First Nations, First Thoughts

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The Impact of Indigenous Thought in Canada

Edited by Annis May Timpson

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This book is dedicated
with special thanks
to
Peter and Sue Russell
for many a warm welcome to your home
and
to
my dear friend
Jilly Jennings
for being the Elder in my life

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First Nations, First Thoughts

Introduction: Indigenous Thought in Canada

Annis May Timpson

This book examines the impact of Aboriginal thought on Canadian public discourse. It considers how Aboriginal peoples have questioned colonial interpretations of Canadian history; challenged prevailing cultural, political, economic, and constitutional "wisdom"; called for adjustments in settler Canadian thought; and, with varying degrees of success, brought Indigenous perspectives to bear on cultural institutions, universities, governments, and the courts.

First Nations, First Thoughts explores how Aboriginal peoples have articulated ideas, visions, and perspectives within their autonomous, self-determining communities and in broader public discourse in Canada. In addition, this book considers how the ideas, innovations, and challenges that Aboriginal peoples have brought to public attention have been resisted, acknowledged, questioned, and accepted.

The scholars and practitioners who contribute to this book demonstrate how academic research, cultural narratives, governance, and constitutional discourse in Canada can be enriched by the full recognition of Indigenous thought and careful processes of Aboriginal-settler exchange. They also emphasize the complexities of integrating Aboriginal thinking into established institutions and dominant discourses, highlighting the challenges, and the responsibilities, that face Indigenous and settler nations in Canada if the potential for embracing Aboriginal perspectives in the country's public institutions is to be fully realized.

This book is designed as an interdisciplinary contribution to the broader, ongoing process of decolonization in Canada. It highlights the diverse contributions that Aboriginal thinkers have made, and continue to make, to Canadian public debate.[1] It invites readers to consider how Aboriginal self-determination could be realized and a fuller reconciliation achieved between

Aboriginal and settler communities. Although this book confirms that the process of decolonization in Canada is not yet complete, it nonetheless highlights encouraging examples of progress toward that goal.

Oral Tradition and the Transmission of Indigenous Thought

Oral traditions in Aboriginal communities are intrinsic to the intergenerational transmission of Indigenous knowledge.[2] Aboriginal storytelling maintains the distinctness of Indigenous thought, rebalances power relations between Aboriginal peoples and settler Canadians, and, as Taiaiake Alfred has argued, reduces the alienation in Aboriginal communities that arises when people are separated from their heritage and, by implication, from themselves.[3] This book shows how Indigenous storytelling can extend the established boundaries of historical research, generate new resources for archives and museums, broaden cultural understandings of urban space, encourage retention of Indigenous languages, and rekindle community strength. It also demonstrates how these oral traditions mitigate the impact and damage of colonialism by enabling Aboriginal peoples to question research methodologies, reframe historical knowledge, challenge dominant ideas, and, above all, develop agency.

The importance of storytelling in Aboriginal communities reinforces the recognition of Elders as conveyors of deeply held Indigenous wisdom.[4] These men and women retain profound understanding and knowledge of Indigenous thought, not only for cultural reasons intrinsic to their communities but also because they often speak the endangered languages of their nations. Their stories bring nuanced understandings of Aboriginal thinking into the public domain. As John Borrows has argued, "Oral history in numerous Aboriginal groups is conveyed through interwoven layers of culture that entwine to sustain national memories over the lifetime of many generations. The transmission of oral tradition in these societies is bound up with the configuration of language, political structures, economic systems, social relations, intellectual methodologies, morality, ideology and their physical world."[5]

Indigenous storytelling generates rich oral narratives that broaden knowledge embedded in written texts, visual images, and geographical space. This book shows how such narratives enable Aboriginal people to express memories of overcoming hardship and surviving on the land. It also demonstrates how such stories sustain intergenerational knowledge within Aboriginal communities and can enhance cross-cultural understanding beyond them.

Oral traditions in Aboriginal communities reinforce awareness about profound differences between Indigenous and Western understandings of history and sovereignty. Indeed, this book clarifies how recognition and respect for Indigenous stories are important not only for intercultural communication but also for good governance, effective co-management, progressive scholarship, and, in the longer run, political and constitutional reconciliation between Indigenous and settler communities in Canada.

Integrating Indigenous Thought into Canadian Institutions

First Nations, First Thoughts not only explores ideas developed within Aboriginal communities, it also considers the impact of Indigenous thought in Canada. Contributors to this book analyze different approaches to creating and changing Canadian public institutions so that both Aboriginal and settler perspectives are embodied within them. They also consider the complexities of realizing this objective given the current under-representation of Aboriginal people on the staff and governing bodies of museums, the faculties of universities, and the bureaucracies that service public governments. Although contributors argue that the impact of Indigenous thinking on Canadian institutions will increase if the representation of Aboriginal people within these organizations is improved, they also emphasize that numerical representation alone cannot ensure the institutional absorption of Indigenous thought. More fundamental cultural shifts, inside and outside those institutions, are necessary to bring this about.

The integration of Aboriginal knowledge into Canadian public institutions that have long been shaped by Western values is complex. This book highlights alliances that have been developed to give voice to Aboriginal perspectives at the institutional level, leading in recent periods to collaboration and co-management. It also shows how these initiatives have encouraged the development of new approaches to scholarship; long-term relationships between curators, archivists, and members of Indigenous source communities; experiments in developing public agencies that prioritize Aboriginal culture; and cross-cultural initiatives by Indigenous and non-Indigenous public servants to facilitate the full absorption of Aboriginal thinking into public governance.

Nonetheless, contributors also point out the difficulties that have arisen with initiatives to integrate Indigenous thinking into Canadian institutions, including the dangers associated with appearing to pursue this objective while simultaneously absorbing Aboriginal thinking only on dominant Canadian

terms. Indeed, the book raises important questions about shifts in public discourse and institutions that will have to take place if they are to be truly decolonized through the full inclusion of Aboriginal thought.

Readership

This book has been compiled with four core groups of readers in mind. First, it speaks to Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars, and students, who are concerned with the broader impact of Aboriginal thinking in Canada and with the development of methodologies to ensure full recognition of distinct Indigenous perspectives in academic scholarship, cultural analysis, jurisprudence, and political thought. Second, it is addressed to those working with Aboriginal collections in museums and archives, both in Canada and farther afield. It highlights how an understanding of the Indigenous context of long-established collections held in these institutions can be improved through the development of co-managed projects with members of Indigenous source communities. Such initiatives not only facilitate cross-cultural understanding but also provide opportunities for Aboriginal peoples to reconnect with artifacts from their communities and, in the process, rethink and retell their histories.[6] Third, this book is aimed at activists, politicians, and officials who are concerned with developing models of governance designed to enable Indigenous communities in Canada to determine their own futures. Contributors consider how these processes might be realized through more inclusive forms of public administration, the delivery of public policies that are more effectively oriented to Aboriginal communities, and new approaches to economic development.[7]

Finally, this book offers Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples who want to develop new approaches to Indigenous-settler relations in Canada the opportunity to consider how these relations might be grounded, as Michael Murphy notes, in "mutual respect, mutual accommodation, and consent."[8] The achievement of decolonization in Canada is still in the making, but I hope this book, published forty years after the provocative *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy,* will contribute to a broader recognition in Canada, and elsewhere, of the benefits of taking full account of Aboriginal thought.[9]

Organization

This book is divided into five core sections that, together, provide an interdisciplinary lens on Indigenous thought in Canada. Part 1 considers how

Aboriginal writers and scholars have challenged, and continue to question, dominant intellectual discourses associated with colonialism, liberalism, and a settler-oriented education system. Both chapters show how such challenges are, at times, articulated by Aboriginal thinkers working from within the frameworks of mainstream institutions established by dominant settler groups.

In Chapter 1, Robin Jarvis Brownlie considers key periods in First Nations historiography and questions how contemporary historians might respond, more effectively, to the epistemological challenges of Indigenist thought. She analyzes the earliest published work by Aboriginal authors in Canada, written by Ojibway (Anishnabe) in the mid-nineteenth century, to counter the discourse of racial inferiority in the civilizationist rhetoric of the colonial period. She then considers early twentieth-century interventions by Cree and Kainai writers who questioned the impoverishment, marginalization, and oppression of their people. Brownlie contrasts resistance to this historiography with the receptivity of non-Indigenous scholars to late twentieth-century radical Indigenous writing that challenged concepts of the "just society" encoded in the federal government's 1969 White Paper on Indian policy. She also reflects on more recent recordings of Aboriginal oral history during land claim negotiations and healing initiatives associated with settlements for the abuse suffered by Aboriginal children in residential schools. Brownlie shows how Canadian resistance to Indigenous thought shifted in the late twentieth century as academic historians addressed questions about colonization, oppression, and injustice. Nonetheless, she argues that non-Aboriginal historians could develop greater understanding of Indigenous history if they relinquished control of research agendas, became more receptive to Aboriginal narrative structures and epistemologies – including intergenerational stories of supernatural phenomena – and gave fuller recognition to Elders, as scholars, who can facilitate understanding of the history of Indigenous thought.

Drawing on her own recent experience of entering the academy as an Indigenous scholar, Margaret Kovach addresses questions about the indigenization of contemporary scholarship. In Chapter 2 she considers the vulnerability and exhaustion that Indigenous students and educators can experience within academic institutions, noting how these feelings are linked to Aboriginal experiences of education as an instrument of oppression, the underrepresentation of Aboriginal scholars in universities, and tensions generated by having to resist institutionalized racism and challenge dominant modes of thought. Kovach emphasizes how Indigenous scholars have to not only

mitigate Indigenous and Western ways of knowing but also meet different expectations within Aboriginal and academic communities. She considers how academic institutions might respond, supportively, to recognize the particular forms of double duty that Indigenous scholars often undertake. Like Brownlie, she discusses how Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars could develop research that respects Aboriginal ontology and the methodologies that flow from it.[10]

Kovach makes an important argument about the long-term advantages of nurturing Indigenous scholarship in universities to ensure that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal students have access to a decolonized system of higher education. As she notes, this is likely to have a positive ripple effect because students who go on to become educators will be more likely to embed Aboriginal ways of knowing into their own practice as teachers. This is one of several ways, Kovach suggests, that educational institutions can contribute to the broader process of decolonization. As other contributors suggest, a decolonized education system will enhance the integration of Aboriginal perspectives into cultural and political institutions in Canada.

