

LANDSCAPES OF DIFFERENCE: AN INQUIRY INTO THE DISCOURSE OF THE
NATIONAL PARK AND ITS EFFECTS ON ABORIGINAL IDENTITY
PRODUCTION

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By

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ABSTRACT

The goal of this work is to identify and explore the identity producing practices of Parks Canada in creating the idea of Canadian nationalism. In producing the idea of Canadian nationalism, Aboriginality and the concept of wilderness had to be discursively placed as one in the same in Canadian consciousness. This thesis focuses on identifying the discourses which have supported the representation of the ecological Indian and the vanishing Indian. I utilize discourse analysis in order to examine both the socio-historical origins, and the contemporary supportive structures of these produced identities. Further, I look to how language and the manipulation of imagery create reality, meaning, and determines certain actions such as the claiming of Indigenous lands. I identify parallels between the process of adoption and the national park, including a discussion of the regulation and renaming of the national park as representational of the boundaries and challenges that people who are returning to their Aboriginal roots face, such as the lack of accessibility to their people, language, tradition and culture. I incorporate my own voice and experience into the work as I myself have been adopted and raised within a non-native family. For those of us who have not had the experience of growing up in a family environment that is Native, imaginary Indians as portrayed within popular culture, delve us farther away from actually coming to know what it means to be an Aboriginal person in today's world. This thesis also identifies the process through which parks regulatory practices, which have been used to 'nationalize' the parks, have reached the point where visitors have become wards of the park. This status of wardship for visitors in the park, emulates the status of Indian people as wards of the federal government. Further, the parks, in claiming ownership of the land within the national parks, have erased the contemporary presence of Aboriginal people from within its border's by denying them the right to hunt, fish, trap and gather within the park, yet it continues to use images of Indians in representing the values of the park.

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DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to the memory of my Grampie, William Cotter who offered me so much love. I keep my promises, I did this for you. I gain inspiration through the memory of the way in which you lived your life and loved so deeply.

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INTRODUCTION

Sitting here in this living room, typing out the introduction to a work which has been my love, my enemy and confidant over the past few years is an almost overwhelming experience. I wanted this work to be a real expression of the journey that life has taken me since having made the conscious decision to attain a graduate degree in Native Studies. My hope is that this work will carry itself to those who have experienced something similar and have begun this process of self- exploration through whichever means that they are comfortable with. This is my story of the experiences and influences which have shaped my own identity and sense of self. Part of this process of coming to know occurred while at university where not only was I beginning to question my own understandings of identity, but I was beginning to find my voice. The major transformation for me was that I allowed myself to explore what it meant to be Aboriginal for the first time since I was adopted at a young age into a loving white family and had known no other Aboriginal people.

While at University I was beginning to form relationships with other Aboriginal people, and was participating in ceremonies and sweats within the Native community at Trent. I was the co-founder of an Aboriginal adoptee circle at the University. Trent provided me with an opportunity to allow myself to explore what it meant to be adopted. This recognition brought about a great deal of pain also, as I lost a very good friend of mine who was also adopted and had experienced pain when reunited with her birth

family. Processing the experiences in the past five to seven years has been a positive experience in that there were many times where I felt like I really didn't feel comfortable with the situations that I was in, and that I didn't belong. Throughout the writing process, I also experienced the death of my Grampie. Part of the motivation behind the completion of this work was that I promised him that I would finish. I know that he is watching over me, protecting me, and helping me through this process.

Expressions of doubt and uncertainty inherent within this process are a necessary addition to this work, as when exploring influences which have shaped ones perception, there exists an illusion of fantastic proportions which molds the social construction of Aboriginality. Lack of accessibility to certain avenues or opportunities is another prevailing theme which has influenced my sense of self revealing itself through the experiences of writing proposals and their subsequent downfall, as well as through the imaginings that I held onto in my minds' representations of my birth family and community. Outside of these themes, I can also see a transformation of sorts; education has provided a comfortable space through which to process some of the events in my life and has provided the tools through which to examine identity production. Looking back, I am glad that I was at the university taking classes in Native Studies and surrounded by friends when my birth mother contacted me. I don't know if I would have been able to process the situation had I not had these supports. Through the classes and the discussions in the coffee shops, I was able to talk through the life-altering experience of meeting my birth family for the first time. I also notice that I was beginning to rid myself of the shame that I had felt about being adopted. I was able to stand up in a classroom

and openly admit that I was adopted, and this was a huge success for me. Through education, I was able to find my voice.

This voice has enabled me to adopt a critical perspective toward some of my experiences, one of which was a position working as a tour guide in the Prince Albert National Park. I began to notice that others had certain expectations of me, my knowledge, and my spirituality and that these expectations were as a product of my perceived “Indigenous tour guide” status. This thesis examines the expectations and situates them as part of a discourse meant for dominant society to self identify.

The national park set the environment for the production of the Indigenous tour guide and the system of meanings which perpetuated this identity product. The Indigenous tour guide reinforces the messages and meanings of conservation, preservation, wilderness, and ecology which the Canadian national park presents. The park landscape of the Prince Albert National Park in Prince Albert, Saskatchewan, was the place where I first encountered tourism’s expectations of the Indigenous tour guide, as I was employed by *Amisk Adventures* as a tour guide and general worker at the Waskesiu marina on Waskesiu Lake in the park. Alongside others, I was to operate the tour by taking the tourists from the main marina to Grey Owl’s cabin on Ajawaan Lake, where I acted as interpreter, relaying information about Grey Owl’s life and achievements. It was during this experience that I first began witnessing the level of expectation in terms of traditional/ cultural knowledge that is projected upon Aboriginal people in their “native environments,” where, in fact, the wilderness park perpetuates and relies upon the association of Native environment and Native people in portraying their

image. This reliance is also apparent through examining parks literature and promotional materials.

