed politics of cultural authenticity" (Johnson 24-49).

"who advocated the exploration and development of New Mexico's mineral resources . . . [and] proposed the infamous Bursum Bill of 1921, which aimed to divest Pueblos of a large portion of their lands and to give land title and water rights to non-Indians" (Flick 148). The second personage is William F. Cody, better known as Buffalo Bill, an exploiter of Indians for entertainment in his rather popular Wild West Show. Bill Bursum, who owns the "largest television and stereo store in Blossom," is Lionel Red Dog's employer and regards himself as "part of the [Indian] family, always doing what he could to help" (66, 224). Bill's list of good deeds, such as giving Lionel a job at the store, sponsoring the basketball team from the Friendship Centre, and taking out advertisements in the local Indian newspaper, masks his real motive which is to generate publicity in the Native community and make better sales (224). As he thinks to himself: "Make money. The only effective way to keep from going insane in a changing world was to try to make money" (156). The exchanges between Sifton and Eli, and Lionel and Bursum are good illustrations of how Sifton and Bursum betray non-Native assumptions about Natives. When Bursum runs into Eli at the store, for instance, his conversation is governed by premises which have currency in White society; he sympathizes with Lionel on the assumption that the latter did not know that the van[4] was stolen. Lionel's correction falls on deaf ears and Bill goes on to comment on "all that free money" which the band gets from the government (66). On being told that Lionel is Charlie Looking Bear's cousin, Bill's lack of surprise is expressed by his response: "All you guys

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[4] This episode occurs when Lionel is sent to Salt Lake City to address a conference on Indian education. By virtue of being Indian he is whisked off to a rally in a van. As it happens, the van is stolen property and Lionel finds himself in jail. This fiasco costs Lionel his job at the Department of Indian affairs and he ends up selling stereos for Bursum.

[Indians] are related" (66). Sifton is surprised at Eli's monosyllabic answers as he has "always thought that Indians were elegant speakers" (115). The assumptions about all Indians being drunks and/or thieves are voiced through other minor non-Native characters, such as Sergeant Cereno who wants to ascertain whether the four renegade Indians were on drugs or into drinking (77); and the officer who comments that "the bastards [Indians] will steal anything" in response to Alberta's disbelief that anyone would steal her car (253).

King displays what non-Natives require from Natives through an assessment of the genre of the Western, which is shown to rely on the predictable outcome of the clash between Indians and non-Indians: the Indians have to perpetually lose and the Cowboys have to always win in order to satisfy the genre's logic. The Westerns that Eli and Karen's father, Herb, read in the novel follow the same pattern, as is made evident through the cover of Eli's book which features "a beautiful blonde woman, her hands raised in surrender, watching horrified as a fearsome Indian with a lance [rides] her down"(135). Eli "[doesn't] even have to read the pages to know what was going to happen" and he doesn't even bother to find out (166). For the majority of non-Natives the "Indian" featured in the Westerns constitutes the "real" Indian. This "Indian" dresses in buckskin and feathers, lives in tepees, carries bows, arrows, and a scalping knife. The warriors in these stories always attack the settlers, kill the men and abduct the women but do not marry them, and ride bravely into battle with the enemy, while possessing the knowledge that they are doomed to die because the White man is superior to them. It is this quest of Euroamerican society for the Imaginary Indian—the only authentic Indian—which discredits contemporary Natives: the Imaginary Indian stipulates that the only

authentic Indian is the vanished Indian; therefore, if you are not extinct or on the brink of fading away, you cannot be considered a real Indian.

King exposes the strict parameters for "Indianness" through Portland Looking Bear's travails in Hollywood. C.B. Cologne's comment that "[j]ust because you are an Indian doesn't mean that you can act like an Indian for the movies" exposes the gap between being Native and being Indian (155). It is this cleavage between the real and the imaginary that propels Portland's first move toward becoming more authentically Indian by changing his name from the ordinary Portland to the dramatic Iron Eyes Screeching Eagle (127). The power invested in the name is evinced through the fact that "before the year was out, Portland was playing chiefs" (127). However, even this is not enough to make Portland a "real" Indian: after losing the role of Chief Long Lance to C.B. Cologne, because his nose is not the right shape, Portland takes to wearing a rubber nose. King makes Portland's false nose a symbol of what White society expects from Natives:

> Portland couldn't breathe with the nose on, had to breathe through his mouth, which changed the sound of his voice. Instead of the rich, deep, breathy baritone, his voice sounded pinched and full of tin. Then too, while the nose looked dramatic in the flesh, it looked rather bizarre on film....Worst of all, it stunk, smelled like rotting potatoes. People began to measure their distance. (130)

The discomfort and the changes induced by the rubber nose can be read as the negative effects of White expectations on Native people and of how the media controls images. Brian Johnson observes that King's novel "is most explicitly engaged in questioning the effects of Western technology and electric media on Native subjectivity and culture" (par. 8): While it gives non-Natives heroes such as John Wayne and the Universal Cowboy, it demolishes any sense of cultural pride in the Native. A fitting example in Green Grass, Running Water is Lionel's desire to be John Wayne, "[n]ot the actor, but the character"

(202). While his father suggests that "he should keep his options open" and tries to tell him about Native "[w]arriors, chiefs, councilors, diplomats, spiritual leaders, and healers," Lionel is steadfast in his adoration of John Wayne (202-3). The ephemerality of the icon is displayed through the fragility of the John Wayne ring which Lionel owns.

The Western in King's novel, The Mysterious Warrior, starring John Wayne, Richard Widmark, and Maureen O'Hara, which Bursum plays on the Map is a "composite of western films" (Flick 158). Bursum's love for Westerns is based on the established difference between Indians and non-Indians: "Everyone was same as the others. Predictable. Cowboys looked like cowboys. Indians looked like Indians" (264). Even the four Indians are confused as Lone Ranger thinks that they had fixed the film, only to be told by Hawkeye that "a lot of them look the same" (266). It is important to note that Bursum watches the Western on the Map, which functions as a "unifying metaphor" and is meant to have a "cultural impact" on the customers (108). Put together in the shape of the physical map of North America using televisions of various sizes and brands, the Map embodies the imagined community of non-Native North America. The marginalisation of Natives is revealed through Bursum's choice of film for the Map, which is, a Western. The Map also serves to illustrate the connection between imperialism and the media: according to Johnson, Bursum's Map "exposes television as the dominant form of media in the twentieth century even as it connects media to cultural imperialism" (par. 22). However, some of the "oppressiveness of technology" (Johnson par.22) is alleviated through the intervention of the four Trickster figures who by changing the ending of the Western induce a sense of pride in its Native viewers:

> Charlie had his hands out of his pockets, his fists clenched, keeping time to the singing. His lips were pulled back from his teeth, and his eyes flashed as he watched his father flow through the soldiers like a flood.
> "Get 'em Dad," he hissed.
> "Yahoo!" shouts Coyote. (267)

The ease with which the four Indians slide in and out of the Western is proof that the media is not impervious to incursion. Cox notes how King

> intervenes in and revises narratives that affirm colonial dominance and plot Native American absence. While Europeans/European North Americans frequently annihilate the Indians of their literary imaginations, King repopulates their stories with First Nations characters whose presence replots doom as survival of, and resistance to, colonial violence and domination. (220)

This repopulation of non-Native stories with Natives is similar to the insertion of the Native presence in colonial narratives, as seen in Ruffo's Grey Owl and Moses' The Indian Medicine Shows. Bursum's discomfort with the revised ending and his frustration with technology is an example of how identity is governed, to an extent, by popular media: "'Well, something sure as hell got screwed up,' said Bursum, looking at the remote in his hand. 'Damn. You put your faith in good equipment and look what happens'" (268). Bursum identifies himself with the cowboys because they win, all the time and every time. This is why he enjoys the Western. It would not be amiss to state that the Western makes it easier for him to claim a paternalistic position because it maintains and justifies his power in society.

A close species of what the Western provides Bursum with, which is a sense of ascendancy with regard to the Natives, may be seen in the behaviour of the guards on the US-Canadian border when interacting with Natives. It is such conduct that led the Federation of Saskatchewan Indian Nations to hire a private investigator to look into allegations of police brutality against Native people in March 2000 after two Native men

(Rodney Naistus and Lawrence Wegner) were found frozen to death on the outskirts of the city where they were allegedly abandoned by the police.[5] The more recent cases of Neil Stonechild and Darrel Night[6] are also examples of death caused by police brutality and negligence. In June 2004 "The Commission on First Nations and Métis Peoples and Justice Reform" concluded that "racism in police services does exist and is a major contributor to the environment of mistrust and misunderstanding that exists in Saskatchewan."[7] In King's novel, Amos' experience with the ceremonial outfits and his exchange with the guard expose not only the lack of respect for other cultures but also the sheer ease with which a Native can be imprisoned:

> "We need our outfits," said Amos. "We can't dance if we don't have our outfits."
> The older guard moved in close to Amos, smiling as he came. "I can always put you in jail, if that's what you'd like. Is that what you'd like?"
> "We need our outfits."
> "Jail or home. What's it going to be?" (216)

Compare this with the inability of the law to imprison the sneaky tourists or the man who stole Milford's truck, and one is presented with King's clear exposition of the lack of parity in North American society.

King also displays the intrusive nature of non-Native society which looks at Natives as collectibles or museum pieces. The following instances foreground the related issues of

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[5] See the CBC website for more details.

[6] The Neil Stonechild case was opened after more than a dozen years following the death of two other Native men in suspicious circumstances. Neil Stonechild, a Cree teenager, was found frozen to death in a field outside Saskatchwan. A friend claims to have last seen Stonechild in police custody. Darrel Night was abandoned by the police on the outskirts of Saskatoon in freezing weather in 2000. For more information see the CBC website.

[7] See the CBC website for more details.

appropriation and objectification. The arrival of the tourists at the Sun Dance is one such example: "Every year or so, a tourist would wander into the camp. Sometimes they were invited. Other times they just saw the camp from the road and were curious. Most of the time they were friendly, and no one seemed to mind them. Occasionally, there was trouble" (117). The occasion that Eli remembers involves a troublesome and rather rude tourist who not only ignores the religious beliefs of the people but also insults and dupes the Natives. This event serves to demonstrate the non-Native attitude of reducing Natives to objects rather than viewing them as people. George Morningstar's arrival at the Sun Dance and his behaviour toward the people there adds credence to such objectification. George Morningstar is Latisha's husband who deserts her because he needs "to get his life together. To find his roots" (209). Modelled on General George A. Custer, George shares with the General not just his first name but also his "soft light brown hair that just touched his shoulders," and his fringed leather jacket (111). There is some indication that George marries Latisha because "she was, as he said, a real Indian" and because she meets him on his visit to the reserve for Indian Days (112). George's fascination with Indians is reminiscent of Karen's attraction to Eli because he is an Indian. George wants to cash in on his relationship with Latisha by claiming that he is not a stranger but family and so should be allowed to take pictures of the Sun Dance. There is a suggestion that George's position as a photojournalist at *New Age* depends on his position as an insider in the Native community and his ability to expose their secrets. Latisha's refusal to comply with his wishes or help him out invites the same kind of arguments which have been leveled by non-Natives against Native assertions of privacy regarding their religious

ceremonies. King highlights the vulnerability of the Natives to such intrusions because the colonizer's law does not recognize such incursions as legally inappropriate.

The other set of tourists who are spotlighted are those who come to Latisha's Dead Dog Café. Latisha's Dead Dog Café is a "nice local establishment with a loyal but small clientele *and* a tourist trap," which has gained its reputation over time for selling dog meat (92). It is Norma's idea of selling beef as dog meat because "[t]ourists like that kind of stuff" (92). Most of these characters have contributed in one way or the other to the establishment and maintenance of stereotypes about Native people. Their reactions, therefore, to the preposterous idea of having dog meat are governed by their assumptions about Indians. The first group of tourists are straight out of the Canadian Mountie novels, and Bruce, who insists on flaunting his twenty-five years of service with the RCMP, insists that he has never heard of Indians eating dog and if he had he "would have arrested them" (111). The second group of tourists is composed of well-known Canadian writers whose material has in one way or the other influenced the way in which Natives have been perceived. Composed of Polly, John, Sue, and Archie, it is not surprising that Archie (Grey Owl) wants to see Indians, Sue (Susanna Moodie) talks about being on an adventure, and Polly (Pauline Johnson) leaves Latisha a copy of the Shagganappi along with a twenty dollar tip.