Part 2 focuses on the importance of Aboriginal oral traditions in the conveyance of Indigenous thought and shows how First Nations narratives provide new insight into the analysis of historical events and urban space. In Chapter 3 Leslie McCartney draws on her experience as former executive director of the Gwich'in Social and Cultural Institute to show how Gwich'in oral histories, collated and archived during the institute's Gwich'in Elders Biographies Project, highlight Indigenous thinking about the famous story of Albert Johnson, the Mad Trapper of Rat River. McCartney reinforces Brownlie's arguments regarding the value of exploring the rich tapestries of Aboriginal oral history by demonstrating that Gwich'in stories about the search for Johnson represent it not, like the mainstream media, as a hunt for an individual carried out across "a landscape that was barren, frozen, and void of people" but as an exercise that unfolded "on a rich Gwich'in cultural landscape ... alive with stories, legends, place names, trails, sacred sites, and stories of people who had, for centuries, been intimately connected with the land."[11] Moreover, she shows how these Indigenous narratives, which are missing from mainstream archives, provide insight into concerns about land, economy, treaties, and hunting practices that were shaping Gwich'in lives in 1932. McCartney also raises important concerns about the collation of Aboriginal oral histories by exposing how current copyright laws in Canada do not provide for the full recognition of those who tell these stories. Indeed,

she argues that Canadian copyright law should be improved to ensure the recognition of work and insights by Aboriginal storytellers and to protect stories in their original form.

While McCartney focuses on Aboriginal narrative as oral history, Martin Whittles and Tim Patterson in Chapter 4 explore First Nations storytelling as a mechanism to indigenize urban space. Aboriginal people in Canada continue to urbanize in unprecedented numbers, and these migrations have generated much discussion about the problems of Aboriginal dislocation and urban poverty and the need for new forms of Aboriginal governance in urban centres.[12] Yet, as Whittles and Patterson note, non-Aboriginal narratives of urban environments pay limited attention to the cultural experiences of Aboriginal communities in Canadian cities and towns. Drawing on ethnographic research with members of the Blackfoot Confederacy who live in Lethbridge and Calgary, this chapter reveals the veracity of the Aboriginal urban narrative. Focusing on ways that Nápi (Old Man Creator) stories speak to geographical and architectural landmarks in these cities that are culturally specific to the Blackfoot, the chapter challenges the view that Nápi stories are "archaic legends."[13] Instead, Whittles and Patterson show how these transposive narratives [are] "fluid, situational, and responsive reflections of the world in which they are created and shared."[14] Indeed, just as Julie Cruikshank found that the "storytellers of Yukon First Nations ancestry continue to tell stories that make meaningful connections and provide order and continuity in a rapidly changing world," so Whittles and Patterson argue that Nápi narratives "are, in fact, contemporary, dynamic approaches that Siksikaitsitapi use to explain the built environment."[15] Whittles and Patterson show how these narratives recreate the city for Aboriginal people as "a place not to be headed to, but a place to be from, a place where one can be a citizen, not a transient."[16]

Part 3 focuses on the representation of First Nations in museums and highlights the importance of ensuring that significant cultural institutions renegotiate the ways in which Aboriginal peoples have been constructed in the course of the colonial project. In Chapter 5 Laura Peers and Alison Brown explore how relations between Indigenous communities and museums can be rethought through reciprocal, long-term research. They discuss the Kainai-Oxford Photographic Histories Project in which both authors were involved. This photo-elicitation initiative, co-managed by the Pitt Rivers Museum in Oxford and the Mookaakin Cultural and Heritage Foundation in Alberta, was significant not only for its findings but also because it created the first

protocol agreement to be signed between an Aboriginal nation and a British museum.[17]

The project recovered cultural knowledge associated with photographs of Kainai people that had been taken by Oxford anthropologist Beatrice Blackwood in 1925. It encouraged the transmission of narratives of community strength and resistance as Kainai people interpreted the social and economic contexts of the photographs and named all the people whose images were encapsulated within them. Building upon the contributions of McCartney and Whittles and Patterson, Peers and Brown show how this project enabled the Kainai to appropriate the photographs "to fit with their own ways of inscribing the past" and pass on cultural knowledge, implicit in the names of those photographed and often preserved in the Blackfoot language, to younger generations of their tribe.[18]

Peers and Brown reinforce points made by Kovach about the importance of building and sustaining relationships to underscore community-based, Indigenous-oriented research. They show how this project has led to the development of a long-term relationship with the Kainai, and other Blackfoot peoples, to guide research on Blackfoot collections held by the Pitt Rivers Museum. In addition, echoing concerns raised by McCartney, they discuss how the project encouraged participants to rethink copyright in relation to photographic collections at the Pitt Rivers Museum. Indeed, this chapter shows how co-managed research can enhance public understanding of museum collections in which substantial Aboriginal artifacts are retained. Significantly, it also highlights how decolonization remains an international project.

In Chapter 6 Stephanie Bolton focuses on the McCord Museum of Canadian History as a case study for exploring how museums can resist, and respond to, Aboriginal perspectives. Although the museum was founded to examine the history of Aboriginal peoples and settler Canadians, as well as the relationship between them, Bolton shows that the McCord has a mixed record of engagement with Aboriginal material. This includes complex stories of institutional resistance to exhibitions focused on First Nations and, in contrast, a positive response to key recommendations of the 1992 report of the Task Force on Museums and First Peoples, an inquiry that was co-managed by the Canadian Museums Association and the Assembly of First Nations.[19]

Bolton emphasizes how the McCord Museum's founder wanted to make it "as Indian as [he] possibly [could], – a museum of the original owners of

the land."[20] Nonetheless, centuries of colonial collection practices, the absence of Aboriginal people on the museum's board of trustees, and the minimal presence of Aboriginal staff at the McCord Museum complicated the realization of this goal. The implication of Bolton's argument is that the impact of Indigenous thought on Canadian cultural institutions will be incomplete if it is confined to specific projects. Indeed, it is important not only to work with Aboriginal source communities on co-managed projects but also to develop strategies that will increase Aboriginal representation in the staffing and governance of cultural institutions such as the McCord Museum. These strategies could embrace Kovach's ideas about the importance of developing more culturally sensitive educational institutions.

Part 4 focuses on the value and complexity of bringing Aboriginal cultural perspectives into public governance. It raises important questions about Aboriginal culture and autonomy and considers them in relation to broader issues of public policy delivery, government administration, and economic development in subnational jurisdictions with significant Aboriginal populations. It also highlights the need to ensure that embedded values and institutional practices do not undermine the effectiveness of achieving increased Indigenous autonomy in political, administrative, and economic spheres.

In Chapter 7 Fiona MacDonald analyzes the Manitoba government's initiative to create Aboriginal child welfare authorities in order to provide culturally relevant services for Indigenous families. She argues that although this initiative is consistent with a group autonomy approach to cultural recognition, it is also important to consider such initiatives in the context of broader, neoliberal restructuring that has enabled the provincial state to co-opt First Nations thinking about the need for Aboriginal-centred child welfare while disconnecting it from the long-term structural problems of Indigenous poverty. MacDonald demonstrates how the demand by First Nations for autonomous child welfare agencies was rooted in a concern that Aboriginal children be cared for in a manner consistent with Aboriginal culture and philosophy. However, she also questions the degree of autonomy that can be achieved through such agencies, given low funding and staffing levels, on the one hand, and the rooting of provincial child welfare policies in Anglo-Canadian cultural values, on the other. MacDonald argues that such initiatives can contribute to transformative political and cultural change for First Nations communities only if the devolution of child welfare is part of a broader, well-funded approach to Indigenous governance.

In Chapter 8, I focus on Inuit initiatives to rethink public administration in ways that facilitate the creation of an Aboriginal-oriented public service to support the new territorial government of Nunavut. This chapter analyzes the multifaceted approach that Inuit in Nunavut are developing, highlighting the combination of numerical, institutional, cultural, and linguistic initiatives involved. It highlights how Inuit public servants and Elders have worked together to identify methods of integrating Inuit knowledge into the administration of government. Nonetheless, this chapter shows that unless issues of numerical representation and cultural change are considered together, the potential to develop an Aboriginal-focused model of governance will be limited. Moreover, it presents the argument that the objective of creating a representative public service in Nunavut, one shaped by Indigenous cultural perspectives, is more likely to be realized if this project is connected to broader strategies that are designed to encourage the graduation of Inuit students from an Aboriginal-oriented education system. In addition, reflecting ideas discussed in the other two chapters in this section, it considers the extent to which it is possible to sustain Indigenous thinking about government in subnational units that are also shaped by interactions with broader frameworks of the Canadian state.

In Chapter 9 Gabrielle Slowey locates questions about Aboriginal agency in new thinking about the relationship between economic development, self-government, and cultural identity in First Nations communities. She shows how First Nations in northern Canada are challenging the foundations of development theory by re-evaluating the idea of economic development, as imposition, and expressing agency by intertwining economic development and self-determination. Slowey shows how adoption of the development paradigm by First Nations, as an act of modernization, does not preclude the retention of traditional cultural identities. She demonstrates that economic development strategies can encompass Indigenous values and culture and, simultaneously, reinforce the importance of Aboriginal participation and competition in the global economy. The significance of Slowey's analysis is that it focuses our attention on contemporary Indigenous thinking about the economic dimensions of self-sufficiency, thereby complementing discussions about political, cultural, and constitutional self-determination in other sections of this book.

The three contributions to this section emphasize the importance of embedding Aboriginal culture in new approaches to the delivery of social

policy, the design of government institutions, and the promotion of economic development. Although still in their early stages, the initiatives studied highlight how public governance and economic development can be enhanced through the integration of Indigenous perspectives. The contributors also show how these innovations can be constrained by fiscal pressures, the broader influence of dominant Canadian values, and entrenched approaches to governance. At the same time, this section highlights how Indigenous communities in Canada are rethinking the extent to which the goal of Aboriginal self-determination can include selective engagements with the political, administrative, and economic frameworks of the state.

The final section of this book brings together two contributions that highlight the importance of thinking back as well as looking forward in the process of seeking political and constitutional reconciliation between Indigenous and settler nations. In Part 5 both contributors argue that it will not be possible to move toward political reconciliation between Indigenous and settler communities until we take full account of the first thoughts, and first principles, that shaped self-governing, Indigenous nations prior to the European colonization of Canada. They also argue that it is important to understand how influential political theorists, and constitutional interpretation by the courts, have failed to recognize the full significance of these fundamental principles in Indigenous thought.