Another experience wherein I was employed at Wanuskewin Heritage park as a hostess/ interpreter brought me to the realization that the image of the Indigenous tour guide becomes reinforced by habitat or environment. In the case of Wanuskewin Heritage Park, this environment included trails, buffalo jumps, a medicine wheel, and an interpretive centre equipped with buffalo burgers and bannock. These experiences brought me to look at the image of the ecological Indians as displayed through National parks literature, as these texts visually mark this association between Aboriginality and the construction of the idea of the national park. Furthermore, once they have been circulated, the meanings and messages communicated through the paraphernalia belong within the realm of popular culture, portraying unreal, fantastical images of modern contemporary Aboriginal existence, where in order to be Aboriginal, one has to fulfill unrealistic expectations.

For those of us that have not had the experience of growing up in a family environment that is Native, imaginary Indians as portrayed within popular culture, delve us farther away from actually coming to know what it means to be an Aboriginal person in today's world. I have had the experience of being fitted into a particular mold that society has created by being noticeably Native; people have judged me based on preconceived notions of who I am. Through being adopted, people have also fitted me into a particular category as someone who is putting on a show, trying to be Native yet not quite getting it right. Having an identity constructed for you by a force greater than itself leaves Aboriginal people very few options in terms of self expression, where the

only way to be heard is through adapting to the norms that have been predetermined, through putting on the feathers, the buckskin, and talking about the rocks that have spoken to you. In short, this means being the noble savage. All of a sudden, coming to know oneself becomes a contest in who can be the most traditional.

Expressing itself through a Native Studies thesis, this is a collection of how I have come to associate my own experience of being a Native person having gone through the adoption, repatriation process without actually going through the process of expressing it. This work is symbolic of my own coming to know through naming some of the discourses which have attempted to define me through the experiences of having worked within the Prince Albert National Park and having been exposed to my own reserve at Sturgeon Lake, Saskatchewan.

The fact that this work speaks of erasure through the creation of images is interesting, wherein the more that Aboriginal people feel that they must adapt to these constructions of identity, the more that they become erased. The ecological Indian as expressed through my time spent as a Wanuskewin host, or as a park interpreter, the ways in which people positioned me throughout these experiences, made me feel more of a loss of identity rather than a reclamation of identity. Great power is inherent within the image of the vanishing Indian- where the collection of images within this tradition of thought make one so confused that they no longer can associate with the real; the identity becomes lost, vanished. It is important to come to understand how the discourse gets played out and to recognize the form and the structure of the discourse and it's disassociation with the real. Having the ability to identify the powers of the unreal in creating Aboriginal identity, brings one to the realization that the imaginary Indian is a

tool used to dehumanize. Once we can name the systems, or in this case, the traditions of thought which come to name Aboriginal people as exuding certain characteristics, we ourselves have power.

I find it interesting this pull to conform to this way of expressing oneself. My experiences of working at Wanuskewin showed me that it was exciting to have people interested in your culture. People were interested in the pow wow dancing and the bison burgers, but also needed you as host to fulfill certain expectations that they had of you. Tourists would come expecting difference and as tour guide, I felt a certain desire to exude those qualities of being the best bannock maker in all of Saskatchewan. It is the non-fulfillment of expectations such as when I had to admit that I don't speak a Native language, that makes me as tour guide feel somewhat inadequate as an Indian, aren't all Indians supposed to be able to speak an Aboriginal language? Falling short of certain expectations, can be disheartening, especially in those first few years of self exploration where I wasn't all that sure of who I was in the first place. There is that expression of being "caught in between two worlds," it makes it very difficult when those worlds are so demanding in their expectations of who you are. There is the need of society to define as either / or. There seems to be no in-between.

Canadian nationalism as a discourse needs its other in order to self identify, and the creation of the national park relies on this aspect of discourse in order to create the idea of the national park using the production of Aboriginal identity as a tool. I felt that at times during my experiences of working as an Aboriginal tour guide, that I was submersed in these imaginings of me as an extension of my people. It is important to understand how the system works, how Aboriginal people have been imagined in

dominant society, and what purposes these imaginings have served. Then it becomes easier to accept oneself as not belonging within these stereotypical categorizations whose purpose is to know you in ways that you are unable to know yourself, that thereby produce you as less than once again.

The practice of imagining Aboriginal people has been a practice of domination. To know you, to fully know you is to have power over you. To create these ideals of what it could mean to have an Aboriginal identity can be seen as a self-defeating practice. As mentioned, there is a pull, a desire to accept these images as the real, despite the fact that they are manipulations. The image of the Aboriginal princess illustrated on the “Jasper of the Lakes” pamphlet, a creation of the national parks services, not only represents a popular image associated with landscape and femininity, but as an image, she holds personal meaning for me. This image shown on page eighty-five depicts an Indian princess and chief sitting on top of rocky cliff overlooking troubled waters.

Having had no contact with my birth mother as a young child, I would often try to imagine what she looked like. Using Hollywood depictions of Aboriginal femininity as a referent, I created this image of my mother as an Indian Princess, as this tragic, beautiful woman witnessing a loss, represented by the woman sitting on a rocky cliff overlooking troubled waters. This was an image that I held onto for a long time until I thankfully had the privilege of seeing my birth mother in the real. I believe that there is a possibility that we all have urges to associate with these imaginings of us, whether we are conscious of it or not.

This work is an analysis of various discourses which have informed dominant cultural identity constructions of the Indian and their use within the ideology of Canadian

Nationalism. This thesis came about through the process of researching the landscape of Sturgeon Lake, being the reserve of which I am inherently tied through the nature of my birth; the experience of once again returning to Sturgeon Lake, and the subsequent meeting of my relations. These processes led me on a path to discover more about my own relationship to the land at Sturgeon Lake and the surrounding area which now encompasses the Prince Albert National Park. The changes which have had to occur, both physically and ideologically in order for the area that was once used as a hunting and trapping ground for the people of Sturgeon and Montreal Lakes, to be created as a National Park, represent some of the transformations which I had experienced in returning home. I too, have born witness to discursive challenges, as had the land, which lay claim to me as an individual. Being a Cree woman coming to know what it means to be indigenous to an area, has been a difficult task in that there are layers of representational practices carried out in the name of Canadian nationalism which obstruct a clear view of identity construction. Coming to know one's Aboriginal self requires not only the naming of positioning practices which claim to represent Aboriginality, but also the deconstruction of some of those images as indicators of dominant society's imaginings of Aboriginal identity.