While both Dee Horne and Brian Johnson prefer to see Green Grass, Running Water as an example of "creative hybridity," I find it hard to entirely agree with either critic. According to Horne, "the creative hybrid text is productive of meaning (reforming society by reformulating it within the text); it is not simply reflective or expressive of existing reality." Rather, I would contend, King *is* expressing existing reality in the novel,

but from a Native perspective. While there is an indication in the novel that King is creating an alternative reality for the present, there is also the suggestion that radically subverting the Native-non-Native binary is not an easy task. For example, Coyote's presence might affect the landscape and the lives of all the characters in the novel, but it does not magically alleviate all the problems in the lives of the Natives. In fact, Coyote creates more problems than provides solutions. However, I would agree that the form of the novel is hybrid to the extent that it uses both inherited and colonial forms; for example, King writes the novel in the English language and makes use of canonical texts but they are put to Native ends. I also find myself at variance with Johnson when he observes that "it would be a misinterpretation to suggest that the novel itself is technophobic" and that "King nonetheless remains cautiously optimistic that, like the book, electric media can be adopted and adapted, to more accurately reflect divergent cultural perspectives." It seems to me that the characters in the novel are either compelled to watch television, such as Lionel, Alberta, Charlie, because they are unable to sleep or out of habit, or they are resistant to having newer technology invade their homes, such as Harley and Camelot who are happy with their age-old television set, or Eli who resists having even a decent radio in his cabin. At any rate, King's treatment of technology cannot be equated with that of, say, Leslie Marmon Silko's in Almanac of the Dead.[8] According to Margara Averbach, the episode relating to the old unnamed Yupik Medicine woman and the weather maps is an instance of the "translation of technology" (174). In this episode, Rose, working as a translator, explains the significance of the

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[8] Margara Averbach provides a very compelling illustration of "inverse appropriation" in Native texts, and she uses Silko's novel, among others, to show how technology is appropriated to serve Native requirements (166).

weather maps transmitted by satellite to the Medicine woman, who is interested in them. This information makes the Medicine woman realize that "white people could fly circling objects in the sky that sent messages and images of nightmares and dreams but . . . [she] knew how to turn the destruction back on its senders" (156). Consequently, she "turns this destruction back against the whites, and to do that she rewrites and ceremoniously translates the weather maps. Her ceremonies reorganize the image around a non-Western idea of representation and do so with traditional elements such as the 'recitations of the stories' and the rubbing of weasel fur against the screen of the television set"[9] (Averbach 174). Her intervention results in the modification of the weather in Alaska and the crashing of the colonizer's airplanes.

However, I do find myself in agreement with Johnson regarding King's argument against seeing Native literature as post-colonial as proof of his resistance to any purely oppositional model of Native literature. The following extract from "Godzilla vs. Post-Colonial" reveals that King's premise for objecting to the post-colonial label is that (a) it discounts the presence of Native literature prior to colonization, and (b) it assumes that Native literature is a product of the struggle between colonizer and colonized:

> [While] post-colonialism purports to be a method by which we can begin to look at those literatures which are formed out of the struggle of the oppressed against the oppressor, the colonized and the colonizer, the term itself assumes . . . that the struggle between guardian and ward is the catalyst for contemporary Native literature. And, worst of all, the idea of post-colonial writing effectively cuts us off from our traditions, traditions that were in place before colonialism ever became a

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[9] The process is described in the following manner: "She rubbed the weasel fur rapidly over the glass of the TV screen, faster and faster; the crackling and sparks became louder and brighter until the image of the weather map on the TV screen began to swirl with masses of storm clouds moving more rapidly with each stroke of the fur. Then the old woman had closed her eyes and summoned all the energy, all the force of the spirit beings furious and vengeful" (175).

> question, traditions that have come down to us through our cultures in spite of colonization, and it supposes that contemporary Native writing is largely a construct of oppression. (12)

King's resistance is understandable given the fact that any literature born out of a struggle will always be a literature of resistance, which would severely restrict its growth and curtail its author's creativity.[10] King's dexterity in playing with Western literature and mainstream history arises from his determination not to see his writing as oppositional or reactionary. This is what separates Green Grass, Running Water from its Native peers. In this respect, Green Grass, Running Water appears to mark a movement away from the kind of writing witnessed in the counterwriting texts. By refusing to accept the definitions of the colonizer, King not only demolishes colonial myths of superiority but also privileges the Native worldview. Green Grass, Running Water appears to be King's invitation to see the world anew from the perspective of the Native. Monkey Beach, the novel discussed in the next chapter follows the same trajectory of moving away from a confrontational model, a movement which as we shall see, is beset with its own set of problems.

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[10] King's reluctance to see Native literature solely as resistance literature echoes a similar point raised in the introduction.

Chapter 6: Other Ethnicities and the Marginalization of the non-Native

In the previous chapters the opposition has largely been between non-Native and Native peoples, with non-Natives implying all categories of peoples who are not of Native extraction. It is worth mentioning, in passing, that most Native writers tend to reduce the multiculturality of North America to a binary—Native versus White—in a manner similar to the aggregation of Native cultures under a single rubric. Such disregard of other cultural minorities might have something to do with Natives being largely ignored in the writings of those with hyphenated North American identities. This chapter takes into account specific ethnicities included in the category of the non-Native and mentioned by Native writers.[1] The ethnicities referred to are Africans/Blacks (Babo in Green Grass, Running Water), Germans (Herr Schwarzkopf in Kiss of the Fur Queen), and Jews (Colleen Birk in alterNatives).[2] It is, perhaps, useful to indicate that the treatment of these other ethnicities is guided more by the record of historical interaction between them and the Natives, and less by Anglo-North American society's treatment of them. Accordingly, the portrayal of Babo is quite different from that of Herr Schwarzkopf. The other concern of this chapter is the marginalization of the non-Native in Native fiction. Unlike the other texts in this thesis,[3] which either allow their non-Native characters to damn themselves by their own words or do it for them thereby maintaining the centrality of their presence in the text, Eden Robinson makes the non-

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[1] The examples are from texts which have been discussed in the earlier chapters.

[2] The Tacknyks have already been discussed in Chapter Two, and so are not mentioned here.

[3] The notable exception being Highway's Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing.

Native presence marginal in her novel Monkey Beach. Her strategy of relegating representatives of Euroamerican society to the margins and populating the "wilderness" with Natives is the reversal of the Richardsonian binary of garrison and forest.[4] By doing this Robinson destabilizes the established notion of the forest as uninhabited, wild, and beyond the pale of civilization, and turns it into a vibrant place in which non-Natives are a transient presence. Not only does Robinson intervene in the grand narratives of colonial history but also dismantles the Self-Other binary by denying that the Self is indispensable to the Other's self-definition . Accordingly, she displays aspects of stealing the horses by giving the colonizer a taste of his own medicine. While the novel does share some strategies with Highway's Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing such as the lack of non-Native characters, the elucidation of the political and religious effects of colonization on Native society, the loss of the spiritual center, and the death of young men, Robinson's critique lacks Highway's militancy. The nightmarish quality of events, which is common to both texts, is put to different uses by the authors. While Highway contains the nightmare of colonization by placing it in a framework of affirmation that seems like a damage-control device, Robinson counters the terrible effects of colonization by demonstrating how the rediscovery of cultural roots can assist healing.

The two sections of this chapter have in common the issue of marginalization. The relationship between the two sections is also ironic: while the section on other ethnicities outlines the peripheral position occupied by non-Anglo Euroamericans in North American White society, the section on Monkey Beach discusses the strategies that

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[4] Richardson's Wacousta is used in this study as the ur-text for the representation of Natives in non-Native Canadian fiction. The plural connections between Wacousta and selected twentieth-century Canadian texts have already been discussed in Chapter 1.

Robinson uses to marginalize those who are its primary practitioners, which is the Anglo-Euroamericans. In addition, both sections share the related issues of assimilation and acculturation, and discuss how each community has reacted to these topics.

(a) Other Ethnicities

The texts which have been discussed so far highlight the understanding of "difference" between Natives and non-Natives, whether in terms of social constructs, political structures, religious beliefs, or spirituality. The authors take great care in emphasizing that difference is not equal to deficiency or lack, an equation that has been popularized by non-Natives in their efforts to subjugate and rule the Other. It seems that the writers bring a historical bearing on the crafting of their ethnic characters. Native reactions to these characters appear to be governed by the historical relations that they, as a group, may have had with the indigenous peoples of North America. While I am uncomfortable with the idea of treating ethnic groups such as the Natives, Africans, Germans, or the Jews as uniform entities given the critical climate of the times, in the context of this study the characterization of ethnic groups under categorical rubrics is a heuristic strategy.

In spite of the best intentions and endeavours of America's founding fathers and racial purists, who originally envisioned America as an exclusively "White"—read English—nation, the lack of adequate labour, capital, and the need for skilled workers necessitated the arrival of Africans, Asians, Jews, and a variety of Europeans. The desire for quick and easy economic gain dominated the American colonist's concerns and this initiated the recruitment of peoples from other nations "who would work at wages so low that extraordinary profits could be achieved" (Dinnerstein 13). This called for the importation

of Africans on a grand scale, which would provide the cheap labour so desired by the colonist. Unlike the poor Whites, who came to the colony from England as indentured labourers and then terminated their services after a period of time, the Africans and their progeny were slaves for life. Not only were the slaves treated inhumanly, but their racial and colour differences gave rise to myths about White racial supremacy. In addition, they were recipients of the same contempt and loathing that was so far reserved for the Indians. However, as Dinnerstein notes, "the colonists feared that Indians and slaves might combine forces and destroy them, or that the tribesman would offer a haven for runaways. To prevent these occurrences, whites [sic] spread tales of Indian torture and atrocities among the blacks, and at the same time paid the nearby Indian tribes to return escaped slaves" (19). In spite of exercising the classic divide-and-rule policy so dear to the English, they could not entirely prevent the formation of alliances between the two peoples. Relations between Europeans and Africans and Europeans and Natives have been the topic for countless discussions and books; some well-known titles include Terry White's Blacks and Whites Meeting in America: Eighteen Essays on Race, Forbidden Love : The Secret History of Mixed-Race America and Red, White, and Black: The Peoples of Early America by Gary B. Nash, Ronald Takaki's A Different Mirror : A History of Multicultural America, J. C. H. King's First Peoples, First Contacts: Native Peoples of North America, and James Axtell's Beyond 1492: Encounters in Colonial North America, among others. Not much light, however, has been shed on associations between Africans and Natives.[5] One possible reason for Natives not mentioning this

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[5] Katz's Black Indians: A Hidden Heritage (1986) paved the way for other works on Native-Black history such as Jack D. Forbes' Africans and Native Americans: The Language of Race and the Evolution of Red-Black Peoples (1993), The Black Seminoles:

aspect of their history could be the Euroamerican system for determining racial purity based on blood quantum to decide whether the person in question was eligible for treaty rights or otherwise. Similarly, the emergence of the Black power movement in the United States, with its emphasis on cultural continuity and Blackness, could ill-afford to publicize racial mixing. However, the two non-White peoples do share a common history, which was perhaps the reason that united them against a common oppressor.