In Chapter 10 Michael Murphy revisits some of the concerns raised by Brownlie in her discussion of the oppressive impact that civilizationist ideas that prevailed in the colonial period had on Indigenous people. Murphy analyzes how theorists espousing civilizationism, both in Europe during the Age of Empire and in contemporary Canada, have constructed Aboriginal nations. Murphy uses this framework to situate Tom Flanagan's book *First Nations? Second Thoughts* within a broader theoretical tradition, one that asserts that the colonization of the Americas was not only inevitable but also beneficial for Aboriginal people because it facilitated economic and human progress.[21]

Murphy focuses on critiquing Flanagan's argument that First Nations should abandon quests for self-determination and reconcile themselves to the inevitability and multiple advantages of assimilation. In so doing, he criticizes Flanagan for failing to engage with the question of consent – for constructing Aboriginal citizens as "suitable objects for assimilation" but being unable to see these same citizens as "fit subjects for self-government"

who, on the basis of their prior status as members of independent, self-governing communities, have the "*right to make their own choices*" about developing "*mutually* acceptable" models of reconciliation with non-Aboriginal peoples.[22] Murphy then considers how contemporary Aboriginal thinkers, and Aboriginal nationalists, in Canada have developed routes to self-determination that are based not on "a kind of racist special pleading or a demand for extra rights that are denied to non-Aboriginal peoples" but on their "equal right to exercise choices and make decisions that for too long have been the exclusive privilege of non-Aboriginal peoples through their control of the modern state."[23]

Recognition of the precolonial status of Aboriginal nations as independent, self-governing peoples also underscores the final chapter of this book, in which Kiera Ladner considers the potential for constitutional reconciliation between Indigenous and settler communities in Canada. She emphasizes that this is important because "Indigenous people never ceded their rights and responsibilities (collective sovereignty) under their own constitutional order; nor did they consent to be ruled by the Crown or its operatives (such as Parliament)."[24] As a result, Ladner argues that "Canadians need to step beyond the myth of lawful acquisition and sovereignty" to understand that the "true magic" of the colonial period "lies in the relationships that were established between Indigenous peoples and the Crown that recognized and affirmed the sovereignty and rights of both nations and, in so doing, enabled the creation of Canada."[25]

Ladner's analysis focuses on the courts' potential for reconciling Indigenous and Canadian constitutional orders and emphasizes the importance of this project given the jurisdictional tensions and disputes about Canadian sovereignty that keep erupting on First Nations land. She has serious reservations about the Supreme Court of Canada's capacity to achieve this because she finds it to be "a colonial institution that is charged with the responsibility of defending the Crown's sovereignty."[26] Moreover, Ladner considers the possibility that the court has "framed reconciliation in a manner that is inconsistent with principles of treaty constitutionalism" by "disregard[ing] Indigenous constitutional orders (regardless of treaty) and subject[ing] Indigenous nations and their 'sovereign' constitutional orders to the sovereignty of the Crown."[27]

Nonetheless, Ladner takes some comfort in the court's 2004 decision *Haida Nation v. British Columbia (Ministry of Forests)*, which, she suggests, may have set out stepping stones that could lead to a broader debate not only

about reconciliation but also about "decolonizing Canada and creating a postcolonial country based on the recognition and affirmation of Indigenous constitutional orders" and the affirmation of treaty constitutionalism in section 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982*.[28] Thus, Ladner argues that "the courts have opened the door in making reconciliation a constitutional requirement, especially when the requirement of reconciliation is paired with the constitutional requirement to uphold not only the honour of the Crown" but also, critically, "Indigenist understandings of the Canadian Constitution, Indigenous constitutional orders, Indigenous history, and the principles of treaty constitutionalism."[29]

Murphy and Ladner both emphasize the importance of seeking political reconciliation between Indigenous and settler nations, not only because of tensions between the Crown and First Nations but also because, "as the courts have said, 'we are all here to stay'; and thus, as interdependent and intertwined people and nations, we have to find a way to live together in a mutually agreeable and mutually beneficial manner."[30] Both contributors stress that Aboriginal self-determination and a broader political commitment to a decolonized, nation-to-nation constitutional framework are essential to the achievement of reconciliation. They also highlight how such an approach could lead to enhanced "democratic dialogue," the exchange of "the best that Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal cultures have to offer each other," constitutional innovation, and more effective co-management of shared jurisdictions.[31]

Conclusion

As the title of this book suggests, its origins were triggered by the intense reaction that followed the publication, in 2000, of Tom Flanagan's book *First Nations? Second Thoughts*. In response, the first conference I organized as director of the Centre of Canadian Studies at the University of Edinburgh was titled "First Nations, First Thoughts." It invited Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal scholars to explore the significance of Aboriginal peoples to the development of cultural and intellectual thought in Canada, to consider the development and transmission of Indigenous thought, and to explore the broader impact of Aboriginal perspectives on Canadian public discourse.[32] As was the case for that conference, my goal for this book was to foster interdisciplinary analysis of the significant contribution that Aboriginal peoples have made, and continue to make, to intellectual, cultural, political, and constitutional thought in Canada.

The contributors to this book encourage us to look closely at the development of Indigenous thought, to consider its impact on Canada, to assess current realities of integrating Indigenous thought into Canadian institutions, and to pursue intellectual interpretations that take Aboriginal perspectives into full account. It highlights the need for new research agendas that are not only grounded in a recognition of the fundamental differences in Indigenous and Western modes of thought but also acknowledge the importance of building long-term relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities. Such agendas would commit resources to the preservation of Indigenous knowledge, encourage research into ways that Indigenous epistemologies might guide scholarship about Aboriginal communities, and consider how greater space could be made to ensure that Indigenous ways of knowing are fully embraced within Canadian public discourse.

There are consequences to overlooking Indigenous thought. Healing may be suppressed if Indigenous thinking is not fully acknowledged or understood. Our knowledge base will be weaker if contextual information and Aboriginal perceptions about past events are not recognized. Angry protests are more likely to continue to erupt, and optimal organizational structures that take account of Indigenous and non-Indigenous perspectives will not be achieved. By contrast, Aboriginal peoples and settler Canadians stand to benefit if the full integration of Indigenous ideas in Canadian institutions is grounded in mutual respect and recognition of distinct histories, constitutions, cultures, and modes of thought.

NOTES

1 See also discussions of Aboriginal contributions to civil society in Gordon Christie, ed., *Aboriginality and Governance: A Multidisciplinary Perspective from Québec* (Penticton, BC: Theytus Books, 2006); Celia Haig-Brown and David A. Nock, eds., *With Good Intentions: Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006); Michael Murphy, ed., *Reconfiguring Aboriginal-State Relations – Canada: The State of the Federation 2003* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005); and David Newhouse, Cora Voyageur, and Dan Beavon, eds., *Hidden in Plain Sight: Contributions of Aboriginal Peoples to Canadian Identity and Culture* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2003).

2 See Julie Cruikshank, *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1998), xii; Renée Hulan and Renate Eigenbord, eds., *Aboriginal Oral Traditions: Theory, Practice, Ethics* (Halifax/Winnipeg: Fernwood Publishing/Gorsebrook Research Institute, 2008).

3 Taiaiake Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness*: *An Indigenous Manifesto* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 1999), xv.

4 See also Peter Kulchyski, Don McCaskill, and David Newhouse, eds., *In the Words of Elders: Aboriginal Cultures in Transition* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1999).

5 John Borrows, "Listening for a Change: The Courts and Oral Tradition," *Osgoode Hall Law Journal* 39, 1 (2001): 4.

6 See also Miriam Clavir, *Preserving What is Valued: Museums, Conservation, and First Nations* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002) and Laura L. Peers and Alison K. Brown, eds., *Museums and Source Communities: A Routledge Reader* (London: Routledge, 2003).

7 See also Frances Abele and Michael J. Prince, "Aboriginal Governance and Canadian Federalism: A To-Do List for Canada," in *New Trends in Canadian Federalism*, ed. François Rocher and Miriam Smith (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2003), 135-65; Graham White and Jack Hicks, "Nunavut: Inuit Self-Determination through a Land Claim and Public Government," in *Nunavut: Inuit Regain Control of Their Lands and Their Lives,* ed. Jens Dahl, Jack Hicks, and Peter Jull (Copenhagen: International Work Group for Indigenous Affairs, 2000), 30-115.

8 Michael Murphy, "Civilization, Self-Determination, and Reconciliation," in this volume, 269. See also, Alfred, *Peace, Power, Righteousness;* Patrick Macklem, *Indigenous Difference and the Constitution of Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2001); John Borrows, *Recovering Canada: The Resurgence of Indigenous Law* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); Joyce Green, "Self-Determination, Citizenship and Federalism: Indigenous and Canadian Palimpsest," in *Reconfiguring Aboriginal-State Relations,* ed. Murphy, 329-52; Dale Turner, *This Is Not a Peace Pipe: Towards a Critical Indigenous Philosophy* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006).

9 Canada, *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1969).

10 See also Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London/Dunedin: Zed Books/University of Otago Press, 1999); Renee Pualani Louis, "Can You Hear Us Now? Voices from the Margin: Using Indigenous Methodologies in Geographic Research," *Geographical Research* 45, 2 (2007): 136-37.

11 Leslie McCartney, "Respecting First Nations Oral Histories: Copyright Complexities and Archiving Aboriginal Stories," in this volume, 82.

12 See, for example, Mary Jane Norris, Martin Cooke, and Stewart Clatworthy, "Aboriginal Mobility and Migration Patterns and the Policy Implications," in *Aboriginal Conditions: Research as a Foundation for Public Policy,* ed. Jerry P. White, Paul Maxim, and Dan Beavon (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2003), 108-29; Evelyn J. Peters, "Geographies of Urban Aboriginal People in Canada: Implications for Urban

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13 Martin Whittles and Tim Patterson, "Nápi and the City: Siksikaitsitapi Narratives Revisited," in this volume, 98.

14 Ibid., 103.

15 Cruikshank, *The Social Life of Stories,* xiii; Whittles and Patterson, "Nápi and the City," in this volume, 98.

16 Ibid., 112.

17 University of Oxford, Pitt Rivers Museum, *Annual Report,* 1 August 2005 to 31 July 2006 (Oxford: Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford, 2006), 24.

18 Laura Peers and Alison K. Brown, "Colonial Photographs and Postcolonial Histories: The Kaianai-Oxford Photographic Histories Project," in this volume, 134, referencing Elisabeth Edwards, *Raw Histories: Photographs, Anthropology and Museums* (London: Routledge, 2001), 100.

19 Task Force on Museums and First Peoples, *Turning the Page: Forging New Partnerships between Museums and First Peoples* (Ottawa: Canadian Museums Association/ Assembly of First Nations, 1992).

20 Pamela Miller, "David Ross McCord," in *The McCord Family: A Passionate Vision*, ed. Pamela Miller et al. (Montreal: McCord Museum of Canadian History, 1992), 85, as quoted by Stephanie Bolton, "Museums Taken to Task: Representing First Peoples at the McCord Museum of Canadian History," in this volume, 153.

21 See Tom Flanagan, *First Nations? Second Thoughts* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000).

22 Michael Murphy, "Civilization, Self-Determination, and Reconciliation," in this volume, 264.

23 Ibid., 267.

24 Kiera Ladner, "Take 35: Reconciling Constitutional Orders," in this volume, 290.

25 Ibid., 296.

26 Ibid., 286.

27 Ibid., 283.

28 Ibid., 288.

29 Ibid., 295.

30 Ibid., 296.

31 Murphy, "Civilization, Self-Determination, and Reconciliation," in this volume, 266, 267.

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PART 1

Challenging Dominant Discourses

1
First Nations Perspectives and Historical Thinking in Canada

Robin Jarvis Brownlie

Racism is "fundamentally a theory of history."[1] This observation by historian Alexander Saxton illuminates an important truth about the centrality of constructions of history in racial discourses, one that is particularly relevant in white-dominated settler colonies like Canada. Theories of history based on ideas about race have provided members of colonial societies with a justification for displacing, dispossessing, and destroying Indigenous peoples. These theories explained why Europeans were entitled to engage in acts of aggression and dispossession and often went even further, erasing the agency of whites with the notion of inevitability. As literary critic Maureen Konkle has recently noted, "According to this line of thinking, it wasn't that actual white people were wreaking such havoc in Native societies but rather that the havoc wrought was inevitable when inferior met superior."[2]

Aboriginal people in North America have long produced spoken and written histories of their own that launched systematic attacks on these kinds of arguments.[3] Historical thinking and writing have been important in Aboriginal resistance to colonization for a number of reasons. First and most simply, the elucidation of historical events and processes has been essential to Aboriginal efforts to understand their own losses and the difficulties they have faced. Second, Aboriginal people who encountered the self-justifying colonial histories of white society immediately perceived what was at stake in these constructions and sought to counter them with their own understanding of what had occurred and why.