In this work I begin by exploring some of the traditions of thought and their categorizations which have come to inform modern conceptualizations of Aboriginal people. I then look to how these traditions have produced imaginary identity constructs such as the "ecological Indian" and the "vanishing Indian" in their portrayal of Canadian National identity. Throughout this process, my own positionality as a woman in between

two cultures, both Native and non-Native informs the critical analysis of these imaginings.

Unclear expectations shape modern conceptions of both wilderness landscape and Aboriginal identity. Images that are meant to represent wilderness such as the noble, vanishing, and ecological Indian are unreal and unattainable. These images propose impossible standards making the park seem empty of any recognizable form of Aboriginal presence unless our presence as Aboriginal tour guides mimic these projections through the language we speak, dwellings that we lived in, and traditional knowledge we present. For the noble and ecological Indian images, the contemporary impossibility of adopting this image made for the claiming of Indian lands, their transformation into a nationally designated park, and their continuity, seem as a natural, legitimate practice.

This particular journey is a process of sorting out what it means to be an Aboriginal woman adopted. Deconstructing the ideas presented by the national parks towards wilderness are ways through which to express this process of shedding layers in order to come to understand identity construction as a product of experiences. Images surround me, and I am haunted by images of what being Aboriginal looks like and feels like. Sorting through various ways in which Aboriginal people have been positioned in society, and looking at how identity has been constructed within popular culture, has been an opportunity for me to name how I feel about having been adopted, labeled, and disseminated. An examination of dominant, produced discourse has revealed the influences which have shaped my own (mis)understandings. As previously expressed, dominant discourse's re-presentations of Aboriginal identity are seductive in nature. The

image of the noble Indian calls out to people in a way that makes them want to exude some of those qualities. As a parks interpreter I deeply desired the knowledge to name the various plants and to speak of their medicinal qualities. The main purpose behind this work was to examine the ideology within which Native people are submersed into, and to question whose purpose this ideology serves.

In order to expose the discursive practices which have led to the eventual erasure of Aboriginal presence from the landscape, I offer a critique of Parks Canada promotional material. The images which I have chosen are representations rooted within the discourse of the noble Indian and are manifestations of the vanishing and ecological Indian. I have chosen these particular representations in order to expose the fact that modern conceptualizations of wilderness act as justifications for certain types of practices such as the claiming of Indigenous lands which is necessary for the land's subsequent designation as national park. I too am intimately bounded by wilderness, the wilderness of images which claim to represent me as an Aboriginal person. I relate some of my own experiences in order to expose national constructions of wilderness for what it is- a justification for the strategic employment of signs and indicators meant to regulate experience. The images that I utilize in this work incorporate various guises of the noble Indian occupying wilderness space. The use of these images will be revealed as part of this process of creating and maintaining ideas of Canadian nationalism. As will be revealed, this practice is anything but innocent, as it actually works to erase contemporary Aboriginal presence.

The nature of this work means that there can be no conclusion. Dominant society will continue to imagine the positionality of Aboriginal people and we will continue to

imagine our own futures carved from molds that only we will create. The contribution that I hope to make, is to offer a critique of the modern manifestations of the noble Indian in order to come to understand the scope of the layers of representational practices that feed into dominant societies' constructions of Aboriginal identity. Not only to achieve this, but to identify how I became a consumer of these images and what sort of impact this has had on my own quest for self discovery.

Colonial discourse is seductive in nature, it has shaped my own imaginings of myself in the past, and will no doubt have the ability to weave its way into my future in ways that I cannot imagine. Perhaps someday my own children will come to wonder how they can fit into molds which have been socially predetermined. I would hope for them that they have the tools through which to express themselves. Perhaps there will come a time when contemporary technological society will no longer need to hold onto nostalgic imaginings of Aboriginal people in order to create the illusion of Canadian nationalism.

I hope that the contemporary image of Aboriginality, as rich and varied as it is, will be accepted and embraced as an indicator of strength and resilience. Of course, there are many illustrations in many Canadian communities both urban and rural, where positive identity construction has molded the lives of many First Nations people, whether they grew up in an Aboriginal, or a non Aboriginal environment. The slate has not been wiped clean as there still remain vestiges of these fantastic imagining's influence, however, this realization becomes a position of strength. It is truly a challenge to live up to an image and fantasy, a dominant production intended to justify your people's exploitation and oppression.

CHAPTER ONE

THEORY AS METHODOLOGY

In this chapter the intention is to describe discourse and discourse analysis as a useful approach to understanding the practice of identity production. I will introduce concepts created through discourse analysis such as the *contact zone*, and *contact landscape* which aid in shaping an understanding of the relationship between the discourse of wilderness and the discourse of Aboriginality. This chapter also discusses the importance of post structuralist theory and its usefulness in describing how language produces meaning, which aids in this particular study which analyses certain discourses surrounding the contemporary appeal of the noble Indian. Later on in this chapter I explore the important contributions of landscape theory in creating an understanding of the ideological component of landscape as a way of thinking and producing meaning. These theories influence the ways in which I describe landscape perception as associated with my own adoption experience. This chapter also incorporates some challenges surrounding *difference* and landscape.

1.1. Discourse and Subjectivity

Despite the fact that much criticism exists towards the use of other Western methodological approaches in the place of orientations rooted within Aboriginal paradigms of thought, modernist and post modernist interpretations influence the ways in

which I have come to interpret Aboriginality from a personal perspective. Post-structuralist thinking has led to the recognition that I as subject have been shaped through particular contexts, discourses, and ideologies which have been, for the most part, informed by and through Western cultural conventions and customs. According to Weedon (1997), poststructuralist theory suggests that experience is not universal and does not speak for itself, rather one must look to historical and cultural discursive practices that produce specific experiences.