The earliest record of Native-African interaction is in 1526 when Vasquez de Ayllon, a wealthy Spanish official in the city of Santo Domingo in Hispaniola founded a colony in eastern South Carolina. Landing on the coast with five-hundred Spanish men and women, one-hundred African slaves, six or seven dozen horses and three Dominican priests, he built the settlement of San Miguel de Gualdape. Five months later the colony was ravaged by disease, starvation, and internal disputes and the enslaved Africans fled the settlement to join the Natives in the woods. Thus were created the Black Indians of Pee Dee River, the first fruit of the friendship between two peoples of colour. In this regard, William Loren Katz notes, "Europeans forcefully entered the African blood stream, but Native Americans and Africans merged by choice, invitation, and love" (2). Katz's groundbreaking and controversial study of Native and African relations, aptly titled Black Indians: A Hidden Heritage, chronicles some aspects of the interactions between the two races. If the Natives and the Africans form the two sides of a triangle, the third side is undoubtedly the Euroamerican. Not surprisingly, therefore, the entity which brought about the union of these two peoples is the colonizer. As mentioned

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History of a Freedom-Seeking People (1996) by Kenneth Wiggins Porter, Alcione M. Amos, and Thomas P. Senter, and Jeff Guinn's Our Land Before We Die: The Proud Story of the Seminole Negro (2002).

earlier, the colonizer tried to keep the two races apart by turning one against the other. However, contrary to expectations, Native villages became havens for the fugitive Africans, Natives became their protectors, and the colonizer found himself grappling with a worrisome problem. According to Katz, Africans proved useful allies for the Natives as "[t]hrough their slave experience they qualified as experts on whites—their diplomacy, armaments, motives, strengths, and weaknesses. Escaped slaves came bearing knowledge of their masters' languages, defenses, and plans. Sometimes Africans were able to carry off muskets, machetes, or valuable gunpowder" (28-9). Katz proposes that perhaps another reason for eliminating Natives was to prevent their forming alliances with Africans (7).

Farfetched as it may seem, the possibilities of resistance and aggression that could come from a combined force of Natives and Africans is well illustrated through the case of the Black Seminoles. The Seminole Wars of the 1830s saw Natives and Africans united against a common cause. The Seminoles of Florida offered refuge to the runaway slaves who then became an integral part of the Seminole Nation. Africans married Native women who were free, in the hope that even if they were captured their children would be free. The Black Seminoles who were the result of these unions were the bane of White military men and were often cited as the culprits in the ongoing resistance offered by the Natives (Katz 100-13). Though members of the Five "Civilized" Nations (Cherokee, Chickasaw, Creek, Seminole, and Choctaw), the Seminoles never adopted the Euroamerican practice of keeping slaves. To protect their African brothers and sisters from their white ex-owners they identified them as property, but their treatment of the "slaves" greatly enraged the Whites. The integration of Africans into the fabric of the

Nation caused much discussion among the Whites, and it was finally decided that the Indians did not know how to keep slaves and needed to be taught (Katz114-25).

Slavery was introduced among the Five Nations by the Whites to keep their slave property secure by drawing Natives into the system. Unlike the Seminoles the other four Nations adopted slavery and even had "Slave Codes" (Katz 135). However, as they came to realize, the Indians had very different notions about how slaves should be treated. While Africans were held in bondage by the Natives "most observers found that the chains of slavery were fitted rather loosely on black people owned by Indians" (Katz 136). This is not to say that there were no Natives who treated the Africans badly. Some Nations such as the Catawbas of South Carolina had a reputation of being slave hunters and were paid by slave owners to capture runaway slaves. In the eventuality that the closest Nation refused to do the hunting, other Nations were called in to do the needful.

While the Blackfoot of North America do not appear in the annals of history as having had any historical exchanges with Africans, Thomas King's Cherokee ancestry may well attest to Native-African encounters. The characterization of Babo Jones in King's Green Grass, Running Water shows signs of the writer's familiarity with Native-African historical relations. Sergeant Cereno's attitude towards Babo, who has worked for sixteen years in Dr. Hovaugh's asylum, when he questions her regarding the missing Indians reflects his racial and class prejudices. While he insists that Babo refer to him as "Sergeant Cereno," he is dismissive of Babo's insistence that he call her "Ms" instead of "Miss." His obvious impatience with Babo's circumlocutory manner of speaking, which is reminiscent of the way in which the Native characters converse in the novel, aligns her with the Natives and him against the both of them. His parting reference to Babo as

"Aunt Jemima" (45) exposes the power of stereotyping in White society. In addition, King's play on Conrad's short story "Benito Cereno," from which the names Babo and Cereno have been borrowed, places them in antagonistic positions. King underscores the allusion by making Babo trace her ancestry back to her great-great-grandfather who was a barber on a ship. However, Sergeant Cereno is not the only character with racist assumptions in the novel; the interchange between Dr. Hovaugh and the guard on the Canadian border is a case in point:

> 'Are you bringing anything into Canada that you plan to sell or leave as a gift?' said the guard.
> 'Nothing,' said Dr. Hovaugh.
> 'What about her?' said the guard.
> 'She's with me.'
> 'Nonetheless, you'll have to register her,' said the guard.
> 'I see,' said Dr. Hovaugh.
> 'All personal property has to be registered.'
> 'Yes,' said Dr. Hovaugh. 'Of course.'
> 'It's for your protection as well as ours,' said the guard. (198)

The assumption that Babo is Dr. Hovaugh's "personal property," a danger to the "settlers," and the suggestion that he may want to sell her in Canada resonate with the American history of slavery and the slave trade. Dr. Hovaugh's high-handed attitude at the Canadian border when he tells Babo to let him do the talking, and at the lodge where he assumes that Babo will carry his luggage reinforce the stereotypical assumptions regarding race. In this regard Babo makes an important correction when she tells Dr. Hovaugh that her ancestors were "enslaved" but were not slaves (261). Babo's importance as a mediator between Natives and Whites, which has a historical precedent, is denied by Dr. Hovaugh who insinuates that he brought Babo along because "it is always advisable to have someone who knows them close at hand" (260). Babo's knowledge regarding the Indians is based on personal contact and interchange. She

perceives them correctly as women and tells Sergeant Cereno, "We used to talk, you know, life, kids, fixing the world. Stuff like that. We'd trade stories too, the Indians and me" (45). Babo's respect for the stories which the Indian women have told her and her sensitivity to appropriation is a contrast to the grossly appropriative gestures of the Euroamerican tourists and George Morningstar: "'Now you got to remember that this is their story. I'm just repeating it as favour. You understand?'" (45). Alberta's perception of Babo is markedly different from that of the White characters; as she watches her across the room, Alberta thinks "[p]erhaps she was an entertainer, someone from the States up for a show. Or maybe she was a movie star" (236). Musing on the reason for Babo's presence in Canada, Alberta realizes that she must be a tourist because "[Y]ou didn't see many black people in Alberta... For that matter you didn't see many black people in Canada at all. A colleague of hers at Calgary, a man from New York who liked to work at being provocative, told her that Canada was an all-white country, that the only reason there were any blacks in Canada at all was because of the Commonwealth. Except for baseball, of course" (235). The difference in the assumptions of the White guard and the Native professor with regard to an unknown Black woman accompanied by a White man highlight how our perceptions regarding ethnic groups are dictated by historical understanding and prevalent stereotypes. While one may argue that Alberta's perception of Babo is as essentialized as that of the White characters, it is important to note that her comment is more of a reflection on Canadian society and not so much on Babo as an exotic Black woman.

The non-Anglo Europeans, in particular the Germans and the Scotch-Irish, arrived in America in the eighteenth century. While they were welcomed for their wealth and

skills, they too suffered under English domination. The bitterness between the English and the Europeans was mostly caused by local problems in the American colonies. In the case of the Germans, their pacifism, the desire to maintain their own language and customs, their need for privacy, and their anti-slavery stance, convinced the English of their lack of patriotism and led to their being dubbed as dangerous to the colony. The move to Americanize the Germans through the institution of "charity" or free schools for German communities in the 1760s met with opposition from German leaders who saw it as a move to provide cannon-fodder for the military. Though the Germans were the largest of immigrant groups in the United States and participated in American society as intellectuals, radicals, and labourers, they resisted the blandishments of the melting pot and made every effort to maintain their Old World culture. It is worth mentioning in this context that the Germans supported the English on the Indian question which involved taking stringent measures against the Indians and restraining them (Dinnerstein 20-24).

Colin G. Calloway, commenting on Native-German relations, notes:

> For the most part Germans approached Indian country for much the same reasons as other Europeans did and behaved in much the same manner as they did, and the Indians responded to them accordingly. But Germans also often occupied a somewhat marginal position in colonial America and the United States, and on occasion they developed their own particular relations with Indian people. Those relations prompted Indians to identify them sometimes as friends, sometimes as intermediaries with other more aggressive Europeans, sometimes as the prime aggressor in frontier conflicts. (48)

This assessment would indicate that Native-German relations in North America were no different from other relations between two peoples engaged in mutual conflict or benefit. However, this relationship is granted a complexity when seen through the fictional lenses of German novelist Karl May (1842-1912), in whose novels encounters between Germans and Indians take place. According to Susanne Zantop, May in his bestselling

Winnetou trilogy gives his audience "the exoticized yet sympathetic, even idealizing depiction of the Other . . . [and] the fantasy of balance, equality, tacit agreement, and respect between the two extraordinary men/cultures [Old Shatterhand and Winnetou (Apache)] as they meet eye-to-eye" (3). Zantop compares the German-Indian relationship in May's novels with "the black cop-white cop buddy fantasies that have recently populated U.S. films and in which the moral stature of the white hero is enhanced by the presence of the dark-skinned sidekick" (4). Not unlike the Lone Ranger-Tonto or Hawkeye-Chingachgook pairs, the Shatterhand-Winnetou relationship captured the imagination of the German nation and generated "a whole culture industry that almost obsessively reiterates and thereby reproduces the idea of a special affinity between Germans and Native Americans based on shared experiences" (Zantop 4). Just what these "shared experiences" could be has been deliberated on by various German critics who have come up with three possible scenarios. According to Peter Bolz, it is the German longing for political freedom and freedom of movement during the nineteenth and first half of the twentieth century that propelled the Germans to identify their predicament with the colonized Native Americans. Not surprisingly, they referred to themselves and were referred to as "the Indians of Europe." Gerd Gemünden and Susanne Zantop have established similar connections between a collective sense of inferiority resulting from military and political defeat, and a collective identification with the Indian as the loser. Harmut Lutz sees a link between "the Germans' quest for a national identity and territory in the nineteenth century and their sentimental self-projections as the *Indianer* of Europe, colonized and oppressed by others yet longing to be free" (qtd. in Zantop 7).

"Indianthusiam," a term coined by Harmut Lutz, is espoused by a large number of Germans and finds expression in the creation of *Indianer* clubs where they don feather headgears and play Indian, have weekend retreats in sweat lodges, and spend money on self-styled shamans for spiritual enlightenment (Zantop 7). Calloway notes that "Germany offers a large market for Native American goods, with sales of jewelery alone reaching nine million dollars in 1998 and with significant potential for expansion" (76). While most German critics who deal in Native-German relations find it hard to digest Ward Churchill's assessment of German "hobbyism" and call his critique unfair and harsh, Churchill does have a point. In the section titled "View from a Foreign Shore" in his article "Indians Are Us?: Reflections on the 'Men's Movement'," Churchill recalls his observations on "a recent (unpaid) political speaking tour of Germany" (222). Confronted by a group of German "hobbyists" decked out in beaded moccasins, buckskin, braided hair, and carrying self-fashioned pipestone pipes, Churchill finds that "(in reality, they looked much more like Vikings than Cheyennes or Shoshones)" (222). Churchill's opinion of German "Indianthusiam" is less sympathetic than those noted earlier:

> Bluntly put—and the majority were precisely this harsh in their own articulations—they absolutely *hate* the idea of being Europeans, especially Germans. Abundant mention was made to their collective revulsion to the European heritage of colonization and genocide, particularly the ravages of nazism [sic].... Their response, as a group, was to try and disassociate themselves from what it was/is they object to by announcing their personal identities in terms as diametrically opposes to it as they could conceive. "Becoming" American Indians in their own minds apparently fulfilled this deep seated need in the most gratifying fashion. (224)

However, Churchill finds that these Germans are Indians on weekends and "good Germans" on weekdays. In addition, they consider themselves a "spiritual people" and

therefore "apolitical," which seemingly absolves them of engaging in activities to physically defend the rights and territories of the people whose culture they appropriate (225). Churchill's diagnosis is that the German hobbyism helps them to reconcile themselves to their Germanic context: it is a form of "'feel[ing] good about themselves'" (225).