There is a third significant reason for the recurrent attention to history in Aboriginal writing, namely, the denial of historicity to "Indians" in white colonial mythology. Colonial thought in the nineteenth century increasingly constructed Aboriginal people as static, unchanging, and confined to a permanent "state of nature."[4] Such thinking placed Indigenous people outside

history and rendered them as mere relics of an earlier stage of human development that were doomed to be superseded by those who had taken their land. Another strain of colonial discourse simply erased First Nations entirely by dating the beginning of history from the arrival of whites.[5] Writing history, then, became essential to the Aboriginal project of resistance and survival. Producing their own histories has been a way for Aboriginal people to write themselves into new societies in their lands and name and document the wrongs of colonization. It has also allowed Aboriginal people to highlight their own change over time and their ability to adapt like all dynamic societies.[6]

In this chapter I examine Aboriginal thinkers' interventions into historical thought and writing in Canada, and I pose the question, what was their impact? The two earliest published Aboriginal writers in Canada, George Copway and Peter Jones, both penned books framed as histories of the Ojibway (Anishnabe) people, a trend that continued within the sporadically published Aboriginal works over the succeeding century.[7] More recently, Aboriginal historical production has flourished, from confidential treaty reports to videos and published oral and documentary histories. I will consider both early and recent manifestations of this writing to elucidate their main points, address continuities over time, and discuss their impact (if any) on non-Aboriginal versions of history.

Nineteenth-Century Writers

The published works of George Copway and Peter Jones, which languished in obscurity for over a century, were recently rediscovered and are receiving considerable attention from historians, literary critics, and others.[8] The two men are complex and problematic in many respects, particularly in terms of the influence that Christian ideas and their English wives had on their thinking. Both Jones and Copway were converts to Methodism (in fact, Jones spent the rest of his life as a Methodist preacher), and this church's program and missionary network powerfully shaped their arguments and worldviews. At the time this set them apart from many Aboriginal people who remained attached to their Indigenous spiritualities and had yet to acquire the literacy skills wielded by Copway and Jones. Although Copway and Jones both argued for assimilation, many of their compatriots were clearly pursuing a path of cultural continuity. In addition, both men married English women who exercised an obvious but indeterminable influence over their written work. Finally, George Copway is an ambiguous figure because of his erratic and opportunistic behaviour: he was charged with embezzling funds from two

Ojibway groups in Upper Canada and later became a paid recruiter of Canadian Aboriginal men for the US Civil War.[9]

These two writers employed history in their effort to defend their people from the worst effects of colonization. Copway's most historically oriented book, the second he published, bore the title *The Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation* and appeared in 1850. Jones' *History of the Ojebway Indians* was published posthumously in 1861 and compiled and edited by his English wife, Eliza. Without denying their assimilationism and the strong Christian influence on their goals and analyses, a sympathetic reading of their work in its historical context sees them grasping for ways to be heard, accepting some terms of the European discourse to find a voice, and then attempting to subvert it from within.

In both the United States and Canada, the mid-nineteenth-century social and geopolitical context was one of aggressive Anglo expansion into new Aboriginal territories as well as growing conflict in the United States over slavery. At the same time, the British Empire was shaken by a series of colonial wars and rebellions in Jamaica, India, and New Zealand. The resulting escalation of violence was associated with hardening racial attitudes among whites and a new insistence that colonized peoples were immutably, racially, and biologically different. According to scholar Maureen Konkle, the notion of race as inherent difference was well entrenched in North America by the 1840s, displacing the older Christian framework that saw non-white peoples as being culturally but not biologically inferior and, therefore, potentially capable of equality.[10]

This unfavourable evolution in racial thinking was among the chief factors that motivated Jones, Copway, and others to speak out; however, it also imposed narrow discursive constraints. Native intellectuals had to counter the imperialists' successful promotion of notions of racial inferiority and difference along with the Manichean ideology of civilization versus savagery. In this context it was practically impossible to argue in favour of difference and equality, since colonial discourses so vehemently linked difference (from British norms) to inferiority and, importantly, unfitness for self-government.[11] It was difficult to portray Aboriginal cultures as equally valid or valuable, given their fixed position within colonial ideology as the very definition of savagery.[12] A discourse of Aboriginal redeemability through Christianity and "civilization" allowed these spokespersons to find an audience and a voice.

Aboriginal activists also needed to foster alliances with sympathetic whites and, for the most part, these were available only among mission-oriented

Christians and certain government authorities, all of whom were intent on implementing a policy of Europeanization. By contrast, in this period the argument for leaving Aboriginal cultures unaltered was associated with the belief that First Nations were not suited to integration with whites and were doomed to extinction. For example, Sir Francis Bond Head, lieutenant-governor of Upper Canada, argued in 1836 that Aboriginal people could not adapt, died faster when converted to Christianity and agriculture, and should be segregated for their own protection so that they could live out their final days in peace: "The greatest kindness we can perform towards these intelligent, simple-minded people, is to remove and fortify them as much as possible from all communication with the Whites."[13]

All these considerations combined to compel Aboriginal intellectuals to argue for their people's ability to assimilate and, thus, earn entitlement to rights and equality. Indeed, Peter Jones wrote that his main motive for undergoing his first Christian baptism, in the Mohawk Anglican church, was his desire for equality: "that I might be entitled to all the privileges of the white inhabitants."[14] After experiencing a deeper conversion at a Methodist camp meeting, Jones embraced the assimilationist approach wholeheartedly and condemned nearly every aspect of Ojibway culture. George Copway also espoused assimilation but worked to subvert its cultural implications to some extent by denouncing the wrongs of colonization and European institutions while asserting the superiority of certain Ojibway values and practices. Both men used accounts of historical events and processes to critique certain aspects of the European presence. By arguing for their people's historicity and ability to adopt European ways, these spokesmen sought to fight colonialism's fatal linkage of "Indians" with difference, savagery, exclusion, and extinction.

Although Copway and Jones took divergent approaches to depicting Ojibway culture and society, their accounts demonstrate significant similarities in their constructions of history. Both denounced the damage wrought by colonization and the harms introduced into Ojibway and other Aboriginal societies by white traders and settlers. In both of his books, Jones repeatedly deplored the failure of white Christians to live up to their own religious rhetoric and condemned those who had harmed his people. In one sentence, which was repeated three times with only small variations in his books, he exclaimed, "Oh, what an awful account at the day of judgment must the unprincipled white man give, who has been an agent of Satan in the extermination of the original proprietors of the American soil!"[15] Thus, while

Jones embraced complete assimilation and worked to spread Christianity and Europeanization, he was forthright in naming colonization's history of violence and expropriation and its introduction of social problems, foremost among them being alcohol. He also mentioned the assistance that the Ojibway and other First Nations gave the British government in the War of 1812: "During the last American war the Ojebways, as well as other Indian tribes, rendered the British great assistance in fighting the Americans. In that war many of our fathers fell, sealing their attachment to the British Government with their blood."[16]

George Copway, in *Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation*, attacked colonization and also launched a critique of European social institutions, which he compared unfavourably with those of the Ojibway. According to Copway, Ojibway forms of law, government, and social control revealed their superior rationality: their institutions operated through the appeal to reason, not coercion, and were much more effective than European approaches for maintaining social peace. As Copway remarked about his people's means of obtaining social consensus without resort to force, "They would not as brutes be whipped into duty. They would as men be persuaded to the right."[17] Given the centrality of reason in British claims to moral superiority, such words were aimed straight at the heart of the dichotomy that opposed civilization to savagery.

Copway devoted several chapters of his book to accounts of the Ojibway's wars with the Six Nations and the Sioux (Dakota), including the Ojibway's conquest, with their allies, of the Six Nations and their lands north of Lake Ontario.[18] In a gesture that seems to be intended to evoke a parallel with empire building and expansionism in both the United States and his native Canada, Copway emphasized his people's military prowess and territorial expansion. At the same time, he mounted an outspoken critique of colonialism and commerce, for their insatiable appetite for Aboriginal lands and their willingness to acquire them unjustly. Like many other Aboriginal writers of the nineteenth century, he was particularly critical of the way alcohol was used by white traders and others to destroy Aboriginal people for personal profit. This criticism was also prominent in Jones' work.[19] Finally, Copway addressed the accusation of savagery that whites made against First Nations by reversing the direction of condemnation. Citing North American wars between Europeans as one cause of the massive decrease in the Aboriginal population, he stated, "During these wars the Indian has been called from

the woods to show his fearless nature, and for obeying, and showing himself fearless, it is said of him that he is 'a man without a tear.' He has been stigmatized with the name – 'a savage,' – by the very people who called for his aid, and he gave it."[20] Not only were white readers censured for their ingratitude and hypocrisy, they also received a telling reminder of military history since the arrival of Europeans, a history in which Aboriginal people had repeatedly played a crucial role not only as opponents but also as allies.

Copway and Jones were not the only individuals to address this history of military alliance. In 1841 most of the Ojibway and Six Nations chiefs of southern Upper Canada gathered together to present donations of money to Indian Department officials. The money was donated to help rebuild the Brock Monument at Queenston Heights, which had recently been destroyed by a Canadian dissident in the tensions that followed the Upper Canada Rebellion. Sir Isaac Brock was an important figure to First Nations, having shown them respect, distinguished himself through his bravery, and fought side by side with them and one of their most important leaders, Tecumseh, in the War of 1812. The chiefs made speeches as they pledged their donations, and they emphasized the common cause they had shared with Anglo-Canadians in the fight with the Americans and also the injuries, suffering, and loss of life this had entailed. For example, Chief Canoting, who spoke for the Delaware (Lenape), Oneida, and Chippewas of the Thames, declared that their warriors had fought with Brock against the common enemy and that "it is our firm determination to retain the same zeal, loyalty, and devotion, that glowed in the bosoms of our forefathers, who bravely defended the Royal Standard, under which we have the happiness to live, and to claim the proud distinction of British subjects."[21] These speeches contained a number of central themes, including the shared suffering and danger of war, the superiority of British over American policy, and a continuing willingness to fight for the British Crown. The clear message was that the history of military alliance bound together First Nations and newcomers, creating mutual attachment and obligations, including the Crown's responsibility to reward Aboriginal people's loyalty and sacrifice. This approach was consistent with Aboriginal diplomatic practices that stressed mutual military aid as one of the pre-eminent features of cooperation and friendship between nations. Through repeated allusions to this history, First Nations people sought to keep alive a relationship of goodwill and mutual protection with the Crown that became increasingly important as their own numerical significance and political power declined.