A discourse analysis of parks landscape literature and its use of the convention of the noble savage will highlight the meanings inscribed in such practices as the claiming of Indigenous lands, the creation of the idea of the wilderness park, and the production of Aboriginal identities as subjects supporting Canadian Nationalism. Discourse analysis will identify and critically analyze wilderness and national park discourses manifested in national park brochures, and explore how these discourses contribute to the production of Aboriginal identities.

Discourse, rather than a conceptual category, will be looked at as a social practice, in the sense that it produces meanings which then inform certain actions. Being intimately related to power, discourse determines how certain objects or people are looked upon and thereby determines actions such as the claiming of Aboriginal lands. Wodak (1997) suggests:

Discourse is socially constituted, as well as socially conditioned- it constitutes situations, objects of knowledge, and the social identities of and relationships between people and groups of people. It is constitutive both in the sense that it helps sustain and reproduce the status quo, and in the sense that it contributes to transforming it. (p.6)

Discourse is intimately related to power in that it has the ability to constitute the social identities of, and relationships between people and groups of people. Understanding the scope of discourse's power is key to exposing the systematic and complex nature of inequality. The production of identities and relationships through discourse occurs through "a set of meanings, metaphors, representations, images, stories, statements and so on that in some way together produce a particular version of events (Burr, 1995, p.48). I will offer a new understanding of the relations of power and how these relations are played out by exploring identity production as both a practice and product of discourse associated with wilderness and the production of the national park. Discourse analysis will lead to an understanding of how these power relations circulate and produce identities.

The erasure of Aboriginal presence from the land was achieved through representing empty lands by the practice of feminizing (inscribing a gendered hierarchy on the land) in order to make it available for contact and conquest. The processes of discourse create the practice of erasure as naturalized behavior. The nature of discourse has been responsible for the creation of familiar images present in parks promotional literature such as the ecological Indian. This paper will examine how the erasure of Aboriginal presence from the land, the representation of empty lands, and the feminization of wilderness relate to the production of the vanishing, and ecological Indian manifestations of the noble savage. The conditions of these identity-producing practices such as the "contact zone" (which is a space of intractable conflict) will be introduced, as will their role within the creation and maintenance of Euro- Canadian National identity. These discourses are intimately related to each other in a complex play

of power, which has become so naturalized that these practices rest within the realm of the unconscious or subconscious. Discursive systems call to us in ways that are very difficult to resist. The call to represent difference through the subject position of Aboriginality is a tempting position.

Social- historical conditions are very important to consider when implementing discourse analysis. Those working with discourse analysis such as Mary Louise Pratt in her introduction to *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, demonstrate and put into practice an unwillingness to further categorize identity producing practices as exclusive of imperial ideology. She does this through a race, class, and gender analysis of the role of imperial travel writing in creating the domesticated subject. McClintock (1995) also resists such classification in her study of the production of the domesticated subject through focusing on the fetish and the historical subculture of sadomasochism, where she contextualizes the practice of identity production within distinctive social- historical conditions such as the Victorian devaluation of women's work. In both cases, Pratt (1992) and McClintock use discourse analysis as a means by which one can explore instances of agency and of self-representation coming from within the very context of systematic inequality. In this work I suggest that agency can be played out through analyzing and naming certain discursive positional practices, leading to self-realization, which occurs when one resists representational practices that try to fit you into a predetermined mold. Pratt uses the term *transculturation* to describe this agency, while McClintock sees this agency in terms of the historical subculture of sadomasochism where women could transgress social boundaries through the use of theatrics and the creation of spectacle. In each scenario, including my own, discourse analysis allows for

the unveiling of producing practices, as well as represents an interruption to their presupposed power and authority. The production of national parks as wilderness land depends on the identity production of racialized Aboriginal subjects. The land claim is one way through which Aboriginal people have asserted their agency within a historical and present context of systematic racial inequality. The Aboriginal land claim asserts that national park wilderness land is Aboriginal territory. This instance marks the social, cultural, and political transgression of the presumably domesticated, racialized subject into active agents of change. Through examining national parks images, this work will expose the hidden messages that help to produce, in the Canadian consciousness, certain ways of identifying Aboriginal people as products of popular discourse.

McClintock's work suggests that discourse analysis exposes those texts, iconographies, and images that have not yet been revealed and it contextualizes them into a series of relationships. Likewise, Pratt (1992), through using discourse analysis as a tool, claims that her work "offers a critique of empire coded through counter knowledge and counter history, in texts (iconographies are texts in that they produce meaning) unwitnessed, suppressed, lost, or simply overlain with repetition and unreality" (p.2). Parks pamphlets and associated forms of expression are, in fact, so overlain with repetition that their practices of erasure, subordination, and racialization transcend into this realm of unreality. An exploration into the supportive discourses associated with wilderness and national park discourse, will lead to an understanding of how signifying practices can come to encode and legitimate the aspirations of economic expansion and empire manifested in the claiming, controlling, and naming of Aboriginal land, and identities.

This analysis employs a poststructuralist position in analyzing identity producing practices without implicit references to the work of Foucault, Lacan, and Althusser. This work illustrates the creation of the Aboriginal subject through the employment of certain discursive practices. The Parks Canada production of Aboriginality utilizes identifiable conventions and discursive practices, which are also used to normalize power. For instance, the convention of the noble savage is employed to produce the identities of the ecological and the vanishing Indian. Furthermore, the feminization of the landscape is a discursive practice, which strategically employs power over Aboriginal identity and also legitimates the claiming of Aboriginal lands. Poststructuralist theory acknowledges that something had to happen first in order to produce the erasure of Indigenous presence from the land. That initial practice was the feminization of the land and the regimentation of state authority, which would structure relations of power.