Highway appears to share Churchill's assessment of German hobbyism in Kiss of the Fur Queen. The first reference to Germany comes up rather gauchely at the very beginning of the novel when Abraham Okimasis wins the dogsled race. The attraction of the Trappers' Festival is the Fur Queen Beauty Pageant which boasts of seven finalists who "had been prodded, poked, photographed, interviewed, felt, watched, paraded around the town for the entire three days of the Trappers' Festival, for the delectation of audiences from as far afield as Whitehorse, Yellowknife, Labrador, and even Germany, it had been reported in the *Oopaskooyak Times*" (7). The exclusive German interest in a local trappers' festival seems out of place and stands out in the company of local place-names. The second mention comes up in relation to the Wasaychigan Hill Pow Wow where Jeremiah feels like a "German tourist" (242). This reference is not elaborated on or explained; aside from implying that Jeremiah feels like a stranger or feels that he does not belong to that community, the significance of the allusion is left to the reader's imagination. Reading it against Churchill's assessment, one could say that Jeremiah lacks the allegiance for or spiritual connection to his Native heritage as a German tourist would; or that his presence there is similar to that of a German hobbyist for whom this is a weekend getaway. Zantop observes that "German protagonists as a separate, clearly distinguishable category figure, for example, in novels and short stories by Louise

Erdrich, Lee Maracle, Richard Wagamese, Emma Lee Warrior, Tomson Highway to name a few. All these writers explicitly or implicitly address the question of how fantasies of a specific affinity or mutual prejudices affect the interaction of both 'ethnicities'" (7).

Jeremiah's prejudices come out in relation with Herr Schwarzkopf, his German History professor. Jeremiah is quick to turn Herr Schwarzkopf into a caricature with his grating German accent and "generous Hanseatic[6] nostrils" which "honk so loud that Jeremiah envision[s] a flotilla of boats in Danzig[7] harbout" (123). Assuming that Highway's use of these key terms are not motivated simply by their exotic names, the mercantile and Third Reich connotations associated with them place Herr Schwarzkopf squarely in the category of the exploitative colonizer. In addition, Herr Schwarzkopf's bloodlust and misogyny are evinced through his lesson on European history, which reveals the collusion between religion and colonization. Jeremiah's comment on his teacher's description of the burning of "witches" during the Spanish Inquisition is revealing: "For Herr Schwarzkopf, it appeared, the more gruesome the account, the better; if the occasional man, too, had been burnt as a witch, he ignored the fact and, apparently, wished his students to do as well" (123). His less than amicable attitude

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[6] From Hansa: a league originally constituted of merchants of various free German cities dealing abroad in the medieval period and later of the cities themselves and organized to secure greater safety and privileges in trading.

[7] In the aftermath of World War I the port of Danzig, with its close to half a million German inhabitants, was given to Poland so that the new country would have access to the sea at Danzig (Gdansk). This separated East Prussia from the rest of Germany. In 1939, Hitler demanded the return of Danzig to the German Reich but met with resistance from the Poles. This is more popularly known as the "Danzig Problem." Polish reluctance to return its German provinces gave Hitler the excuse he needed to storm Poland which he did on September 1, 1939.

toward his teacher can be read on two levels: Herr Schwarzkopf's pronounced racial features isolate him and mark him as a foreigner. It is plausible that Jeremiah, who at this point in the narrative is fiercely trying to become a part of the melting pot by erasing his racial distinctiveness, finds Herr Schwarzkopf's marked display of roots disturbing. On a more general level, given that the genocide perpetrated in North America is often compared to the Holocaust engineered by the Nazis, and that Hitler is said to have modeled his extermination of the Jews on the Euroamerican annihilation of the Natives,[8] the characterization of Herr Schwarzkopf could be an unconscious negative reaction on the part of the character and a studied one on the part of the author.

The New World held no respite, however, for the non-Christian. Although the Jews who migrated to America contributed to colonial economic development, they were not looked upon kindly and were persecuted on the basis of their religious beliefs. Dinnerstein notes, "Anti-Semitism, in fact, was the one prejudice common to most of the European immigrants, and it surfaced among Americans as well" (236). The influx of Jews into the New World was met with increasingly discriminatory practices, such as barring them from clubs, resorts, jobs, and residential areas. Social antipathy was often complemented by physical and verbal abuse. Jews, owing to social pressures, were amenable to the idea of Americanization: Jewish children belonging to the second and third generations did not share their parents' commitment to the Old World and its values

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[8] Ward Churchill is credited with this connection between "Manifest Destiny" and the "Final Solution," though he observes in an interview with Derrick Jensen that "'Actually, the first person I'm aware of to make that connection was Adolf Hitler. He stated clearly in Mein Kampf that he did not take any of the old empires of Europe as the model for what he saw as the destiny of the German people. Rather, he took the Nordic population, as he called it, of North America, who had had the 'strength of will' to exterminate an 'inferior' people and put their land to its own use, making of itself in fairly short order a continental power capable of projecting a global influence on the course of events.'"

(Dinnerstein 233-37). The index of assimilation is readily apparent in the change of names, for example, Greenberg became Green, Borach became Brice, Birnbaum became Burns, and Levitch became Lewis, among others.

The interaction between Jews and Indians, which came about after the opening up of the Western frontier, has a precedent in Christian cosmogony and the desire on the part of the Euroamericans to find a place, as it were, for the Natives in Christian history. While the Natives were linked to the ancient cultures known to the West, such as the Greeks, Scythians, Tartars, and Spaniards, the most popular choice were the ancient Jews. Accordingly, the Natives were connected to the Ten Lost Tribes but were "portrayed as corrupt copies of the Jewish or other high civilizations of the past or, at worst, the very agents of Satan's own degeneracy" (Berkhofer 37).

The opening up of the West provided excellent trade opportunities for the adventurous, and the industrious Jews moved westward as suppliers of wanted wares. While not much has been written about Jewish peddlers in the West, even less attention has been paid to the likely encounters between Jews and the Native inhabitants of the Western territory. M. L. Marks' Jews among the Indians: Tales of Adventure and Conflict in the Old West (1992) is one of a kind in its treatment of first-contact narratives between Jews and Natives. Of the seven featured Jews five are peddlers of varying degrees, while of the remaining two one is an artist and the other a Superintendent of Indian Affairs. While there may have been countless other Jewish men and women worthy of mention, Marks' choice of these seven is dictated by the extent of their interaction with Natives and the fact that most of them were peddlers. Immigrants in the New World, regardless of their ethnic affiliations were united in regarding the Jews as

objects of contempt. The values of the Old World, in this regard, were duplicated in the new one; however, one society that did not recognize or espouse the values of the White man was Native society. This may or may not have played a crucial part in Native-Jewish relations, as for the Natives the Jewish peddler was yet another "White" man with whom they could trade and form alliances through inter-marriages. For the Natives, the Jews must have qualified as the "Other" as many Jews flourished using the same mechanisms of exploitation with regard to the Natives as did other Euroamericans. The Jews mentioned in Marks' work, however, are distinguished from the common trader by the personal element in their dealings with Natives: these men engaged with Natives in military, commercial, governmental, artistic, and supervisory capacities, and were distinguished enough to leave their mark on history. The one exception which proves the rule is Sigmund Schlesinger who fought against a combined army of the Cheyenne, Oglala Sioux, Arapaho, Kiowa, and Comanche at the Battle of Beecher Island in 1868 and was recognized as a hero for his military acumen. Marks cites Herman Bendall, who was appointed Superintendent of Indian affairs in 1869 by President Ulysses Grant, and whose aim was to foster the Indians' independence and self-reliance, though he deplored the idea of treating them permissively. Julius Meyer, Joseph Sondheimer, and Solomon Bibo are mentioned in relation with commercial transactions in addition to their personal interactions with the Natives. For example, Meyer was adopted by the Pawnees and named "Box-Ka-Re-Sha-Hash-Ta-Ka" which translates as "Curly-headed white chief who speaks with one tongue" (50). Solomon Bibo, also known as Don Solomono among the Acoma pueblo, married the granddaughter of the governor of the Acoma pueblo in 1885 and was appointed governor in 1888, the only Jew and white man in the history of

the Acoma to hold that title. Joseph Sondheimer had a less than amicable relationship with the Natives owing to his being an outspoken critic of the Indian-actuated taxation until the time Oklahoma achieved statehood. Even less desirable was the recently-converted Mormon Levi Abrams who triggered the bloodiest decade in Utah in 1853 when he murdered Tonif, a Pavant chief's father. The last name that comes up is of Solomon Nunes Carvalho, painter and daguerreotypist, who accompanied Fremont on the Trans-Mississippi expedition to find the optimum railroad route through the Rockies. It was on this expedition that Carvalho painted Natives and, in doing so, joined the league of painters such as George Catlin and Paul Kane.

In the context of this history of Jewish-Native relations, Drew Hayden Taylor's choice of a Jewish professor of English as one of his primary characters in alterNatives is understandable. The choice of people from other ethnicities and their use in Native fiction seems to be predicated on two identifiable bases: the nature of their historical interaction with Native tribes and the degree to which they acquiesced in the policies of acculturation. Colleen's change of name from Berkowicz to Birk, and her reluctance to publicize her Jewish heritage is a clear indicator of the unattractive history of anti-Semitism in North America. Her attraction to Native culture and to Angel, her Native lover, could be seen as a desire to adopt another culture as her own, in addition to continuing the tradition of inter-racial marriages between Natives and Jews. The militant stance of the alterNatives against Colleen is three-pronged: personal, professional, and cultural. Yvonne's accusation that Colleen is mothering Angel and ruining his career as a writer is an expression of romantic jealousy, while Bobby's accusations of Colleen being hand in glove with the colonizer stem from her being a member of the academy. Colleen

is suspect culturally, according to Yvonne, because she is "a woman in search of a culture" (112). While the charges against Colleen do seem somewhat inflated she cannot be totally absolved of the charges. Though she does come out and defend her ethnic identity as a third generation Jew, her interest in Native culture is not purely academic.

(b) Marginalization of the non-Native in Monkey Beach

Eden Robinson's Monkey Beach, a novel that reads like a primer on Haisla history and culture, is about the complexity of being Native in a "progressive" and "modern" world. Robinson becomes the anthropologist-cum-historian who takes it upon herself to reveal aspects of Haisla society and culture to the reader; the difference is that she acts in the aforementioned capacity for her own people, and her novel is directed as much toward non-Natives as it is toward Natives who have drifted away from their cultural roots. The novel is also a redefinition of being Native and a revelation of how older values are regenerated and conveyed in a manifestly different society. Most of all, the novel is about the persistence of a culture that has resisted assimilation, but has incorporated, and been influenced by, elements of a culture other than its own. The use of "culture" in the singular is indicative of the limited nature of this discussion, which deals primarily with the influence of Anglo-American culture on Native cultures. Most critics who discuss Native/non-Native relations in North America are quick to differentiate between the open and flexible nature of Native society and the closeness and intolerance of the non-Native. The capacity of Native society to embrace and subsume elements of an(Other) culture and yet retain its essential nature is what comes across

through Monkey Beach. In ethnology this capacity is termed "acculturation." The Social Science Research Council broadly defines "acculturation" as "'culture change that is initiated by the conjunction of two or more autonomous cultural systems'" (Teske and Nelson 352). Aside from being a "dynamic process" initiated by the "continuous first hand contact" between autonomous cultures, acculturation is not a monolithic term and there are "degrees of acculturation" (Teske and Nelson 351). According to Emory S. Bogardus, there are three types of acculturation—blind, imposed, and democratic. Of the three, the category of "imposed acculturation," which "implies one people's suppression of another people's culture and the forced imposition of its own behavior patterns and ideas" can be applied to the cultural policy practiced in North America (qtd. in Teske and Nelson 355). However, Joseph Eaton's concept of "controlled acculturation" comes closer to what Robinson presents in her novel; this type of acculturation is defined as "'the process by which one culture accepts a practice from another, but integrates the new practice into its own existing value system. It does not surrender its autonomy or separate identity . . .'" (qtd. in Teske and Nelson 357). In addition, acculturation does not imply a change in value systems or require a "positive orientation" toward the group whose culture is being adopted (Teske and Nelson 357).