The Early Twentieth Century

The path-breaking historical writings of men like Peter Jones and George Copway were followed by a small number of books being published in North America in the ensuing century or so. As scholar A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff has noted, the relative interest in Aboriginal writings among the white public between the 1820s and 1850s was succeeded by an unreceptive climate during the remainder of the century as Anglo-expansionists on both sides of the border (especially in the United States) fought bitter battles over land with western tribes. Thus, relatively few books appeared in the second half of the nineteenth century, and nearly all of them were published in the United States.[22] Nevertheless, the pattern of emphasis in historical writing continued: "From the 1850s to the 1890s, most of the works by Indian authors were histories of woodland tribes from the East and Midwest."[23]

Aboriginal publications were likewise scarce during the first two-thirds of the twentieth century, due in part, no doubt, to a relative lack of interest among the reading public and a general shortage of publishing opportunities in Canada. It would appear that no full-length historical books by Aboriginal authors were published in this period. Nevertheless, three men on the Prairies were painstakingly recording Aboriginal views of history: Edward Ahenakew (Cree), Joseph Dion (Cree), and Mike Mountain Horse (Kainai) wrote significant works, each of which focused on his own people.[24] These men were concerned about the poverty, marginalization, and oppression of their people and were politically active, working with the League of Indians of Western Canada and other organizations. All three were born in the 1880s and experienced both the wretched conditions of early prairie reserves and the vivid recountings of old times by those who had lived a free life on the plains before treaties and white settlement. They wrote between 1910 and 1960 and published some short pieces in newspapers and journals; they attempted to produce full-length books as well, but either did not complete them or could not find publishers for their manuscripts. All were concerned with history and sought to counter colonial representations of Aboriginal people and Native-newcomer relations through their own depictions of historical events and processes. In each case, their writings were published as books in the 1970s.[25]

Ahenakew, Dion, and Mountain Horse were all clear about their mission to correct the misrepresentations of non-Aboriginal historians, though they took different approaches to the task. Their writings share a focus on Cree and/or Kainai lifestyles and cultures, an obvious effort to invoke the reader's

sympathy and understanding, and attention to at least some aspects of the harm inflicted on Aboriginal people through disease, treaties, settlement, and/or government policy. Like their predecessors, both Ahenakew and Mountain Horse drew attention to their people's military contributions, in this case the exemplary enlistment rates of Aboriginal people in the First World War. Dion briefly mentioned their role in the Second World War for the limited purpose of denouncing the Indian Department's policy of compulsory enfranchisement: "Nearly 3,000 young Indians had fought in World War Two against the power of dictators; why should a dictator be tolerated at home?"[26]

Edward Ahenakew, an ordained Anglican clergyman whose bishop forced him to cease his work with the League of Indians of Western Canada, was most circumspect in his approach.[27] The first half of his book was devoted to stories of the old days from his friend Chief Thunderchild. The stories beautifully conveyed the tenor of a young Cree man's life before treaties and simultaneously preserved these important oral traditions before they died out.[28] The second half created a character known as Old Keyam, which meant in Cree "I don't care," that allowed him to speak about important issues such as education and government policies. Ahenakew used the voice of Old Keyam to make a key intervention into the construction of history: to defend the Cree who took part in the killings at Frog Lake during the 1885 Northwest Rebellion. Old Keyam explained these events as acts of vengeance against unpopular officials and also as an expression of frustration and rage at the misery and degradation of reserves. He concluded, "Looking back now, we can recognize that the massacre at Frog Lake was the last effort of the Indian to register in letters of blood his opposition to the ever-increasing and irresistible power of another race in the land that had been his."[29]

Mike Mountain Horse was more direct in expressing his objection to the depictions of Aboriginal people in histories authored by whites. The first words of his book asserted his need to tell the Aboriginal side of the story: "Often, in perusing supposedly authentic historic[al] volumes, I have read of the Indians as being bloodthirsty individuals, yelling, whooping, and seeking to destroy. I have become increasingly aware, as I continued reading, that very few of the good points of the Indians were chronicled. Hence it became my desire to narrate as accurately as possible some of the true facts concerning my people."[30] Mountain Horse's book recounts stories of his childhood and upbringing intermingled with descriptions of the Kainai worldview and customs. He also tells specifically historical tales such as "The Great Battle,"

which recounts the last bloody battle between the Blackfoot Confederacy and the Plains Cree. Mountain Horse's central goal seems to be to evoke sympathy and empathy in his non-Aboriginal target audience.

Of the three authors, Joseph Dion most explicitly offered a corrective to dominant versions of history: "A great deal has been written by various white historians in their own style dealing with the western Indians. A lot of these writers have been carried away with themselves and mixed fiction with the truth."[31] He was also the most forthright in naming the negative impact of the European invasion on his people, explaining that "the white man" brought "new and wicked weapons" and "set to work to destroy everything where ever he went." This destructiveness, combined with European diseases and "plain cruel selfishness" resulted in "untold misery" and "ultimate degradation" for the Plains Cree.[32] Dion discussed at length the smallpox epidemics, and he included some vivid first-hand accounts of the treaty and the violence of 1885, both at Frog Lake and at Poundmaker's and other reserves. Although Dion had begun writing as early as 1912, much of his book was written in the 1950s. It is possible that the anti-colonial spirit of the postwar era, as well as his own maturity and experience, permitted him the freedom to criticize the dominant society more directly than his predecessors.

Work since 1969

Aboriginal history writing did not flourish fully until the last three decades of the twentieth century. The current phase of Aboriginal intellectual production relating to history began in around 1969, when the federal government's *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969* (better known as the White Paper) sparked major political mobilization.[33] This movement took root with the publication of Harold Cardinal's *The Unjust Society*.[34] His scathing response to the White Paper was aimed at a wide audience and garnered considerable attention, which helped to begin the process of educating mainstream, non-Aboriginal Canadians about the injustices of the past. Framing his well-aimed polemic around Trudeau's proclaimed goal of building a just society, Cardinal outlined the features of Canadian history that he considered central to the unjust society that Aboriginal people experienced. He emphasized dispossession, deception, failed educational policy, and the injustice of forced assimilation. He also lambasted the government for its history of smothering control, bureaucratic red tape, indifference, and incompetence. The very first sentence declared Cardinal's historical focus: "The history of Canada's Indians is a shameful chronicle of the white

man's disinterest, his deliberate trampling of Indian rights and his repeated betrayal of our trust."[35] Cardinal declared his intention to provide a more accurate version of history: "I intend to document the betrayals of our trust, to show step by step how a dictatorial bureaucracy has eroded our rights, atrophied our culture and robbed us of simple human dignity."[36]

Howard Adams' *Prison of Grass*, published in 1975, took a similar approach, indicting Canadian society and the federal government, and attaining bestseller status.[37] He too began with statements about the inaccuracy of mainstream history: "I attempt to examine history and autobiography and their intersection with colonization. The intentions of the book are to unmask the white supremacy that has dominated native history, and to construct an authentic Indian/Métis history."[38] Adams began with a Marxist analysis of racism and its economic and psychological impact; he then devoted considerable space to exploring the history of the Métis from the founding of Red River to 1885. Like Cardinal, Adams highlighted many of the same issues that Jones and Copway had raised a century before, especially the history of deceptive and/or forcible land seizure, the social ills created by colonization, and Aboriginal people's exclusion from mainstream society. Like the other writers, he excoriated the Department of Indian Affairs for the bureaucratic control that smothered all initiative and freedom: "All activities of the native community were completely under the control of the colonizing officials, who made all the decisions affecting the daily operations of native people ... This grinding paternalism and prison-like authority has persisted to this day."[39]

Aboriginal writers of this period confronted a new sociopolitical context in which the overt racism and paternalism of previous eras were rejected by many Canadians. Nevertheless, in practice, the same colonial relations and pervasive racist assumptions and practices prevailed. Nothing made this more obvious than the process that surrounded the Trudeau government's attempts to revamp federal Indian policy in 1968-69. Having proclaimed its commitment to a just society and participatory democracy, the government embarked on an unprecedented process of consultation, only to produce a set of policy proposals that directly opposed Aboriginal goals.[40] The more liberal political climate made the contradictions of government policy and rhetoric more glaring and provided a more accommodating set of discourses from which to assail colonialism. Harold Cardinal was able to use the Liberal Party's rhetoric of justice and democracy to denounce the authoritarian Indian Affairs system and demonstrate the exclusion of First Nations from society. Howard

Adams had access to Marxist analyses of exploitation and colonization to ground his own critique of Canadian society.

In a climate where questions of sexual discrimination were again being addressed, it was also possible to raise an old colonial issue, the sexual abuse of women. Thus, some Aboriginal writers revisited the problem of violence, which had been present in nineteenth-century Aboriginal writings. The Pequot Methodist William Apes, who was the first published Aboriginal writer to produce a full-length life history, had voiced this theme in 1829, when he wrote that whites had "committed violence of the most revolting kind upon the persons of the female portion of the tribe."[41] It is also worth noting that Peter Jones quietly attacked the use of the racist term "squaw" by stating in a footnote in his *History of the Ojebway Indians,* "The Indians generally consider this word a term of reproach."[42] Sarah Winnemucca, the first Aboriginal woman to publish her life story, referred repeatedly to rapes and attempted rapes of Aboriginal women and noted, "The mothers are afraid to have more children, for fear they shall have daughters, who are not safe even in their mother's presence."[43] She also added a strong assertion about her determination to resist any such attacks: "If such an outrageous thing is to happen to me, it will not be done by one man or two, while there are two women with knives, for I know what an Indian woman can do."[44]

Both Howard Adams and Harold Cardinal also took the opportunity to name this kind of ongoing colonial violence. Adams approached the issue by means of an anecdote about racist taunting he experienced at the hands of some Mounties who offered him a ride, seemingly for the opportunity to bait him by insulting Métis women. He cited a series of sexualized racist slurs directed particularly at women but also at men and his own person.[45] Cardinal wrote more forthrightly about the impact of constant sexual insults and organized sexual assault by pointing out the pervasiveness of these practices and double standards within the justice system, which Aboriginal people perceived as condoning white violence against them. He confronted his readers with a reverse scenario: "Turn the tables and see what would happen. Imagine a carousing invasion of one of your suburbs by roistering young Indian males in search of white girls for easy conquest."[46]

Cardinal and Adams are the earliest and best-known authors of a small group of writers who have written openly polemic works that critique the present situation partly by expressing Aboriginal understandings of historical events and processes. Daniel Paul is one later writer who has written in

a similar manner. In his book *We Were Not the Savages,* Paul positions his work more squarely as an academic, historical study that is carefully supported with research into written documents.[47] Yet this sort of overt criticism is less common than deploying autobiography as a means of taking on historical injustice and discrimination. A series of autobiographies published in Canada since the 1970s has raised these issues in more subtle language, though clearly with the same intent to expose and critique. Some of the better-known examples of this genre include Eleanor Brass' *I Walk in Two Worlds,* Basil Johnston's *Indian School Days,* and Jane Willis' *Geniesh: An Indian Girlhood*.[48]