Poststructural theory involves a look at how language produces meaning. Rather than *reflecting* and *representing* reality, language actually *creates* reality. Post-structuralism employs some of the practices of semiotics where signs are comprised of the signifier (abstract, form) and the signified (meaning). Although there exists no natural connection between the form and the meaning, one's ideology determines how meaning is created and understood. In this work I look at the concept of Aboriginality as a signifier and explore the various discursive practices which strive to create meaning of Aboriginality. Discourse provides the meanings which are informed by cultural practice. Discourse analysis, therefore, identifies traditions and conventions such as the noble Indian and relates them to cultural practice, in one instance, imperialistic nostalgia. The discourses discussed represent a signifying system, where the inscription of binary

oppositions such as civilized/ savage, white/ red, and noble/ ignoble, are necessary conditions in the imposition of colonial power.

The reliance on these binaries also exposes the ambivalence behind the colonial project of claiming Aboriginal lands and identities. The conventional aspect of colonial discursive practice makes it desirable for the subject position of Aboriginality to answer the call. Some Aboriginal people's response to the ecological Indian stereotype indicates a strong desire to reflect the difference needed to claim an authenticated Aboriginal identity. I, as tour guide at Wanuskewin Heritage Park, wanted to be able to reflect these ideas that others had of me.

Poststructuralism, as a theoretical orientation, involves an analysis of how meaning is produced. Foucault has suggested that power is knowledge, that discourse articulates self, and that we are shaped and produced by discourses. To know you is to have power over you. Discourse analysis allows for the examination of representational practices and meaning making. Through its practice lay the possibility of reclaiming power. The practice of discourse analysis for this study on Canadian parks and identity production involves a theoretical examination of relevant concepts such as the social construction of landscape.

1.2. Cultural Landscapes and Related Concepts

According to cultural landscape theory, landscape perception is dependent upon positionality or one's cultural and ideological context through which we experience land. According to Denis Cosgrove (1984), landscape is a socially -constructed phenomenon which incorporates literary and artistic representations of the visible world, scenery as if

viewed by a spectator. Landscape is a reflection of an individual's perception of place and environment through lenses that are cultural and ideological, and depends upon the subjectivity of the spectator and the objectivity of the perceived place. The concept *cultural landscape* refers to the positionality of the spectator informing a context rich in perspective of landscape where meaning is determined through the signifier (viewer) to the signified (land).

Thomas E. Ross and Tyrel G Moore suggest that cultural landscapes, (of which Carl Sauer was a leading proponent) holds on to empiricist views and practices where landscape was treated as an objective area to be studied scientifically. Ross, Moore and King (1995) use the term *cultural geography* in their study of the relationship between Aboriginal people and the land. They define cultural geography of Native American Indians as “a spatial expression of four centuries of cultural and geographic change set in motion by contact between European explorers and immigrants and the Native American population” (p.3).

Cultural geography of Native American Indians focuses on the spatial restructuring of landscape as a result of colonialist practices. The restructuring of Indian lands into park lands occurred through the imposition of a particular ideological way of thinking about the land. Whether working from a cultural landscape or cultural geographical perspective, it is important to keep in mind that the Canadian national Park is an expression of earlier colonial thought being put into practice.

Similar to Cosgrove's theory of cultural landscape, Alan R.H. Baker (1992) suggests that, “not only is landscape a way of seeing, but it is also a way of thinking and a way of doing” (p.2). Landscape as a concept is powerful in that it determines and is

determined by certain actions. Baker (1992) suggests that, “ideologies create, intentionally as well as deliberately, a landscape as a system of signification, expressive of authority” (p.5). The projection of Aboriginality within the images of the Prince Albert National park brochures reinforce these characteristics of landscape. When Canada proudly refers to “her Aboriginal people,” that is exactly what she means. More studies are needed pertaining to the experience of land, rather than those which treat land as an objective reality, as unrelated to the notion of community.

Another way of looking at the land which brings us closer to the experience of land as community, has been to segment it into “places.” Rodman (1992) suggests that “places come into being through praxis not just through narratives” (p.642). Thus she is stating that place is experiential, that it is a process. This way of thinking opens doors for a multiplicity of perspectives of place rather than just representing a particular set images displayed on the cover of a flyer. This next section explores landscape perception as impacted and affected by changes of environment, culture and ideology, and addresses the processes of reorienting self as Aboriginal after having been raised in a non-Indigenous home.

1.2.1. Finding Place, Finding Voice: my Experience of Landscape

Trent University set the stage for the building of friendships with Aboriginal faculty and colleagues. One faculty member in particular stands out as the first Aboriginal person I had met who was a fellow adoptee. He was raised just across the tracks from his community, in fact, he could see the other Native children playing, some of whom he had become friends with. That experience for him, having exposure to how

things work in a Native community, is very different from my experiences of having no contact with other Aboriginal people. Despite these differences, we were able to have some interesting conversations about how adoption had been understood by each of us within these experiences. These conversations allowed for the opportunity for me to witness the complexity of the mental and psychological affects of adoption which, for myself, had been suppressed for so long. The faculty member and his beautiful wife generously introduced me to the Creator and to the spiritual component of being Aboriginal. The greatest gifts from both of them were their acceptance, compassion and friendship. This was the first time in my life where I actually took ownership of being Native. Soon after my first year at Trent my circle of friends grew, the majority of whom were Native, and they accepted me as a person just coming to know, to experience filling in my brown skin.

Sometimes rediscovering one's Native family after having not known of them for most of one's life can lead to confusion and a loss of control over other facets of life. This occurs as a person tries to re-adjust to her own surroundings while living with the knowledge of an entirely new family. My experiences include the loss of a very good friend, another adoptee who had grown up in a non- Indigenous family. This Cree/Ojibway woman had an amazing ability to make people happy, and everyone around her felt and enjoyed her energy. A victim of suicide, I was later to find out that previously she had previously met her birth family in Northern Ontario and had experienced pain through facing the experience of rejection. I felt awful because I remember urging her to look for her birth family and felt that meeting them would be an experience of her

lifetime. This experience re-opened my eyes to the world around me and taught me more about love, compassion, and loss.

For a teenager, difference in attitude and actions is considered desirable, as it puts you in a distinct group of which to belong. However, racial difference in an urban setting can be challenging, add on to the equation being a lone, distinctively Aboriginal person looking for belonging, and you have an illustration of the situation for an Aboriginal adoptee. In some cases, one begins to deny difference, which makes it very difficult to access supports through which to understand what it means to be Aboriginal.