Teske and Nelson argue that acculturation and assimilation are separate processes, though they may be interrelated. The two main points on which these categories differ are as follows: acculturation does not require acceptance of the acculturating body by the dominant group, while this is a prerequisite for assimilation, and unlike acculturation, assimilation requires a positive orientation toward the dominant group (359). Thus, the subordinated group can adopt cultural practices and elements of the dominant group

without either identifying with it or approving of it. According to Alba and Nee, "in recent decades assimilation has come to be viewed by social scientists as a worn-out theory which imposes ethnocentric and patronizing demands on minority peoples struggling to retain their cultural and ethnic integrity" (827). The innate assumption of racial superiority in assimilation, which dictates the erasure of the subordinated group's cultural memory, is one of the main reasons for its rejection by Native peoples. While assimilation is holistic in its approach and requires a complete surrender to the ways of another culture, acculturation can involve a change in extrinsic or intrinsic cultural traits. While intrinsic cultural traits are described by Milton Gordon as the "'vital ingredients of the group's cultural heritage,'" extrinsic traits "'tend to be products of the historical vicissitudes of the group's adjustment to the local environment'" and less integral to group identity (qtd. in Alba and Nee 829). In other words, the subordinated group can incorporate elements of the Other culture causing changes on the margins, while keeping the core of their cultural identity intact. According to Gordon, these changes may include "'minor modifications in cuisine, recreational patterns, place names, speech, residential architecture, sources of artistic inspiration, and perhaps a few other areas'" (qtd. in Alba and Nee 830).

In the light of the above discussion, it would not be incorrect to relate the marginalization of the non-Native in Monkey Beach to the presentation of acculturation in the Haisla community. Jennifer Andrews in "Native Canadian Gothic Refigured: Reading Eden Robinson's Monkey Beach" remarks that "[p]art of Lisamarie's challenge in Monkey Beach is to negotiate the relationship between Haisla culture and a pervasive presence of popular culture and to find a balance between the two" (13-14). If "balance"

here implies the equalization of opposing and, in all probability, equal forces, then finding a balance between Haisla and popular culture is indeed a daunting task. However, these forces are not equal, as even a cursory study of Native-White socio-political history will reveal. Therefore, the use of "balance" in this particular context seems rather problematic. Given that most of the narrative is concerned with the retrieval and continuance of Haisla culture and tradition in a community that is heavily influenced by Western popular culture, the question is less of finding a balance than of asserting a Native identity. The elements of westernization that are apparent in Monkey Beach are not treated as anomalies but as a natural part of Haisla life. However, these adoptions and changes are marginal to the way in which the Haisla perceive themselves—that is, as a separate community with a unique identity. The marginalization of non-Natives, in this case, is not a deliberate ignoring of their presence but an indication that they are not central to the Haisla community or to their self-definition.

Robinson achieves the decentring of the non-Native by effecting a reversal in her configuration of Canadian society. While we are made aware from the very beginning that the narrative is set on the "reserve," a term created and used by the colonizer, the repeated use of "village" to describe the setting slowly erodes that label. The lack of White presence in the form of characters and the overwhelming presence of Native characters—some of whom are most engaging—reverses the established setting of margin and center. While the Western presence in everyday Haisla life is palpable, Robinson does not treat it as an imposition but a predictable result of cultural interaction. Moreover, what the West has to offer is material and ephemeral—Royal Doulton dinnerware which can be smashed by a hurricane, a job that can be taken back, middle-

class gentility that is defined by stylish clothes and electrical gizmos, and cigarettes that turn to smoke before you know it. The enduring spirit that keeps the village alive is in its Haisla roots to which some cling tenaciously and from which some cannot distance themselves. The novel, in keeping with this duality, houses characters such as Lisa's parents with their middle-class gentility and material goals, Ma-ma-oo with her strong traditional roots and uncompromising lifestyle, and Mick the anti-establishment rebel. Lisa's story is also the story of these characters and of the whole Haisla nation as it were.

The West, as in most Native novels, is associated with negatives; some of the obvious connections are Residential-school experience, political oppression, unfair taxation, decimation of Native population, religious conversion, environmental pollution, and historical mendacity. Further, it is the legacy of colonization which is partly responsible for some of the tragedies in the novel. Robinson sees the world of her novel as governed, partially, by causality and the lives of some characters play this out to a tee. Mick and Trudy, who are products of the Residential schooling system, are sent there by Ma-ma-oo to protect them from Ba-ba-oo who physically abuses not only his wife but also his children. Ba-ba-oo, a war veteran, after losing an arm in the Second World War is caught in the complexities of bureaucracy for his pension: "When he came home, he couldn't get a job or get the money he thought he should get from Veterans Affairs because they said Indian Affairs was taking care of him. Indian Affairs said that if he wanted the same benefits as a white vet, he should move off reserve and give up his status" (81). Robinson makes it fairly clear that Ba-ba-oo's abuse of his family is a case of misguided anger. Unable to care for his family, he vents his frustration on them. Ma-ma-oo's well-meaning gesture of sending her children to Residential school goes amiss when both

Mick and Trudy assume that their mother has chosen their father over them. The years in Residential school have opposite effects on Mick and Trudy: while Mick becomes an AIM activist and vents his rage, Trudy takes to smoking and drugs and becomes the model incompetent mother who is babied by her own daughter. Both are considered the black sheep of the family by the rest of the siblings and estranged from them. Another misfit produced by the system is Josh who is himself a victim of sexual abuse by a priest and in turn abuses Karaoke, Jimmy's girlfriend, and as a result is murdered by Jimmy. Andrews, in this context, notes that in Monkey Beach "evil is primarily associated with Eurocentric interventions in the Haisla community rather than individual Native characters" (12). However, Robinson problematizes such a one-sided reading of the West. Ma-ma-oo's fondness for soap operas and Mick's attachment to Elvis Presley's music are thought-provoking examples of cross-cultural appreciation in the given context. What these characters respond to and identify with is the presentation of a cross-cultural and -racial experience. According to Andrews, "Ma-ma-oo roots for the various female characters on these shows, yelling at the television in an attempt to guide their ill-fated behaviour. This gesture echoes her frustration with her own past as an abused young wife who sent her children to residential school to protect them from the beatings inflicted by her now dead husband" (14). Similarly, Mick's attachment to Elvis Presley is nothing short of the fascination of a fan for a cultural icon. This is evident from his agitated reaction to the news of Presley's demise, as Lisa remembers it:

> I ran back to Mick's apartment. The door was open. Mick was in the living room, pulling apart his eight-track [Elvis Presley] tapes. Mom watched him, hugging herself. Finally, she reached out and tried to stop him. She said something I couldn't hear.
>
> 'He's dead!' Mick yelled at her. 'Don't you get it? D-E-A-D.'

> She took a step back. He crumpled and sat with a heavy thud, the pile of broken eight-tracks crunching under him. (62)

Apparently Mick's fascination with Presley is legendary, and naming Lisa after Presley's daughter is "supposed to be a touching tribute" to Mick (24). Robinson drives the point home when Mick tells his brother that he was "very happy that [Lisa] had been named after the King's daughter, but disappointed that they hadn't named Jimmy Elvis, or at the very least, Presley" (52). It is evident that Elvis Presley is an integral part of Mick's life and identity. How this has come about is left to our imagination, though it is quite possible that Elvis' image as a rebel may have attracted anti-establishment Mick to him. According to Frank Coffey, "Elvis was rebellion," and he "shook folks up" (5-6). At the time when America was intent on maintaining the status-quo of a post-World War II and post-Depression society with its Protestant and conservative values, Elvis—" a white boy singing like a black man"—upset and threatened the established order by his call to emotional expression and rejection of "cautious sensibility" (Coffey 6). Most of all Elvis represented freedom and self-expression: "In terms of society, Elvis broke down musical barriers, bringing rock and roll into the lives of many. He broke down racial barriers, making it possible for white people to sing like black people and vice versa. He broke down sexual barriers, making it acceptable to express oneself through dance in public" (Coffey 12). Robinson's references to Elvis Presley in the novel appear to have autobiographical connections as well.[9]

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[9] With the £800 that came with the prestigious Winifred Holtby first-fiction award that she won for Traplines, Robinson took her mother to Graceland, "[a] place she always wanted to go to" (Stoffman K6).

One of the points of comparison in the novel is between the sane and practical lives of Lisa's parents and the dysfunctionality of the other characters, with the exception of Ma-ma-oo. If the dysfunctional characters are presented as victims of colonial schemes, then the practical ones fare no better. Lisa's father, who has done everything that could be expected from a Native man trying to make it in the White man's world, like going to school to become an accountant and keeping a set of golf clubs, quits his firm "after they pass[ed] him up for promotion four times" (59). He ends up working at the potlines at the Alcan factory; the irony of a well-educated white-collar Native man having to do a blue-collar job, not because he is incompetent but because he is not given the opportunity, is undisguised. However, Robinson does not compose a diatribe against White Canadian society; she leaves it to the readers' discretion to see where the fault lies. In fact, most characters in the novel are remarkably embarrassed whenever another character mentions the wrongs done to Native peoples by the colonizer; for example, when Mick receives a package from Revenue Canada asking him to file returns for past years, Mick complains:

> 'I don't see why we have to file at all,' Mick said. 'The whole fucking country is on Indian land. We're not supposed to pay any taxes on or off reserves.'
> "God, don't start again,' Dad said.
> 'This whole country was built on exploiting Indians for—'
> 'Mick,' Dad pleaded. (30-31)

It is not clear whether Lisa's father begs Mick to stop because he does not want to hear it or because he does not want Lisa to be influenced by Mick's AIM philosophy. Whichever the case Lisa's father shows a degree of escapism in not wanting to confront the truth about his past and that of his nation. Lisa's mother's concern regarding her china when the village is about to be hit by a hurricane, her constant efforts to make Lisa

conform to the expected norms, her buying Ma-ma-oo stylish clothing to prevent her from wearing Salvation Army clothes, and her aspirations for Jimmy display how she also is caught in the material charade of keeping up appearances. Needless to say it is a no-win situation for the Native whether he chooses to fight the colonizer's system or become a part of it. This White preoccupation with surfaces is countered by Ma-ma-oo whose priorities in life are diametrically opposed to that of her children. In a revealing passage Lisa describes the interior of Ma-ma-oo's house:

> Inside, she kept the house tidy, but she didn't bother to decorate like other grandmas I knew. There was nothing on the walls, no doilies on the chairs, no knickknacks on her coffee table. Her saggy, orange sofa never moved from its spot by the front window. I was afraid to touch the curtains because they were so threadbare. If you breathed hard, they whispered against her cracking linoleum, which still had a few sparkles not worn out of its yellowing surface. She had a heavy, black rotary phone that rang like a fire alarm. (74)

However, "[h]er fishing nets, on the other hand, she kept immaculate, so they looked brand spanking new" (75); Ma-ma-oo's concerns seem strange to Lisa because she is unable to relate to the worldview involved. It is her grandmother, with a little help from Mick, who passes on her Haisla heritage and knowledge to Lisa. It is therefore disconcerting when both her teachers die in the course of the novel. Lisa's education in Haisla heritage includes the knowledge of the preparation of traditional foods, such as oolichan grease, salmonberry stew, and q°alh'm and their importance in Haisla culture; the history of the region and of the Haisla as a nation; learning the language and the stories about characters like the B'gwus and T'sonoqua; and rituals like mourning for the dead and the way to contact them.