Since the 1970s several developments have had major implications for the publication of Aboriginal historical interpretations. One is the gradual increase in Aboriginal postsecondary and postgraduate education, which has produced a small but important group of Aboriginal academics. Some of the better-known Aboriginal academics whose work relates to the history of colonization include Howard Adams, Taiaiake Alfred, Marie Battiste, John Borrows, Olive Dickason, James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson, Emma LaRocque, Patricia Monture, Georges Sioui, Blair Stonechild, and Sharon Venne. Of this group, Olive Dickason, Blair Stonechild, and Georges Sioui are academic historians, while many of the other scholars address historical themes in their works on law, politics, culture, self-government, and literature.[49] The Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP), which was established in 1991 and reported in 1996, was another major venue for Aboriginal historical analysis and interpretations.[50]

A third significant development was the federal government's establishment of a land claims process that has produced a large historical research industry. Aboriginal people have participated extensively in the claims process, helping to generate a vast new body of historical research that often represents a collaboration between non-Aboriginal researchers and First Nations researchers and governments. Revelations of widespread physical and sexual abuse in Canada's Indian residential schools have also spurred research into the schools and many lawsuits against the government and the churches that ran them.[51] The establishment and steady expansion of the claims system has involved academic historians, anthropologists, and other scholars in claims-related research with significant implications for academic research in general.[52] In the discipline of history, for example, the hitherto almost ignored treaties had begun by the 1980s to receive more serious scholarly treatment, along with general issues related to land, law, and the *Indian Act.*[53] More attention was devoted to accessing Aboriginal perspectives, imagining history

from Aboriginal points of view, and comprehending the ways in which First Nations people were able to exercise agency. The academic literature on residential schools postdates Aboriginal initiatives to publicize the harm these institutions inflicted, and scholars working in this area have tended to work with Aboriginal people in their research.[54]

The last decade or so has witnessed a noticeable trend toward more widespread Aboriginal involvement in the recording and interpretation of their own history. In addition to works directly produced through the land claims process, there are books such as Treaty 7 Elders and colleagues' *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7*, Ila Bussidor and Üstün Bilgen-Reinhart's *Night Spirits,* the Glenbow Museum and Blackfoot Elders' *Nitsitapi-isinni: The Story of the Blackfoot People,* and *Ahtahkakoop*, written by Deanna Christensen, with the Ahtahkakoop First Nation.[55] All of these books represent collaborations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people that are designed to facilitate the publication of and access to Aboriginal people's own historical interpretations. There are also more Aboriginal historians in the academy, including Winona Wheeler, Heather Devine, and Susan Hill.[56] Growth in this area remains slow, however, and the preponderance of works appearing outside the academic fold is noteworthy.

Aboriginal People and Academic History Writing

What are we to make of the fact that so many Aboriginal people interested in history disseminate their ideas outside the academy? This fact poses epistemological, political, and paradigmatic questions for university historians. Does this choice relate in part to the mode of Western academic inquiry and to the Western knowledge project in general? When investigation of the conditions, attitudes, and experiences of First Nations has been a central component of the colonial project in Canada, some effort is required to reclaim academic inquiry and strip it of its oppressive connotations. Make no mistake – Aboriginal people did not have to read Michel Foucault to understand the meaning of "hierarchical observation" and the ways that knowledge collection underpinned the control exercised over them by the Department of Indian Affairs.[57] Given these historical realities, there are some challenges for First Nations people who seek a place for their own forms of knowledge and their own emancipatory political projects in the Western-oriented academy that our universities represent. I believe that non-Aboriginal scholars can help advance this process by displaying more openness, innovation, and willingness to take risks, both in their own work and in their interactions

with Aboriginal scholars. For their part, Aboriginal scholars have voiced many concerns about racism and colonialism within the academy.[58]

Another problem is the translation process that is required for many Aboriginal students to engage in the type of intellectual debate and inquiry that is pursued in academic institutions. Some of the barriers are linguistic: in Manitoba, for example, some students speak an Aboriginal language as their mother tongue. Other obstacles relate to distinct Aboriginal epistemological premises and intellectual concerns that are not reflected in university curricula. Anthropologist Julie Cruikshank has made perhaps the greatest contribution to explaining these epistemologies to the non-Aboriginal world through her work on storytelling and Aboriginal people's use of stories.[59] When Cruikshank first began to record the life stories of Tlingit and Tagish women in Yukon, she found that, instead of talking about their personal life experiences, the women insisted on telling traditional stories about cultural figures.[60] She finally grasped that the women were giving her cultural training to prepare her to engage with their society's form of historical analysis, which centred on the tropes, thematic concerns, and narrative structures of such stories. The women understood their lives in terms of the traditional stories they told, and they constantly reconfigured and reconstituted the stories to make sense of their own life experiences and larger historical events such as the Yukon Gold Rush and the construction of the Alaska Highway.[61] Such an understanding of history and meaning differs radically from those disseminated in the academy.

In academic communities it is important to ask whether there is room to expand the category of scholar. Aboriginal people frequently observe that their Elders are the equivalent of libraries. Why do we not consider Aboriginal Elders with historical and/or cultural knowledge to be scholars, too? Such people have interpretations and analyses that have been partly passed down from their own teachers and partly developed through many years of thought and study. In most Aboriginal societies, oral history and tradition are evaluated rigourously through a process that compares the comments and stories of several Elders and affirms as certain only those that correspond with the others.[62] So the question can be posed: Should we always require university degrees to bestow recognition on scholarship?

Clearly, Aboriginal people are increasingly interested in having access to publishing as a way to relate and interpret their own history – and they are not always turning to the academy to do so. In fact, there is considerable suspicion in many communities that academic research is simply another

form of colonial exploitation.[63] This perception is founded on the notion that non-Aboriginal people who seek information from First Nations are there only to take something away, that their research is, in effect, a form of theft that robs the people of something valuable. In part, this is a response to the fact that, in the past, researchers often disappeared after doing their research, and the communities gained nothing from their participation – a phenomenon that has not ceased entirely. In part, it reflects the view that researchers should conform to Aboriginal cultural protocols regarding access to the community and its knowledge.[64] In many Aboriginal societies, some form of payment often accompanied the transfer of valuable knowledge to non-kin. Elders expect to receive something in return for their stories, which normally means offering meaningful monetary payments as well as adhering to cultural protocols.[65] Beyond this, there is a strong feeling in many communities that First Nations knowledge is valuable and should not be given away to outsiders.[66] When a community is involved in any kind of treaty or land negotiation, there is a fear that community research could be used against them to affect their negotiations adversely. Thus, there are political barriers to collaborative research, and there are also competing knowledge paradigms: a Western, academic one that views knowledge essentially as a common good and an Aboriginal one that views knowledge as valuable individual or family property that should be retained more intimately within the kinship network.

There is another set of unresolved questions concerning the validity and uses of oral history and tradition. In the field of Aboriginal history, the belief that oral history is important has come to be almost universally accepted, and many academic historians are making greater efforts to conduct this sort of research. It is becoming almost a platitude to state that oral history is essential, but oral history is difficult to do. If anything, it is getting more difficult as First Nations become empowered to protect and claim their own knowledge and are increasingly cautious about vouchsafing that knowledge into an outsider's hands. The academic evaluation and reward system also militates against the pursuit of oral history. Oral history takes far longer than conventional documentary history, and it demands teamwork and community-relations skills that are not part of a historian's academic training and take considerable time and effort to develop. Approaching oral history ethically and sustainably means relinquishing control over the content and timing of the end product, if there is one. Probably one of the most valuable things to do at this particular historical conjuncture is to put academic funding and resources into

projects that record and preserve the knowledge of Aboriginal communities – regardless of whether they contribute directly to academic researchers' publication records. But to do so is risky for academic scholars because success in institutional evaluation processes and grant competitions has much to do with the number of publications they can produce. The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada has recently instituted an Aboriginal Research Program that seems calculated to address concerns of this sort, but more change is required to facilitate new approaches to Aboriginal research in the academy.[67]

Within the discipline of history, some efforts have been made to respond to Aboriginal concerns. Despite Aboriginal people's misgivings about academic historians, Aboriginal interpretations of history have been influential in some respects. Although an analysis of oppression and colonization did not originate solely with Aboriginal people, the strong emphasis on these interpretive frameworks by Aboriginal writers from Harold Cardinal onward has shaped the writing of two generations of academic historians and other scholars who have followed. Aboriginal history and anthropology in Canada have focused since the 1969 White Paper extensively on various aspects of colonization and oppression. This is perhaps most apparent in the literature on residential schools, where non-Aboriginal contributors to the literature have clearly been responding to public and private condemnations of the system issued by First Nations.[68] The literature concerning treaties has likewise been shaped powerfully by these sorts of research collaborations and infused with an Aboriginal understanding that emphasizes the spirit and intent of treaties, presses governments and the courts to interpret them broadly, and sees these agreements as founding documents of Canadian history.[69]

Not surprisingly, academic history has been most receptive to Aboriginal influences that are easy to accommodate in the existing forms, epistemologies, methodologies, and interpretive frameworks. Understandings that do not fit neatly into these have had less impact. For instance, traditional stories are an integral part of Aboriginal historical understandings, as Julie Cruikshank has demonstrated in her work with Yukon Elders. The centrality of storytelling was also revealed, for example, in *Ahtahkakoop*, which was commissioned by the Ahtahkakoop First Nation of Saskatchewan and incorporates traditional stories into its narrative flow to show the integrated cultural world of the Plains Cree by underlining values and self-understandings.[70] While Cruikshank's work has deservedly received a good deal of attention,

the publication of *Ahtahkakoop* passed virtually unnoticed, and the book appears to have had little impact on academic history.