My high school was located within close proximity to the Awkwesasne Indian reserve. Naturally, Mohawk students made up part of my school mates. However my denial of difference and accompanying insecurity prevented any friendships from forming. I now have friends whose mother is from Awkwesasne, and they go back and visit their family once in awhile. I know that it sounds strange to them to know that I had lived in Cornwall, yet never really spoke to someone from Awkwesasne until years later. In retrospect, how could I have felt comfortable, I had been denying being different for so long; I had grown up in a white, loving household where acceptance was never an issue as my grandparents and mother had shown me much love. This strong foundation led me to believe that others would accept me too. Somewhere along the line it becomes easy to equate acceptance with non-difference. I was later to learn that accepting my own Aboriginality meant that I would have to accept others as kin. All I really wanted to believe was that I had come from my familiar family, and that that my identity had solely come from my family in Ontario. The fact that I had many brothers and sisters, that I had

parents, aunts, uncles, and grandparents- kokum and mooshoms in Saskatchewan was a difficult reality to accept.

Regarding my knowledge of being adopted, those around me were always open and upfront with me. It would have been difficult to hide considering the fact that I was probably four shades darker than the rest of my family members. In resisting difference I can remember attempting to physically cover up my Native skin through the application of my mother's lighter shaded makeup. I would even attempt to transform my noodle-straight-jet black hair into a curly mane, which in reality produced more of a Supreme's-Diana Ross look. In my mother's attempt to support me, she presented a book on adoption whose cover featured racially mixed families - a black girl with a white mother, a black mother with an oriental child, and other images depicting difference. I can easily recall the cover of the book, yet not its contents because I had refused to read the pages. I was ashamed of the fact that I was adopted and didn't want to talk about it with anyone. I can remember the tragic moment at the house when my mother had approached me with something that she had come across when she had been in my room. I constantly journaled when I was younger. I would write about my fears, my frustrations- everything. One day I must have been really mad about something that had to do with my mother (of course, the situation was just me being a spoiled brat about something). In a fit of rage, I had written on the paper that I hated my mother and that I wanted to go and find my birth mother so that I could live with her. I will never know the damage that that did to my mother's spirit as she had read those words for the first time. I deeply regret writing it. She approached me with it anyway, and I remember not making a big deal about it, when all that she wanted was probably just reassurance that I didn't really feel that way. Since

having matured I realize now that family is very important. As long as people receive support, acceptance, and love, we have the tools through which to experience change without losing ourselves. It really doesn't matter whether or not that love is coming from your birth mother or not, as long as it comes. Real belonging comes from a strong familial bond- no hierarchies, no difference, just love. I wish that all other Aboriginal adoptees would have been embraced within loving environments such as the one that I am experiencing right now, as my Nana knits upstairs after having urged me to type out a few pages so that she can see me get a Masters degree. This, so that I will not have to struggle through life.

I do believe, however, that there is a strong desire amongst adopted sons and daughters to be able to physically place themselves within their mother's or father's image. Outside of anger lay this desire to know what my birth mother looked like, and I would picture her as a young, beautiful Indian princess. In my mind, this image of my birth mother stayed that age. She never grew older, and she was always this young beautiful woman. Before I met her at the airport she had sent me a picture of herself with my little brother. She didn't wear buckskin, there was no feather sticking out of her unbraided, short, curly hair. I remember just looking at this picture of her and seeing the resemblance between the two of us. We even had the same dimples.

Two notable fourth year Trent Native Studies courses provided me with the tools through which to explore identity production through the use of theory. The first class introduced me to post colonial theory and was entitled *Theoretical concepts in Native Studies*. Through this theory class I was beginning to raise questions about the nature of Aboriginality, about the position of being in between two cultures and finding a new

voice. Sitting in the instructor's living room, she explained Derrida and Bhabba. We felt that through her clever way of translating, she was opening up a new dialogue, a new way of imagining, seeing, and understanding. This class encouraged us to create ideas surrounding how images send messages, how language produces meanings, and personally to examine the affects that stereotyping had on myself as an Aboriginal woman between two cultures. The *Native Studies Honors Collegium* became a site through which I could implement my own critiques informed by my new understanding of theoretical concepts and identity production, within the context of a fourth year collegium.

First contact with one's birth family after twenty- two years is an exciting, yet frightening experience. My first contact with my Cree family came in the form of a phone call from my birth mother. I was in my second year at Trent and had come home to find a message that a woman in Saskatchewan had called and a number was left. Previous to this message I had called the reserve for the first time and inquired about applying for a status card. I was later to discover that I had made this inquiry to an aunt of mine who had immediately recognized who I was through the information that I had given her. It was later conveyed to me that my birth mother, upon hearing the news that I had contacted the band office, just sat down and started to cry. Could anyone consider themselves to be psychologically, mentally, or spiritually prepared for the life altering experience of contacting one's birth mother after twenty- two years? Regardless of the mixed messages going on in my head, I decided to make the call. The woman on the other end of the line spoke with a Cree accent and hesitantly began the process of getting to know me through asking a series of questions regarding my schooling, family and

appearance. Dutifully answering, I paused and then proceeded to inquire who this woman on the other end of the telephone line was. There followed a long, deep pause, and then she replied, “I am your mother.”

No experience or thoughts could have prepared me for that one moment and I suddenly forgot how to talk. I think that all I could say was “oh my god” over and over again. We were strangers, our lives were mysteries to each other, yet we shared the same blood. She told me that she had been living in Sturgeon Lake for most of her life, and was sent away to residential school. She also told me about my brothers, my dad, and about my brothers and sisters on his side. Both of us were filled with nervous energy during the next few weeks, looking forward to the date that I would fly to Saskatchewan to meet everyone. I had called home to tell my adopted mother in Ontario what had happened. It is a very difficult thing to do, to tell your adoptive mother that you will soon be meeting your birth mother, as we try not to hurt the ones that we love. However, my adoptive mother has been very supportive throughout the process, and I am truly blessed to have this woman in my life.