Monkey Beach features a community that has succeeded in incorporating quotidian elements of the dominant culture, such as television soap operas, VCRs, and Pac-Man

games into its own without disrupting the core certainties. A good example of this is the re-configuring of the Raven story:

> Weegit the raven has mellowed in his old age. He's still a confirmed bachelor, but he's not the womanizer he once was. Plying the stock market—instead of spending his time being a trickster—has paid off and he has a comfortable condo downtown. He plays up the angle about creating the world and humans, conveniently forgetting that he did it out of boredom. Yes, he admits, he did steal the sun and the moon, but he insists that he did it to bring light to humankind even though he did it so it would be easier for him to find food. After doing some spin control on the crazy pranks of his youth, he's become respectable. As he sips his low-fat mocha and reads yet another sanitized version of his earlier exploits, only his small, sly smile reveals how much he enjoys pulling the wool over everyone else's eyes. (295-96)

Whether Raven, Lisa, and Robinson are comfortable with this shift is uncertain, though the story does reveal the adaptive nature of Native society. Raven's adoption of Western modes is reminiscent of Highway's comment regarding Weesakeechak dancing along Yonge street in Toronto.[10] The story asserts the continuation and survival of Native tradition in the face of assimilative forces: an apt metaphor for the state of Native America. The novel also highlights the selective attention given to the figures of the Trickster and the Sasquatch by Western scholars. The b'gwus or sasquatch has attracted the attention of scholars such that "[he] is the focus of countless papers, debates, and conferences. His website is www.sasquatch.com" (317). Robinson underscores the arbitrary nature of choices made by the scholars, who focus on whatever happens to catch their fancy, by introducing the figure of T'sonoqua:

> T'sonoqua is not as famous as B'gwus. She covers herself in a cloak and pretends to be an old woman. She will ask for your help, feigning a helpless shake in her hands as she leans on her cane. If you are moved to go close enough for her to see you with her poor vision, she will straighten to her true

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[10] This appears in the interview with Heather Hodgson. I have quoted from this earlier in the section on Kiss of the Fur Queen.

> height, and the hands that grip you will be as strong as a man's. She is an ogress, and she won't let go because, to her, human flesh is the ultimate delicacy and young flesh is especially sweet. But discredited scientists and amateur sleuths aren't hunting her. There are no conferences debating her existence. She doesn't have her own beer commercials. (337)

Other examples of acculturation occur in Ma-ma-oo's offering of Twinkies and a bottle of Johnnie Walker to her dead husband and Lisa cutting her hair when she is mourning for Mick and then burning it on the barbeque grill. The suggestion that the novel might be about balancing two different worlds is undercut by the privileging of Haisla names over English names (for example, the Haisla choosing the name of their village from different spellings and deciding to call it Kitamaat, or the preference for *q°alh'm* over thimbleberry), and the carefully made distinction between English and Haisla:

> Haisla has many sounds that don't exist in English, so it is not possible to spell the words using English conventions. The language of the people in Kitamaat Village is commonly called Haisla. The actual word for the Haisla language is Xa'islak'ala, to talk in the manner of Xa'isla. To say Xa'isla, touch your throat. Say the German 'ach' or Scottish 'loch.' When you say the first part, the 'Xa,' say it from far back in your throat. The apostrophe between the syllables signals both an emphasis and a pause. Say 'uh-uh,' the way you'd say it if you were telling a child not to touch a stove. Put that same pause between the first and last syllables of Xa'isla. Haisla is difficult for English speakers to learn [apparently not the other way round] partly because English sounds are formed using the front of the mouth, while Haisla uses mainly the back. (193)

In addition, the omniscient status of English as a language is undercut when Ma-ma-oo translates two stories for Lisa but insists that "to really understand the old stories . . . you had to speak Haisla" (211). Robinson undermines the Euroamerican claim to landownership by showing how the landscape itself is imbued with Haisla myth: "On my side of the channel, coming up, is *Gee Quans*, which means 'pushed out point.' Lazy, shape-changing Weegit, the raven, was tired of paddling around the mountain on his way

to Kitamaat and in a fit of energy, he tried to push the mountain down to create a shortcut. Halfway through, he took a break and never finished the job" (276).

Monkey Beach does, however, feature non-Native characters: the intriguing part is that some of the characters Robinson portrays would generally hold a marginal position in white society. The "blond white woman," whom Mick visits once he is back is Kitamaat, lives in one of the run down town houses in Kitimaat and her identity is not disclosed (29). There is not much to go on but her presence in what is predominantly a Native and industrial community marks her as a marginal figure even in white social circles. The mention of the ubiquitous "German tourists" (37), is most probably a dig at German fascination with Natives, as is the incident regarding the "three little blond kids" (218). The description of the kids as "pressing their faces against the windows, their eyes round as they stared at us as if we were dangerous animals in zoo," and the "adults excitedly pointed at us" is a fitting example of White ignorance and presumption (218). The Whites become the butt of a joke when the woman takes a picture of Pooch flipping them the bird, and Lisa tells Pooch that he is going to be famous and his postcard will read "'Indian boy gives ancient Haisla greeting'" (219). The biker, also a marginalized figure in dominant society, who bails Lisa out when she is threatened by guys in baseball caps and sunglasses, treats her like any other girl and tells her that her temper is going to get her killed. The absence of racial distinction in the biker's behaviour contrasts sharply with the racial discrimination of the boys who tells Erica that they would teach her "how to fuck a white man" and call Lisa "a feisty little squaw" (250). The similarity with the boys in cars who rape and murder the women in Kiss of the Fur Queen is uncanny; however, the repetitive image testifies to this being a common situation which Native

women have to face given the mistaken and popular image of them as whores. The last white presence is that of the young man who accosts Lisa on her way to Namu. The young man, who evidently comes from a rich family, confides in Lisa that he is being pestered by his parents to go to law school. His ambition of forming a band is not considered a good option by his parents who insist that he needs a back-up career. He seems nice enough, though his comment about how "beautiful" and "spiritual" getting back to nature is immediately puts him in a certain category (216). Lisa's description of her hasty exit—"hopping in my boat and shoving off like he had the plague"—when she realizes that Greg desperately wants to accompany her is a loaded one given the history of Native peoples half of whom were victims of biological warfare waged in the form of plagues and epidemics to which they had no immunity (218).[11]

Instead of allocating blame, Monkey Beach focuses on the retrieval of Native traditions and the enduring aspects of culture that are passed from one generation to another, such as food, stories, and rituals.[12] This facet of Robinson's novel is encouraging as it shows an awareness regarding the need to move beyond counterwriting. This is not to suggest, however remotely, that the counterwriting texts are in any way inferior in their efforts or their message; on the contrary, the progression in which the chapters are arranged signals a gradual move from one strategy of engaging with colonization to another. To focus on a living, animated Native community, which is not

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[11] J.R. Miller in Skyscrapers Hide the Heavens: A History of Indian-White relations in Canada notes that "it is quite likely that at least half of the 200,000 to 300,000 aboriginal inhabitants of Canada at contact were removed by disease over the ensuing 300 years" (48). However, Miller admits that his figures are conservative and the Native population at contact could have been as high as three-quarters of a million.

[12] The reluctance to allocate blame distinguishes Monkey Beach from the counterwriting text, while its decentring of the non-Native aligns it with Green Grass, Running Water.

immune to problems engendered by colonization but ready to grapple with and find solutions to them, is perhaps the most positive mode to adopt. Robinson's epigraph to Monkey Beach is a good indicator of the spirit in which this novel should be approached: "It is possible to retaliate against an enemy, / But impossible to retaliate against storms" (n.pag.). While much of the grief which the characters experience is caused by the effects of colonization, more grief is caused by natural disasters. The trick, Robinson appears to be suggesting, is to be able to distinguish between the two and know when to fight. Self-annihilation is evidently not the way to counter the negative effects of colonization, but the recuperation of tradition definitely is.

Robinson's Monkey Beach underscores the departure from the strategies of opposition outlined in the counterwriting text section by focusing on the retrieval, maintenance, and practice of Native traditions. This echoes the endeavours of the racial and ethnic others, mentioned in the first section, to preserve their cultural forms in the face of assimilation. In addition, like the other ethnicities mentioned earlier, the Natives are victims of certain repressive practices of Anglo-North America, aside from sharing the issue of marginalization with them. The Natives also share a history of colonialism and slavery with the Blacks, forcible assimilation into the dominant culture like the Germans, and persecution based on a different religion and observance of religious practices with the Jews.

Conclusion

I would like to conclude with a few remarks regarding the findings of this study, and a discussion of the location of Native literature in the contemporary literary scene. It seems to me that Native literature has either been perceived as a sub-category of Canadian literature or classified as postcolonial literature. In the following pages I offer a few arguments regarding why it should be regarded as neither, but treated as an independent literature. This dissertation is geared toward the examination of how the non-Native is represented in Native literature, and the findings I would hope have been most illuminating. It can be said with absolute certainty that the representation of non-Natives by Natives does not simply replicate the binary[1] but is expressed through multiple representations. Also, not all the representations are "writing back" either to the colonial centre or to the oppressor. The ones that are doing so succeed in conveying how the colonizer appears to the colonized when seen through the eyes of the latter. This unevenness in representation signals a multiplicity of perspectives on the experience of colonialism. The intention is to show the oppressor that literary representations can and do have far-reaching ramifications, and can affect the chances of survival of an oppressed people. The six chapters in this dissertation are connected by the over-arching formulation of stealing the horses, which provides the tools for interrogating the various representations. Accordingly, each of the representations contributes to the understanding and clarification of the idea. By representing the oppressor, the writers upset the existing power relation as the non-Native is no longer outside the text, but within it and open to manipulation by the Native writer. In this, the Native text becomes

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[1] The "binary" here refers to the noble savage/demonic Indian dyad found in non-Native literature.

a ground for dialogue, negotiation, and the possibility of change as the non-Native cannot turn his back on or pretend to be deaf to what the Natives are saying.

The first kind of representation that we encounter in the texts by Highway, Culleton, and Wagamese is based on the principle of "counterwriting." This involves the setting up of oppositions in order to counter mis/representations of Native peoples in non-Native society, exposing the effects on Natives of such mis/ representations, and the setting up of a new set of representations to counter the existing ones. Concerned primarily with the assignation of blame, the writers show the oppressors that it is they who are responsible to a great degree for the contemporary deplorable condition of Native peoples, and not the Natives themselves. Characters such as April and Cheryl Raintree in Culleton's novel, Jeremiah Okimasis in Kiss of the Fur Queen, and Garnet Raven in Keeper'n Me reveal the extent to which Native peoples have internalized stereotypical images of themselves and how this has had a negative affect on their self-image and sense of worth. While these stories do not harbour too many "noble whites," they are impressive in their exploration of the "demonic whiteman." These texts also manifest a conscious and persistent drive toward the recovery of lost traditions, both spiritual and cultural, and a forceful rejection of all that has been imposed by the colonizer. The recovery of lost traditions is seen as one constructive way to rebuild a disconnected and disheartened Native community, and as instrumental in the process of asserting a unique identity.

The second type of representation exposes how the oppressor seeks to supplant the Natives by pretending to be them. In the attempt to claim oneness with the colonized land, the non-Natives realize that the only way to do so is by becoming the Native. However, this can only be achieved by eliminating the Natives, but not before their

utmost secret spiritual traditions have been plundered. The problem that this representation reveals is the belief, among non-Natives, that Nativeness is something that can be acquired with monetary power. This commodification of all that being Native stands for is a telling comment on the mercantile nature of capitalist society, and the inability of institutionalized religion to minister to its constituency. The tone of this representation is lighter as compared to the previous one, because not only are aspects of it laughable but also some measure of control can be exercised on it by Native peoples. In addition, the representation exposes the ludicrous nature of white people claiming to be Indians when the only thing they have in common is the land they live on. Characters such as George Morningstar and Karen in Green Grass, Running Water and Colleen Birk in alterNatives are interested only in the accoutrements of Native culture and not in their socio-political issues and problems. The writers demonstrate how these claims damage the Natives' political struggle for self-government and a unique identity, because the people who claim to be Native treat Native culture as a curiosity and an artifact.

The third category of representation vouches for the expansiveness of the Native outlook on life. In a non-Native text, when the writer expresses his sympathy for a Native character, it tends to smack of condescension and pity owing to his/her privileged location, in spite of the writer's best intentions. Native writers, by contrast, treat their white characters with genuine compassion, which is conveyed through Ruffo's treatment of Grey Owl and Moses' view of the frontier through the eyes of the settlers. Not only do they not turn a blind eye to the faults of the characters but also try to probe the true nature of their motivations and actions. In a dealing that can turn ugly, if subjected to the historical undulations of race relations, the writers try and balance multiple perspectives,

ignoring nothing, yet affirming nothing either. It is also not surprising that the writers' choice of subject has roots in personal history and experience. It is surprising, to an extent, that the writers choose to speak from within their representations—unlike in the previous cases where no attempt is made to penetrate the consciousness of the white characters. The attempt, instead of failing and returning to haunt the creator, succeeds in conveying truths which can only come from a deep-seated understanding of the untenable nature of the human predicament. Expressed in language which walks the precarious edge between poetry and emotion, these texts embody the forgiving face of Native peoples.