There is also a fundamental cleavage between the way Aboriginal writers such as Howard Adams and Daniel Paul and non-Aboriginal historians approach issues of responsibility and agency. Adams and Paul place a strong emphasis on the wrongs of colonialism and white society and tend to portray Aboriginal people historically as more or less powerless victims. Even Harold Cardinal, who generally depicts First Nations as intelligent and self-confident, approvingly quotes David Courchene, president of the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, who stated in 1968 that nineteenth-century Aboriginal treaty negotiators were "uneducated people" who were "impressed by the pomp and ceremony and the authority of the officials" and "really did not know or understand fully the meaning and implications" of the treaties.[71] This image of Aboriginal treaty participants as unsophisticated and unaware, as tricked or coerced into signing treaties by the officials of a powerful state, is common in Aboriginal public discourse. In contrast, non-Aboriginal writers on this subject tend to stress treaty negotiations in which chiefs like Mawedopenais, Peau de Chat, Mistawasis, and Ahtahkakoop demonstrated an awareness of coming changes such as mass immigration and their own inability to halt the invasion.[72] Both sets of perspectives accurately reflect historical realities, but they present the treaty process in distinctly different lights. Nonetheless, all parties agree on the deceptive language used by government negotiators, the pressure they placed on First Nations to sign, the prevalence of "outside promises" made verbally but left out of written treaties, and the excessively narrow, legalistic interpretations that the federal government applied in implementing them.[73]

Conclusion

The observations in this chapter will, I hope, contribute to the mapping out of new terrain in which academic history could be more responsive to Aboriginal historical thinking. Perhaps the most difficult challenge is the effort to expand our categories of what constitutes history, what constitutes a scholar, and even what constitutes reality. For example, Aboriginal histories often include stories of "supernatural" phenomena and "magical" transformations in which beings move from the human to the animal world and back again, stories that are not deemed to be "history" and for which the English language is sadly lacking a useful vocabulary and corresponding

concepts.[74] Native origin stories often conflict with Western science's insistence on its theory of Asian origins and migration across the Bering Strait. Few scholars have resisted the temptation to endorse Western epistemology and, thus, perpetuate science's exclusive truth claim. Few of us have been willing to abandon our diachronic time scales and our chronological narrative structures for alternative formats. Finally, it remains a challenge for academic historians to contemplate a research agenda shared with or even determined by Aboriginal collaborators or to surrender control of crucial decisions such as the uses and end products of research. Until we take more steps in these directions, we will continue to maintain significant barriers between ourselves and the Aboriginal people whose histories we attempt to understand.

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NOTES

1 Alexander Saxton, *The Rise and Fall of the White Republic: Class Politics and Mass Culture in Nineteenth-Century America* (London: Verso, 1990), 14, quoted in Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color: European Immigrants and the Alchemy of Race* (Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1998), 6.

2 Maureen Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations: Indian Intellectuals and the Politics of Historiography, 1827-1863* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2004), 43.

3 In addition to those cited throughout this chapter, other early writers/speakers include Samson Occom (Mohegan), who preached and spoke in the 1770s, and nineteenth-century writers Andrew J. Blackbird (Ottawa), William W. Warren (Ojibway), E. Pauline Johnson (Mohawk), and John Rollin Ridge (Cherokee). For oral literature, see Penny Petrone, *First People, First Voices* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1983) and *Native Literature in Canada: From the Oral Tradition to the Present* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 1990).

4 Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations,* 6, 36. See also Colin M. Coates and Cecilia Morgan, *Heroines and History: Representations of Madeleine de Verchères and Laura Secord* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002), 257-74.

5 This is particularly evident, for example, in Upper Canadian newspapers in the first half of the nineteenth century, in which histories of towns and settlements are constructed as though First Nations people did not exist by denoting the place before the arrival of Europeans "a howling wilderness." See R.J. Brownlie, "Settlement, 'Indianness,' and Whiteness in Upper Canadian Discourses, 1820-1860"

(paper presented at the annual meeting of the Canadian Historical Association, Toronto, 29 May 2006).

6 Maureen Konkle has written on this subject, "For Native writers, to claim modern time is to claim the history of European depredations on Native peoples and to refute EuroAmericans' insistence that racial difference is the explanation for everything that happened to Native peoples, as well as for their eventual doom. To claim to progress through time, to argue that Native peoples can and will persist into the future, is to claim political standing and to insist on recognition," *Writing Indian Nations,* 37.

7 George Copway, *The Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation* (London: Gilpin, 1850). The book later appeared under the title *Indian Life and Indian History, by an Indian Author, Embracing the Traditions of the North American Indian Tribes Regarding Themselves, Particularly of That Most Important of All the Tribes, the Ojibways* (1858; repr., New York: AMS, 1977). Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby), *History of the Ojebway Indians: With Especial Reference to Their Conversion to Christianity* (London: A.W. Bennett 1861).

8 Relevant works include Donald B. Smith, "Kahgegagahbowh: Canada's First Literary Celebrity in the United States," in *Life, Letters, and Speeches,* by George Copway, ed. A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff and Donald B. Smith (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1997), "The Life of George Copway or Kah-ge-ga-gah-bowh (1818-1869) – and a Review of His Writings," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 23, 3 (1988): 5-38, and *Sacred Feathers: The Reverend Peter Jones (Kahkewaquonaby) and the Mississauga Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1987); Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations;* A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff, "Three Nineteenth-Century American Indian Autobiographers," in *Redefining American Literary History,* ed. A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff and Jerry W. Ward (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1990), 251-69; Cheryl Walker, *Indian Nation: Native American Literature and Nineteenth-Century Nationalisms* (Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 1997).

9 Smith, "The Life of George Copway," 16, 27.

10 Konkle, *Writing Indian Nations*, 40. Catherine Hall places the date for a similar transition in England toward the end of the 1840s and the beginning of the 1850s: see *Civilising Subjects: Metropole and Colony in the English Imagination 1830-1867* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2002), 20.

11 For an instructive analysis of the concept of "fitness for self-government" and its imbrication with notions of race, see Matthew Frye Jacobson, *Whiteness of a Different Color*, 7-8, 14, 22-31, and passim.

12 Scientist Stephen Jay Gould, upon analyzing nineteenth-century attitudes toward race, stated, "I cannot identify any popular position remotely like the 'cultural relativism' that prevails (at least by lip service) in liberal circles today." Stephen Jay Gould, *The Mismeasure of Man* (1981; repr., New York: W.W. Norton, 1996), 63, quoted in Celia Haig-Brown and David A. Nock, introduction to *With Good*

Intentions: Euro-Canadian and Aboriginal Relations in Colonial Canada, ed. Celia Haig-Brown and David A. Nock (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006), 10.

13 United Kingdom, *British Parliamentary Papers*, vol. 12, *Correspondence, Returns and Other Papers relating to Canada and to the Indian Problem Therein, 1839* (Shannon: Irish University Press, 1969), 353; Bond Head to Glenelg, no. 32, 20 November 1836, quoted in Robert J. Surtees, "Treaty Research Report: Manitoulin Island Treaties," Treaties and Historical Research Centre, Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, 1986.

14 Peter Jones, *Life and Journal of Kah-ke-wa-quo-na-by (Rev. Peter Jones), Wesleyan Missionary* (Toronto: Missionary Committee, Canada Conference, 1860), 7.

15 Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 29-30.

16 Ibid., 129.

17 Copway, *Traditional History and Characteristic Sketches of the Ojibway Nation*, 144.

18 The Ojibway's military history was also one of the main preoccupations of the other famous Ojibway-authored work of the nineteenth century, William W. Warren's *History of the Ojibways, Based upon Traditions and Oral Statements* (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1885).

19 See Ruoff, "Three Nineteenth-Century American Indian Autobiographers," 253; see also Walker, *Indian Nation*, 96.

20 Copway, *Traditional History*, 263.

21 "Chief Canoting, speaking at conference held at Colborne-on-Thames on Jan. 27, 1841, in presence of Supt of IA [Superintendent of Indian Affairs]; Rev Richard Flood; Rev. Solomon Waldron; and the Chiefs of the Delawares, Oneidas, and Chippewas," quoted in Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians*, 272-73.

22 For a bibliography of works by Aboriginal authors that focuses mainly on the United States (but with some works published by authors born in Canada), see A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff, "American Indian Literature," in *Redefining American Literary History*, ed. A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff and Jerry W. Ward Jr. (New York: Modern Language Association of America, 1990), 327-52.

23 Ruoff, "Three Nineteenth-Century American Indian Autobiographers," 260.

24 Many thanks to my colleague at the University of Manitoba, Dr. Kathleen Buddle-Crowe, for sharing with me her research on Aboriginal media activism, which includes a most informative section on these three men. See Kathleen Buddle-Crowe, "From Birchbark Talk to Digital Dreamspeaking: A History of Aboriginal Media Activism in Canada" (PhD diss., McMaster University, 2002).

25 Edward Ahenakew published "Cree Trickster Tales" in *The Journal of American Folklore* 42, 166 (1929): 309-53; Joseph Dion published articles in the *Bonnyville Tribune* and other newspapers, while Mike Mountain Horse published in the *Lethbridge Herald*. Edward Ahenakew and Joseph Dion were unable to complete their planned books before their deaths; Mike Mountain Horse was unable to find a publisher in the 1930s. See Hugh A. Dempsey, introduction to Joseph F. Dion, *My Tribe the Crees*,

ed. Hugh A. Dempsey (Calgary: Glenbow Museum, 1979), vii; Hugh A. Dempsey, introduction to *My People the Bloods,* by Mike Mountain Horse (Calgary/Standoff: Glenbow-Alberta Institute/Blood Tribal Council, 1979), vii; Ruth M. Buck, "Introduction to the 1973 Edition," in Edward Ahenakew, *Voices of the Plains Cree,* ed. Ruth M. Buck, rev. ed. (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1973; Regina: Canadian Plains Research Center, 1995), 1, 3. Citations are to the 1995 edition.

26 Dion, *My Tribe the Crees,* 176.

27 Stan Cuthand, "Introduction to the 1995 Edition," in Ahenakew, *Voices of the Plains Cree,* ed. Buck, xviii.

28 Ahenakew's niece, Christine Wilna (Willy) Hodgson, states that he was aware of the threat to Cree oral tradition and understood that its transmission would have to change in order to preserve it; that is, that it would have to be committed to writing. Christine Wilna (Willy) Hodgson, foreword to Ahenakew, *Voices of the Plains Cree,* ed. Ruth M. Buck, vii.

29 Ahenakew, *Voices of the Plains Cree*, 73.

30 Mountain Horse, *My People the Bloods*, xiii.

31 Dion, *My Tribe the Crees,* ix.

32 Ibid., 65.

33 Canada, *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy* (Ottawa: Queen's Printer, 1969).

34 Harold Cardinal, *The Unjust Society: The Tragedy of Canada's Indians* (Edmonton: M.G. Hurtig, 1969).

35 Ibid., 1.

36 Ibid., 2.

37 Howard Adams, *Prison of Grass: Canada from the Native Point of View,* rev. ed. (Toronto: New Press, 1975; Saskatoon: Fifth House, 1989).

38 Adams, *Prison of Grass,* 6, from the preface to the 1989 edition.

39 Ibid., 37.

40 For a thorough analysis of the events surrounding the *Statement of the Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969* (the White Paper), see Sally M. Weaver, *Making Canadian Indian Policy: The Hidden Agenda, 1968-1970* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1981).

41 William Apes, *Son of the Forest: The Experience of William Apes, a Native of the Forest* (1829), cited in A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff, "Three Nineteenth-Century American Indian Autobiographers," in *Redefining American Literary History,* ed. A. LaVonne Brown Ruoff and Jerry W. Ward Jr., 253.

42 Jones, *History of the Ojebway Indians,* 164.

43 Sarah Winnemucca Hopkins, *Life Among the Piutes: Their Wrongs and Claims* (New York: G.P. Putnam, 1883; repr., Reno: University of Nevada Press, 1994), 48.