Returning to Sturgeon Lake was a surreal experience. Extended Cree families are huge, and I wasn't prepared to deal with the knowledge that a person could have forty or so cousins and twenty aunts and uncles. I had just started to entertain the possibility of having two moms and two dads! Everything was different, from the difference of the flat, prairie landscape, the gravel roads and the plethora of reserve dogs wandering freely in packs, to the difference that I recognized between myself and my family by way of accent, nuances and dress. Regardless of these differences, there was a special similarity between our eyes, black hair, and skin. I didn't realize that visually placing my Cree

family would have such a powerful impact. Up until then my brown skin had visually symbolized difference for me for so long, that meeting people who looked like me was very significant. It was like I had back-up for all those times when people would look at me in relation to my family in Ontario and wonder where it was that I fit in.

While visiting at Sturgeon Lake I found out that I had had a Saskatchewan connection all along in the form of a first cousin, who had been adopted into a family and had lived not ten minutes away from me in the neighboring city. I contacted her when I returned home the summer before I set off to Saskatchewan. Returning home is often accompanied by fear, unfamiliarity, and boundary loss, and I experienced all three of these factors upon having returned to Saskatchewan to pursue a Masters degree. Spatially, Ontario does not resemble Saskatoon at all, where at nights there is a cut off point where the lights of the city stop and are met with dark nothingness.

Native Studies at the University of Saskatchewan involved a content and form quite different from what I had been used to. Getting to know different instructors and theoretical orientations (which didn't include post colonial theory) was challenging.

The experience of adoption is so varied and unique. There were cases of direct apprehension, as well as those where the young mothers were led to believe that they as Aboriginal mothers could not offer the type of life that society would deem fit for the child. There are horror stories of both survivors and non survivors (such as the Richard Cardinal case documented by Alanis Obomsawin) of the child welfare system. There are cases like mine, where our mothers were young and Aboriginal, and social expectations were unfair. I was lucky to have grown up in a loving family environment, while I

realize that others were not so lucky. Hence the importance of creating the necessary mediums through which Aboriginal voices could be heard.

It is important to talk about adoption in all of its multiple faces in order to start to build an understanding of the difference that comes across in our voices as expressed through writing, and other forms of communication. The experience of growing up in one cultural / ideological space, to be introduced to another of which you belong by nature of your birth, means that one has to alter signifiers in order to create meaning of the signified. All of a sudden the concept *mother* becomes multifaceted and complex, as we are forced to process having two mothers. There is a distinction between *adopted* mother and *birth* mother with different meanings attached to each. The concept of family as a signifying system becomes less familiar and more complex. After having flown to Sturgeon Lake, upon realizing that this was my birth place, notions of space, place, and home become so confusing. The experience of Sturgeon Lake for the first time was made surreal by the different faces (some that resembled my own) approaching and shaking my hand while calling me *cousin*. While everyone kept reinforcing the fact that I had “come home,” physically, the landscape at Sturgeon Lake represented foreign territory. To them I had “come home,” to me, I had entered this space where nothing made sense anymore.

1.2.2. *Researching Place as Experience – Sturgeon Lake’s Aboriginal Presence in the National Park*

My reserve community’s Cree name is *Puhktahow Sahgaiehcan*, whose English translation is *Net Casting Lake*. Upon my return to Sturgeon Lake, I had suddenly gained a fascination with the landscape and people’s relationship to it. There was a desire to know what sorts of activities took place on the land, where the old trails led, where

people lived, hunted and fished. An understanding of the relationship between people and place would have made me feel more connected to the land after having not been brought up there. Furthermore, this reconstructive look into Sturgeon Lake's historic past would provide solace to me while faced with the challenge of processing contemporary reserve social problems such as alcoholism and substance abuse. I felt a need to see the reserve as it had been, and to take comfort in a construction of the past created within my mind.

In the summer of 1997 I was employed as a tour guide, waitress, and marina operator at Waskesiu Marina. As tour guide, a co-worker and I took the tourists across Kingsmere Lake by boat, to be followed by a two-hour hike through the bush to arrive at Grey Owl's cabin. Previous to this job, I had held a position with the government. One can imagine the contrast. Here I was, a city girl working in the capacity of marina operator and backwoods tour guide in Northern Saskatchewan- what an adventure!

To begin the process of graduate work, my initial proposal was inspired by the interest in Sturgeon Lake's connection to the Prince Albert National Park, as the park was previously Cree hunting territory. The focal point of this proposal involved researching place names within the park. The development of a formally structured interview would provide answers through which to identify the types of activities (such as hunting and trapping) that took place in the area designated as the Prince Albert National Park. A valuable contribution to understanding the relationship between First Nations people and the national parks would come through dialogue with Cree elders in both Sturgeon Lake and neighboring Montreal Lake. This would enable an exploration of the nature of the relationship between the land and Indigenous people of the area.

Exploring land uses and conceptualizations, via place names and elder wisdom, would create a meaningful illustration of Aboriginal interests within park lands. The study of Cree land use activities alongside historic place naming can lead to insight into a community's conceptualization of nature and wilderness. This work, if carried through, would have been based upon the premise that nation building begins through physical transformations of the land, and the re-naming of certain landscapes. Additionally, the concepts *conservation* and *preservation* are used to justify the colonization of land and people. What happens to the identity of a people when one takes away this concept of place which is so integral to their survival and makes them pay an admission fee to visit that place once again?

The transitional practices (such as renaming and the creation of boundaries) that had to occur in the initial creation of the land as park land reflect my own adoption experience. Much like the land, through the adoption process, children become regulated- renamed; raised in white communities, educated, and changed so that when they return home, they find that they themselves no longer resemble the rest of their family members. The regulation and renaming also represents the boundaries and challenges that people who are returning to their Aboriginal roots face, such as lack of accessibility to their people, language, traditions and culture. All of a sudden, it becomes a virtual impossibility to know your Indian self.