Thomas King's Green Grass, Running Water embodies the fourth type of representation, which makes use of humour as a double-edged sword, and succeeds in reversing the imbalance of discursive power. Unlike the "counterwriting text," in which a similar reversal takes place, but which is more occupied with assigning blame and correcting mis/representations, the paradigm shift in this representation breaks the existing status quo by refusing to allow the colonizer to be in control. This representation recognizes that colonization is all about control that comes from familiarity, and so alienates the white characters by estranging them from familiar terms of identification. The worldview of this representation is predicated on Native cultural traditions and the non-Native characters are made to experience a disjunction from known and comforting sources of history, culture, and myth. The writer extends an invitation to the readers to free themselves from the shackles of canonical texts, mainstream history, Western religion, and see the world anew from another perspective. The development of the novel

on two levels—the world of stories and Coyote and the contemporary world—is meant to illustrate the possibilities for and the realities of the Native situation.

The fifth and last type of representation speaks to the non-Anglo-European ethnicities represented by Native writers and the marginalization of non-Natives in Native writing. The three ethnicities in question are Blacks (Babo in Green Grass, Running Water), Jews (Colleen Birk in alterNatives), and Germans (Herr Schwarzkopf in Kiss of the Fur Queen), based on their appearance in the texts included in this study. The treatment of these characters appears to have been influenced by the historical relations between them and the Natives. For example, Babo in Thomas King's Green Grass, Running Water is the only character who can see the "trick" in the events brought about by Coyote and the four old (wo)men. To know that Africans and Natives formed military alliances to fight a common enemy and forged marital bonds contributes to an understanding of why a Black character should demonstrate such a sympathetic understanding of the Native world. It is worthy of note that the Natives share aspects of the oppression perpetrated against the three categories mentioned above. With the Blacks they share a history of colonialism and slavery, with the Germans the attempt to forcibly assimilate them to mainstream society, and with the Jews the persecution based on the observance of a different religion. The first and second sections of this chapter are connected by the shared issue of marginalization, as both categories of peoples are peripheral to the dominant population. In addition, while the first section deals with how this peripheral situation affected the relationship between the other ethnicities and the Natives, the section on Monkey Beach effects a reversal by which the dominant population is itself marginalized.

If the counterwriting model of representation manifests a whole-scale rejection of Euroamerican culture, the type of representation found in Monkey Beach demonstrates the acculturating nature of Native society. This society absorbs elements of an Other without giving up its uniqueness yet resists any attempts at forced assimilation. The marginalization of the non-Native reveals that the Natives do not consider them integral to the process of self-definition, unlike the non-Natives who require the Other to hold their boundaries of Self in place. This clever move is an exposure of the discourse of colonization, which emphasizes the need of non-White cultures for the improvements of the West. The motive behind this representation is not the allocation of blame but the need to recuperate what is left, judiciously combine it with what is imposed, and assist the community in the creation of an identity that will serve as the beacon for generations to come.

I would now like to introduce an issue that has risen from my forays into the field of Native literature. As my area of interest and study is postcolonial[2] literature and theory, it seems that a consideration of Native literature in the context of postcolonial theory could yield some valuable insights. I have drawn attention to the somewhat complicated relationship between Native literature and postcolonial theory in the earlier chapters, and would like to elaborate on the ramifications of these links. Also, it seems pertinent to assess the relationship between Canadian literature and Native literature, given the tendency to treat the latter as a sub-division of the former.

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[2] I am aware of the debate regarding the absence/presence of the hyphen in postcolonial/post-colonial, and I prefer to use the term without the hyphen. However, in the follwing pages, I have adhered to the preferences of the critics in their use of the hyphen.

The Location of Native Literature

The following meditation is prompted by the placement of Native literature in relation to both Canadian and postcolonial literatures. It seemed to me, at the beginning of my study, that my project fell somewhere between the categories of Canadian and postcolonial literatures. Toward the end of this study, I am not as confident about it as I was when I began. While I am somewhat perplexed by this confounding of certainty, I am far more pleased at the open-endedness of the location of Native literature.

Laura Moss in her commendable critical endeavour Is Canada Postcolonial?: Unsettling Canadian Literature (2003) offers arguments against seeing Canada as "a settler/white colony in opposition to an invaded/indigenous population" (11). She finds this separation "ineffective" because

> [f]irst, it places Native populations in a constant state of opposition rather than separation. This not only ignores discussions of self-governance and denies the existence of the Métis but also freezes First Nations writers in a historical role rather than integrating (not assimilating) Native writers into the larger canon of contemporary Canadian literature. Second, it does not acknowledge the fact that many contemporary Canadian writers are not of English/Scottish/Irish/French heritage and it is restrictive to view Canada as a country of writers descended from those who settled or those who were invaded. Third, it does not allow room for resistance or opposition to the very real threat of American cultural imperialism. Finally, it does not leave room to look at Canada, and Canadian literature by extension, as demographically dynamic. (11-12)

Moss' arguments, while seemingly valid, overlook certain key problems: Native and White Canadian, despite all good intentions, are oppositional quantities and the only way to erase this binary is by the elimination of one or both of the categories. It is useful to remember here that questions of "self-governance" are predicated on the notion of an opposition between Self and Other, Us and Them. Aside from that, white Canada is itself divided from within. The Canadian mosaic, which is ostensibly meant to connote

separate equity for one and all, is dominated by a single colour; and where can there be equality when there is domination? As for "freezing" Native writers in a "historical role," it comes with the territory.[3] Native writers carry the burden of their historical past as individuals and as members of a community. And their historical past does not appear to have restricted their artistic potential but is a necessary point of reference. Aside from that the "integration" of Native writers in the Canadian canon comes with its own problems. Canada is a nation-state born out of Western ideas of nationalism and founded by European settlers. It is a Western political entity that was imposed on the land known to its Native inhabitants as Turtle Island. The land itself is a palimpsest which contains the original land markings made by its indigenous population. Is it then logical to assign Native literature the rubric of "Canadian" when the writers do not recognize themselves as such and use their national affiliations to identify themselves? Moss goes on to argue that Canada has "always been multiracial and multicultural" and it is unfair to "concentrate on Canada as 'white'" (15). To support her position she cites the 2001 Canadian census, which shows that forty-five percent of Toronto's population and thirty-one percent of Vancouver's is composed of "*visible* minorities" (15) (emphasis mine). It seems to me that Moss is condemned by her own argument: her usage of the politically correct term "visible minorities" sanctioned, of course, by the Canadian government reveals the politics of power involved in naming. Good questions to ask here, with reference to the "visible minorities" (read non-white—as opposed to the invisible majority—read white), are these: to what extent, if at all, do the minorities have a voice in the social and legal framework of Canadian society, and to what extent are they

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[3] Just as being political comes with the territory, according to Armand Garnet Ruffo.

considered a valuable part of the society they live in? These questions are prompted by the ideas of alienation and lack of belonging that are voiced in the fiction and poetry coming from the visible minorities in Canada, which seem to contradict flatly what Moss is claiming. Canada may be multicultural and multiracial, but it is definitely not an equitable society; Canada is "white" because the power rests with the invisible majority. Bhabha's sensible critique of multiculturalism is important in this regard as it recognizes that multiculturalism "implicitly construct[s] cultures as essentially equivalent and therefore interchangeable in their various parts, leading inevitably to an emphasis on assimilation to the dominant" (qtd. in Moore-Gilbert 125).

While it is reassuring and comforting for Canadian scholars to regard Native literature as a part of Canadian literature, the controversiality of this application is worthy of a review. Native literature is typically studied in Native Studies departments, and only recently have English departments acknowledged it as "literature" and included it in their syllabi, though it is taught in Canadian-literature courses.[4] This has come about primarily because Native literature has captured the interest of "Can Lit" scholars, and has become yet another territory for intellectual exercise and development (if not intellectual colonization). Of couse, not all Native writers and critics are flattered at this move toward inclusion. Aside from that, the term postcolonial has been suggested as a descriptive term and has also been rejected by Native writers. Terry Goldie's observation in this regard is instructive: "Indigenous peoples in Canada, Australia, and New Zealand maintain that the term 'postcolonial' is depressingly laughable without Native sovereignty" (301). For critics such as Linda Hutcheon, calling Native literature

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[4] This seems to be the most prominent mode of introducing Native literature in the Academy and deserves recognition for the same.

"postcolonial" "might be the more accurate historical use of the term" (172). She puts forward Helen Tiffin's model, which proposes that "aboriginal writing should be read as standing in what Richard Terdiman calls a counter-discursive relation to the settler literature, just as that settler literature stands counter-discursively against the imperial culture" (172). However, if the "postcolonial" deals with the relation between centre and periphery, and since that centre in the Canadian context has always been identified with Britain, then, according to the above model, Native literature is twice-removed from the centre.[5] This removal, it seems to me, also removes it from the shadow of the postcolonial. In addition, it would be accurate to state that postcolonialism deals exclusively with the Third World. This excludes both the Second (Canada) and the Fourth (Native) worlds; and, according to Native theorists Jace Weaver and Marie Battiste, "'postcolonial discourse says little about indigenous liberation struggles'" (Brydon 57). Victor J. Ramraj is perceptive in noting, with regard to the Natives in Canada, that to understand the genocide practiced against them one would have to turn to the category of Holocaust theory, as one would have to approach theories of reparation to understand the apologies made by the churches to the Natives (314). These theories, as we know, do not form a part of the postcolonial. Is it fair then to label Native experience postcolonial?

To place Native literature in the categories of either Canadian literature or postcolonial literature seems a travesty of sorts. In the case of the former, the inclusion could be and most probably is an act of literary colonization. To make Native literature a constituency

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[5] I am inclined to agree with Gary Boire who sees the Natives as "twice-colonized" (5). "Canadian (Tw)ink: Surviving the White-Outs." Essays on Canadian Writing. 35 (1987): 1-16.

of Canadian literature is to place a lid over the bubbling cauldron of historical-political controversies, and maintain the exact parent-child relationship which the Native writers are trying to overthrow. To argue that Canadian literature is necessarily a combination of White settler, immigrant, and Native experiences is to open yet another can of worms given the strategic differences in the historical treatment of the three constituents by the Canadian government. For example, the incarceration of Japanese-Canadians during the Second World War cannot be equated with the aggressive socio-cultural policies implemented against the Natives since the colonization of Canada, though the same racist attitudes prevailed (and arguably still prevail) in each instance. Native literature could very well form a part of the Canadian mosaic but it would have to be a censored version which "fits in" with the other literatures and does not contradict the primary sentiments and illusions of the dominant populace. In other words, Native literature cannot be incorporated as it stands, but will need to be purged of elements that are unsettling for the settlers. In this regard, I would like to draw attention to Diana Brydon's reference to Sherene H. Razack's "politics of accountability" (61). According to Brydon, "Canadians need to develop 'a politics of accountability as opposed to a politics of inclusion. Accountability begins with tracing relations of privilege and penalty. It cannot proceed unless we examine our complicity'" (61). Brydon goes on to clarify that "[s]uch an act has nothing to do with identity politics, breast-beating guilt, presumed access to exemption due to conditions of victimage, or any other form of us/them binary that seeks to avoid accountability"; on the contrary, because "everyone is formed within such systems [discriminatory systems, such as, racism and sexism] (no one is exempt) and

everyone must accept accountability for both their actions and their inaction within then [sic]" (61).