44 Ibid., 228.

45 Adams, *Prison of Grass,* 38-39.

46 Cardinal, *The Unjust Society,* 77.

47 Daniel N. Paul, *We Were Not the Savages: A Micmac Perspective on the Collision of European and Aboriginal Civilizations,* 2nd ed. (Halifax: Nimbus, 1993; Halifax: Fernwood, 2000).

48 Eleanor Brass, *I Walk in Two Worlds* (Calgary: Glenbow Museum, 1987); Basil H. Johnston, *Indian School Days* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 1988); Jane Willis, *Geniesh: An Indian Girlhood* (Toronto: New Press, 1973).

49 Howard Adams, *Prison of Grass* and *Tortured People: The Politics of Colonization* (Penticton, BC: Theytus Books, 1995); Taiaiake Alfred, *Wasa'se: Indigenous Pathways of Action and Freedom* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2005), *Peace, Power, Righteousness: An Indigenous Manifesto* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 1999), and *Heeding the Voices of Our Ancestors: Kahnawake Mohawk Politics and the Rise of Native Nationalism* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 1995); Marie Battiste and James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson, *Protecting Indigenous Knowledge and Heritage: A Global Challenge* (Saskatoon: Purich, 2000) and Marie Battiste, ed., *Reclaiming Indigenous Voice and Vision* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2000). John Borrows, *Recovering Canada: The Resurgence of Indigenous Law* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2002); John Borrows and Leonard Rotman, *Aboriginal Legal Issues: Cases, Material, and Commentary* (Toronto: Butterworths, 1998); Olive Dickason, *Canada's First Nations: A History of Founding Peoples from Earliest Times* (Don Mills, ON: Oxford University Press, 1992, 1996, 2002) and *The Myth of the Savage and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1997); James (Sákéj) Youngblood Henderson, *First Nations Jurisprudence and Aboriginal Rights: Defining the Just Society* (Saskatoon: Native Law Centre, University of Saskatchewan, 2006) and *The Mi'kmaw Concordat* (Halifax: Fernwood, 1997); Emma LaRocque, "Native Writers Resisting Colonizing Practices in Canadian Historiography and Literature" (PhD diss., University of Manitoba, 1999) and *Defeathering the Indian* (Agincourt, AB: Book Society of Canada, 1975); Patricia Monture, *Journeying Forward: Dreaming First Nations' Independence* (Halifax: Fernwood, 1999) and Patricia Monture-Angus, *Thunder in My Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks* (Halifax: Fernwood, 1995); Georges Sioui, *Huron-Wendat: The Heritage of the Circle* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999) and *For an Amerindian Autohistory: An Essay on the Foundations of a Social Ethic* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1992); Blair Stonechild, *The New Buffalo: The Struggle for Aboriginal Postsecondary Education in Canada* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 2006) and Blair Stonechild and Bill Waiser *Loyal Till Death: Indians and the North-West Rebellion* (Calgary: Fifth House, 1997); Sharon Venne, *Our Elders Understand Our Rights: Evolving International Law Regarding Indigenous Peoples* (Penticton, BC: Theytus Books, 1998) and *Indian Acts and Amendments, 1868-1975: An Indexed Collection* (Saskatoon: Native Law Centre, University of Saskatchewan, 1981).

50 Canada, Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples,* 5 vols. (Ottawa: Canada Communications Group, 1996).

51 See, for example, John Milloy, *A National Crime: The Canadian Government and the Residential School System, 1879 to 1986* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1999); J.R. Miller, *Shingwauk's Vision: A History of Native Residential Schools* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1996); and Agnes Grant, *No End of Grief: Indian Residential Schools in Canada* (Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1996).

52 Major examples include John Milloy's book on residential schools, *A National Crime,* which was originally a report for the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, and two treaty reports that became published books: Harold Cardinal and Walter Hildebrandt, eds. *Treaty Elders of Saskatchewan: Our Dream Is That Our Peoples Will One Day Be Clearly Recognized as Nations* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2000), which documents the oral history record, and Arthur J. Ray, Jim Miller, and Frank Tough, *Bounty and Benevolence: A Documentary History of Saskatchewan Treaties* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2000), which documents and analyzes the written record.

53 For Ontario, historical writing related to treaties began a little earlier, with a series of unpublished doctoral theses in the 1970s: Anthony J. Hall, "The Red Man's Burden: Land, Law, and the Lord in the Indian Affairs of Upper Canada, 1791-1858" (PhD diss., University of Toronto, 1984); Douglas Leighton, "The Development of Federal Indian Policy in Canada, 1840-1890" (PhD diss., University of Western Ontario, 1975); and Robert J. Surtees, "Indian Land Cessions in Ontario, 1763-1862: The Evolution of a System" (PhD diss., Carleton University, 1983).

54 John Milloy's *A National Crime* has already been cited and is the most obvious example, but the other major survey on the topic, J.R. Miller's *Shingwauk's Vision,* included a substantial number of interviews with survivors.

55 Treaty 7 Elders and Tribal Council, with Walter Hildebrandt, Sarah Carter, and Dorothy First Rider, *The True Spirit and Original Intent of Treaty 7* (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 1996); Ila Bussidor and Üstün Bilgen-Reinhart, *Night Spirits: The Story of the Relocation of the Sayisi Dene* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1997); Blackfoot Gallery Committee, *Nitsitapiisinni: The Story of the Blackfoot People* (Toronto: Key Porter Books, 2001); Deanna Christensen, *Ahtahkakoop: The Epic Account of a Plains Cree Head Chief, His People, and Their Struggle for Survival, 1816-1896* (Shell Lake, SK: Ahtahkakoop Publishing, 2000).

56 Winona Wheeler, "'Ethnic' Assimilates 'Indigenous': A Study in Intellectual Neocolonialism," *Wicazo Sa Review* 13, 1 (Spring, 1998): 33-51, Winona Stevenson (Wheeler), "The Journals and Voices of a Church of England Native Catechist: Askenootow (Charles Pratt), 1851-1884," in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History,* ed. Jennifer S.H. Brown and Elizabeth Vibert (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1996), 237-62, and Winona Wheeler, ed., "Indigenous Voices from the Great Plains," special issue, *Oral History Forum,* 19-20 (1999-2000); Heather Devine, *The People Who Own Themselves: Aboriginal Ethnogenesis in a Canadian Family, 1660-1990* (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2004); Susan M. Hill,

"'The Clay We Are Made Of': An Examination of Haudenosaunee Land Tenure on the Grand River Territory" (PhD diss., Trent University, 2005).

57 Michel Foucault, *Discipline and Punish: The Birth of the Prison*, trans. Alan Sheridan (New York: Vintage Books, 1995).

58 See, for example, Monture-Angus, *Thunder in My Soul*; Emma LaRocque, "The Colonization of a Native Woman Scholar," in *Women of the First Nations: Power, Wisdom, and Strength*, ed. Christina Miller and Patricia Chuchryk (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1996), 11-18. For the United States, see Devon A. Mihesuah and Angela C. Wilson, eds., *Indigenizing the Academy: Transforming Scholarship and Empowering Communities* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2004).

59 Julie Cruikshank, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders* (Lincoln/Vancouver: University of Nebraska Press/UBC Press, 1990) and *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory* (Lincoln/Vancouver: University of Nebraska Press/UBC Press, 1998).

60 Cruikshank, *Life Lived Like a Story*, 2, 14-15, 19-20.

61 See also Julie Cruikshank, "Discovery of Gold in the Klondike: Contributions from Oral Tradition," in *Reading Beyond Words: Contexts for Native History*, ed. Jennifer S.H. Brown and Elizabeth Vibert (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 1996), 433-59.

62 See, for example, Julie Cruikshank, "Oral History, Narrative Strategies, and Native American Historiography: Perspectives from the Yukon Territory, Canada," in *Clearing a Path: Theorizing the Past in Native American Studies*, ed. Nancy Shoemaker (New York: Routledge, 2002), 15-16.

63 See Linda Tuhiwai Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (London/Dunedin: Zed Books/University of Otago Press, 1999), 1-6.

64 Ibid., 15-16.

65 Jonathan H. Ellerby, *Working with Aboriginal Elders*: *An Introductory Handbook for Institution-Based and Health Care Professionals Based on the Teachings of Winnipeg-Area Aboriginal Elders and Cultural Teachers* (Winnipeg: Native Studies Press, 2001), 28-36, 50-54.

66 I experienced this in my own research, while organizing a local Elders' gathering at a Dene community in northern Manitoba.

67 The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada (SSHRC) launched its Aboriginal Research Program in 2004. It seeks to help foster more direct Aboriginal involvement in research and more culturally appropriate approaches. In 2007-8 an evaluation was completed that recommended continuation of the program, with minor adjustments. For a summary of the evaluation results, see Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada, "Management Response Summary: Aboriginal Pilot Program," SSHRC, http://www.sshrc.ca/site/about-crsh/publications/arpp_evaluation_response_e.pdf.

68 In addition to the books by J.R. Miller and John S. Milloy cited previously, many other works show this influence, including Roland Chrisjohn and Sherri Young,

with Michael Maraun, *The Circle Game: Shadows and Substance in the Indian Residential School Experience in Canada* (Vancouver: Theytus Books, 2006); Celia Haig-Brown, *Resistance and Renewal: Surviving the Indian Residential School* (Vancouver: Tillacum Library, 1988); Isabelle Knockwood, *Out of the Depths: The Experiences of Mi'kmaw Children at the Indian Residential School at Shubenacadie, Nova Scotia*, rev. ed. (Lockeport, NS: Roseway, 2001).

69 See, for example, Ray, Miller, and Tough, *Bounty and Benevolence*. Cole Harris' book *Making Native Space: Colonialism, Resistance, and Reserves in British Columbia* (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002) is also strongly shaped by BC First Nations century-long struggle for their land.

70 Christensen, *Ahtahkakoop*.

71 David Courchene, president of the Manitoba Indian Brotherhood, speaking during the regional consultation meeting with the federal government in December 1968, quoted in Cardinal, *The Unjust Society*, 36.

72 See, for example, Ray, Miller, and Tough, *Bounty and Benevolence*.

73 Ibid. See also Jean Friesen, "Magnificent Gifts: The Treaties of Canada with the Indians of the Northwest, 1869-76," *Transactions of the Royal Society of Canada* series 5, 1 (1986): 41-51; Richard T. Price, ed., *The Spirit of the Alberta Indian Treaties* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1999); Sharon Venne, "Treaty 6: An Indigenous Perspective," in *Aboriginal and Treaty Rights in Canada: Essays on Law, Equality, and Respect for Difference*, ed. Michael Asch (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002), 173-207; J.R. Miller, "'I will accept the Queen's hand': First Nations Leaders and the Image of the Crown in the Prairie Treaties," in *Reflections on Native-Newcomer Relations: Selected Essays*, ed. J.R. Miller (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2004), 242-66.

74 See, for example, Louis Bird's delightful book, produced in collaboration with academic historians Jennifer S.H. Brown, Paul W. DePasquale, and Mark F. Ruml, eds., *Telling Our Stories: Omushkego Legends and Histories from Hudson Bay* (Peterborough, ON: Broadview Press, 2005).

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