In the case of postcolonial literature, I would cite Thomas King's "Godzilla vs Post-Colonial" as the best argument to date against the inclusion of Native literature in the ranks of the postcolonial. While King concedes that, possibly, there exist pre- and post-colonial Native literatures, he destabilizes the notion of postcolonial as applied to Native literature by arguing that the quantity on which pre- and post- are predicated is colonialism, and colonial literature has nothing in common with Native literature. He argues that

> in the case of colonialism—within a discussion of Native literature—the term has little to do with the literature itself. It is both separate from and antithetical to what came before and what came after. Pre-colonial literature, as we use the term in North America, has no relationship whatsoever to colonial literature. The two are neither part of a biological or natural cycle nor does one anticipate the other, while the full complement of terms—pre-colonial, colonial, and post-colonial—reeks of unabashed ethnocentrism and well-meaning dismissal, and they point to a deep-seated assumption that is at the heart of most well-intentioned studies of Native literatures. (242)

In addition, King objects to "post-colonial" because it discounts the notion of a Native literary tradition that predates colonization and suggests that "the struggle between guardian and ward is the catalyst for contemporary Native literature, providing those of us who write with method and topic," and that "contemporary Native literature is largely a construct of oppression" (243). On the contrary, King proposes that "Post-colonial might be an excellent term to describe Canadian literature" because it "invoke[s] the cant of progress" and is "joined at the hip with nationalism" (243). King makes it fairly clear that applying postcolonial, either as a chronological marker or as a reading practice, to

Native literature will not do. To describe the range of Native literature King leans towards terms such as tribal, interfusional, polemical, and associational because

> they tend to be less centred and do not, within the terms themselves, privilege one culture over another; they avoid the sense of progress in which primitivism gives way to sophistication, suggesting as it does that such movement is both natural and desirable; they identify points on a cultural and literary continuum for Native literature which do not depend on anomalies such as the arrival of Europeans in North America or the advent of non-Native literature in this hemisphere, what Marie Baker likes to call 'settler litter.' (243)

While I am in agreement with King on certain points, I will concede that Native literature does seem to be a promising candidate for inclusion in the ranks of the postcolonial. Given that postcolonial literature needs to fulfill three conditions to qualify as such, which are a different race, a different language,[6] and a history of political struggle,[7] it appears that Native literature qualifies on the basis of all three (and for the same reasons Canadian literature does not). In addition, Native literature does display elements that would be found specifically in postcolonial literatures, such as it being a literature written by the Other/the colonized/the oppressed in the language of the colonizer, the imbuing of an alien language with the burden of their own experience, the attempts to create alternate histories, its task of correcting misconceptions propagated by and challenging stereotypes constructed by the colonizer. These elements would generally be grouped under the move toward decolonization. At this juncture, Cecily Devereaux's distinction between "the 'post-colonial' as a historical term with reference

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[6] That is, a native language prior to colonization. The authors of The Empire Writes Back discuss the appropriation of English by the colonized peoples and its consequent transformation into english/es. According to this argument, the appropriation signals the creation of another language, which is better suited to carry the burden of colonial experience. For further details see Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin.

[7] I have borrowed these criteria from the introduction to Colonial Discourse /Post-Colonial Theory by Laura Chrisman and Patrick William.

to nation-states and their literatures and 'post-colonial theory' as a critical practice" is useful in understanding how Native literature/theory and postcolonialism intersect (179). Devereaux goes on to define post-colonial theory as "a political position that marks *anti*colonialism and *anti*-imperialist nationalism, and projects its deconstructive critique forward as a process" (179). Devereaux's distinction is echoed by Judith Leggatt who documents her frustration with trying to square Native theory with post-colonial theory and coming to the realization that "in focusing on how these [Native] theories parallel specific modes of cross-cultural communication in post-colonial theory, I may have completely missed their main points, mistranslating and misrepresenting them" (119). At the beginning of her article, "Native Writing, Academic Theory: Post-colonialism Across the Cultural Divide," Leggatt examines her defenses of post-colonialism through a close reading of Thomas King's "Godzilla vs. Post-Colonial" and Lee Maracle's "The 'Post-Colonial' Imagination." She finds that both King and Maracle echo Frantz Fanon in their formulations and this brings her to the conclusion that "King and Maracle echo traditional post-colonial fiction not only in their discussions of binary oppositions but also in their suggestions of how to move beyond those oppositions" even while they reject post-colonialism as a descriptive term for Native literature (115). Leggatt eventually realizes that King and Maracle's "critique of the label are not necessarily critiques of the theory" and that reading Native literature through the lens of post-colonialism is reductive in the extreme (116). Leggatt's article displays her awareness of the tendency of most postcolonial critics to claim Native literature as their constituency. The inclination to homogenize proclaims itself loudly as Leggatt sees a resemblance between the theories put forward by King and Maracle and those of Fanon, Ahmed,

Harris, and Bhabha before conceding that it "could betray a desire to see their theories in terms of the relationship between colonizer and colonized" (119). The good news arising out of Leggatt's efforts is that *if* Native literature is postcolonial then Canadian literature cannot claim that title; the bad news is that postcolonialism has once again proven to be formless and aimless—an amorphousness that has been critiqued by Anne McClintock, Arif Dirlik, and Ella Shohat, among others. I would like to emphasize that I am not arguing that both Native and Canadian literature cannot be postcolonial; I am arguing that both cannot be postcolonial in a given moment irrespective of how we may use the term.

White Canada is, however, a more complicated case, as is revealed through the inventory drawn up by Stephen Slemon in his afterword to Is Canada Postcolonial?: "[T]he authors of The Empire Writes Back say 'yes,' Canada *is* postcolonial, but Leela Gandhi says 'no,' Bart Moore-Gilbert gives five possible answers, and Ania Loomba tellingly ignores the question altogether" (319). It is common knowledge that the White settler countries (Canada, Australia, New Zealand, and the United States) are not referred to as postcolonial because their histories and relations with the Mother country were markedly different from that of the other colonies (Chrisman, Williams, McClintock). Anne McClintock in her essay, "The Angel of Progress: Pitfalls of the Term Post-Colonialism" describes the above-mentioned countries as "break-away settler colonies," which can be "distinguished by their formal independence from the founding metropolitan country, along with continued control over the appropriated colony (thus displacing colonial control from the metropolis to the colony itself)" (89). In the other colonies, once they gained independence, the colonizers either stayed on as expatriates or returned to the mother country, leaving the indigenous population more or less intact. In

the case of the settler colonies, however, the histories of in/voluntary exile, penal settlements, and exploratory zeal resulted in the near extermination of the indigenous population. Moreover, the troubled history with the mother country in some cases and the lack of connections in others left no country to which the settlers could return. Linda Hutcheon in "Circling the Downspout of Empire" agrees that the White Canadian experience of colonialism cannot be equated with that of the Caribbean, Africa, or India, and to do so would be both "trivializing of the Third World experience and exaggerated regarding the (white) Canadian" (171). Also, she accepts that though Canada was politically a colony, the ramifications of that state for its white and non-white constituents are notably different. It is acknowledged that the Native populations of the settler colonies live in a state of internal colonization to this date. Similarly, Donna Bennett, commenting on the "postcolonial complexities" of English Canada, has this to say about Canada's Native component:

> In their desire to maintain or recover a sense of self-identity, members of this group may have less in common with French—and English—Canadian writers than with writers from indigenous postcolonial societies, such as India or Nigeria, that were formally occupied by imperial nations. However, Canadian Native cultures (there is, of course, no single Native culture) also share some concerns with the culture of French Canada, for they are not postcolonial in the sense of having clearly passed from a period of being dominated to one of being free of the dominant culture. At the same time, both French and English Canada, while they may be postcolonial to a dominant Other, have played, and continue to play, the role of imperial power to Native culture [sic] (par. 26).

In these circumstances, I am uncomfortable with applying the term postcolonial to describe Native literature. Aside from that, I see no reason why Native literature needs to be categorized as one or the other. Is it not possible to find elements of Canadian literature in, and apply postcolonial theories to, Native literature without necessarily

claiming it to be one or the other? While this might seem like untidy housekeeping, it is a good strategy to let Native literature find its own niche in good time.

A clue to understanding the postcolonial complexities of White Canada may lie in its history of colonization. While one may argue that the acquisition of land was the primary objective of colonization, a closer inspection reveals that land was secondary to trade. Accounts relating to primary contact with Native peoples of the Americas, Africa, and Indian reveal that in the beginning the imperial powers were looking for markets in which to sell their surplus goods. Colonization was also effected in great measure to protect and increase trade relations from aggressive competitors. As India became a provider of raw materials as well as the market in which the finished products could be sold the interest in land increased and led to colonization. In the case of Africa, slave trade provided a more lucrative opening and so land was not at a premium, though the discovery of gold and diamonds in its southern parts led to colonization. The land in the Caribbean was valuable for its receptivity to growing sugarcane, but it was never considered for settlement beyond the minimum requirement. North America proved to be amenable for both trade and settlement and so land became a desired commodity. Unlike the colonization of other countries, the colonization of North America was predicated on the idea of settlement. America, to the Euroamericans, was the New World where they could distance themselves from Old World corruption, regenerate, and live in an earthly paradise. There was, of course, the minor problem of previous inhabitants, but it was not an insurmountable one. What the settlers did not count on, perhaps, was that the indigenous peoples, whom they thought they had dispensed with, would still be around in the twentieth century to challenge their right to the land. Their presence gives rise to two

major and, in my opinion, unsolvable complications: (a) the land question, which is like the proverbial skeleton in the closet for White Canada, is in the forefront of any discussion between Natives and non-Natives, with the former actively negotiating what one may term their rights and their freedom, and thereby bringing the injustices of the past to bear testimony for justice in the present; and, (b) both colonizer and colonized are inhabiting the same piece of land. If freedom is achieved, where will the colonizers go?—for there is no "home" to which they can return.[8] This, in turn, begs the question whether the children should be made to pay for the sins of the father. If both invader and original inhabitant have to co-exist peacefully with each other and with the migrant population of Canada, then White Canada would have to dispense with its "garrison mentality," abolish multiculturalism, and adopt a genuine approach to equity in all spheres of society. This rather tall order, which smacks of utopianism, testifies to the implausibility of such an endeavour. And yet, it works: in a large, diverse, multicultural, and pluralistic society such as India. To quote Salman Rushdie[9]:

> [India] has taken the modern view of the self and enlarged it to encompass almost 1 billion souls. The selfhood of India is so capacious, so elastic, that it accommodates 1 billion kinds of difference. It agrees with its billion selves to call all of them 'Indian.' This is a notion far more original than the old pluralist ideas of a melting pot or a cultural mosaic. It works because the individual sees his own nature writ large in the nature of the state. (par. 16)

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[8] Zimbabwe is an interesting case in this regard: After a seven-year bloody civil war, Britain crafted the Lancaster House Agreement in 1979 by which one-third of Zimbabwe's arable land was to remain in white hands (McClintock 88-89). Zimbabwe gained independence in 1980 but the situation remains the same.

[9] I came across this reference in Victor J. Ramraj's article titled "Answering the Answers, Asking More Questions" in Laura Moss's Is Canada Postcolonial: Unsettling Canadian Literature.

One may argue that the population of 292, 732, 004 in the United States agree to call themselves "American," just as the 31,629,700 in Canada call themselves "Canadian": the moot point is whether the Native population of 4,918,306 in North America sees, as Rushdie states, its "own nature writ large in the nature of the state" and considers the state uniformly sympathetic to its concerns?[10] These issues do not have simple answers; as public intellectuals and scholars it is our prerogative to dwell on them and seek resolutions, if any do exist.

Hopefully, the above discussion has revealed that Native writers cannot be grouped under the category of either postcolonial or Canadian. To do so would be a severe reduction of and a disservice to their artistry. What this study has tried to convey is the need to recognize Native literature as a unique and independent area of literary study that is rapidly growing, and so requires specialised attention. I have attempted to show how contemporary Native writers are making use of non-Native devices at their disposal to serve the needs of their communities. By opening up the Self-Other binary to scrutiny and intervention, I have provided a blueprint, which I call stealing the horses, that can be applied to study the representation of non-Natives in the indigenous literature from other settler colonies, such as Australia and New Zealand, and to, perhaps, other indigenous literatures with which I am not conversant. I will consider my dissertation a success when the ideas put forward in it serve the needs of other native literatures as well.

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[10] The resident population of the United States, projected to 3/5/2004 at 3:58:17 PM EST. The resident population of Canada as of October 1, 2003. The resident population of Natives in North America according to the 2000 census.

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