The Prince Albert National Park occupies a strong Aboriginal presence, despite its national park status. Aboriginal trace in the park comes in the form of grave sites, stories of spirits at Kingsmere Island, also Cree/ Chippewyan battles where Cree hearts were hung on a tree at present- day Hanging Hearts Lake. Despite all of the attempts to

denaturalize the environment by building boundaries where none had previously existed, the traces of Aboriginal occupation prove that these attempts failed. This attempt to cover up, rename, and reorganize space, has left behind glimpses of Indigenous presence through stories. The examination of such factors as the popularity of Grey Owl and the claims to land by Montreal and Sturgeon Lake First Nations, would lead to important insights about the colonial practice of national park creation and the nature of Indigenous interest to land.

A deep seated relationship between feelings of Canadian identity and the wilderness exists where the precondition of park structure and boundary precludes this identity. For people that occupy the position of being in between two cultures, one identifies with both the Canadian and Aboriginal self. Regulated spaces such as Indigenous heritage sites and national parks may be the places where Aboriginal adoptees feel the most at home when they initiate the process of reclaiming their identity. These spaces are created by the Canadian government and contain (even though fabricated) traces of Aboriginality. Perhaps the wilderness spaces are the places where we feel the most at home, closer to our more natural selves. Wilderness is dangerous; within it we become vulnerable to the elements. Park programs and tours are geared towards interpreting the wild life and the floral aspects of the park. The interpreters themselves spend entire seasons within the park. Park wardens still live pretty much a solitary existence within the park, as they maintain the trails and keep an eye on activity both natural and human. The town site of Waskesiu is the centre of tourist activity. It includes along with other structures: grocery stores, cafes, restaurants, clothing stores, gift shops, hotels, and an administration and resource centre.

In 1997 the Waskesiu Marina was operated through a collaboration between Jacobson Bay Outfitters and the Sturgeon Lake First Nation entitled *Amisk Adventures* (the English translation of *Amisk* is “beaver”). This company employed individuals from the Sturgeon Lake First Nation to operate the Narrows, the Hanging Hearts, and the marina site. I was hired as tour guide and helper to the staff at the main marina. Staff at the Narrows rented out camp sites and operated a small confectionery store where people could rent boat equipment, fishing poles, purchase licenses and buy food items. This small store was the center of the Narrows’ human activity. There, information would be passed on regarding the size of fish someone had caught that day, the kind of weather that the area would be experiencing, bear sightings and the like. The Hanging Hearts site was a smaller, less busy, out of the way type of place. There a plaque stands which recounts the battle story between the Chippewyan and Cree where Cree hearts were said to have been hung on branches of shoreline trees. Today it is comprised of a small wooden building encircled by a wooded area within which boats can be rented, fishing licenses bought, and food sold. The Hanging Hearts Lakes were a series of bodies of water connected through passages leading out to Crean Lake, the largest of the lakes. It is said that fishing was really good in those areas of small bodies of water, especially closer to the shore. If one were to take a short stroll in the woods off to the right, encircling the main area, one could view the grave sites of anonymous Sturgeon Lakers. This is a place filled with stories.

The main marina was comprised of a few buildings, including the cottage which served as our home for the summer, and a restaurant which also acted as a main place of business. There were also a couple of storage areas, docking, and a break water which

acted as a track of sorts for morning jogs. Although Amisk Adventures no longer has a presence in the park, our presence there in the park was meaningful. The park continues to seek Aboriginal people to work in the capacity of interpreter.

In order to prepare for the position of tour guide to Grey Owl's cabin, I had to perform research in the parks administrative library relating key events in Grey Owl's life, including his early childhood fixation with Indians, his time spent in Bear Island, his experiences with hunting and trapping turn conservationist, and his life with Anahareo. I prepared to convey to park visitors the kind of person that Grey Owl was, which I was able to discern through his writings and the sorts of impressions that he left with those who met him. The tourists who would accompany me on this tour represented a variety of interests and walks of life. I recall one lady who had come from England and was on something of a pilgrimage to see where Grey Owl had stayed during the last days of his life. This trip was very significant to her as she had been a fan of Grey Owl's writings since she had been a child. My goal was to present a picture of Grey Owl as accurately as possible.

The research that I had carried out for the purposes of my thesis proposal on Aboriginal presence in the national park would initially be of a different sort, yet would continue to include Grey Owl in some capacity. As before, I began the research into the park by visiting the park's administrative library. There, resources important to this study included a transcribed interview concerning Louis Lavallee of Lavallee Lake (formerly Pelican Lake) who had married a Cree woman from Sturgeon Lake; a manuscript report entitled *A survey of human history of Prince Albert National Park*; and a pamphlet containing place names which identified old Cree names and the new names

replacing them. In addressing Aboriginal presence in the park, I revisited information on Grey Owl. Grey Owl continues to be a prolific promoter of the Prince Albert National Park through his conservationist message.

The archives provided parks pamphlets dating back to the 1930's. Familiar images donned the covers of these pamphlets whose purpose was to represent wilderness space through the conveying of Aboriginality. Oftentimes, Aboriginal images were treading through rough waters, which could have been a message that the future of Aboriginal people was challenging and undetermined. The fact that the ideal calm waters are reserved for images not depicting Aboriginal presence is interesting, as made apparent through a contemporary pamphlet entitled *Share the Wonder* displayed in this thesis. Perched on top of a rocky cliff looking down into the rapids, the Indian Princess is another image documented in this work. The rough waters of this illustration could be symbolic of the uncertain future of her people in this colonial text. Other images depict white men sitting around a fire as a feather-dressed, buckskin-clad Indian chief/storyteller tells stories while gesturing dramatically. The storyteller in the wilderness—the original interpreter of the wilderness—is a reoccurring theme. The *Share the Wonder* captions used in a 1999 Prince Albert National Park pamphlet display a Voyageur boat with Indian rowers carrying a cargo of white—upper class leisurists riding through the water. The interesting thing about this boat, is that it disappears in a dreamlike mist as it floats away in the opposite direction of another boat which is traveling towards the viewer equipped with two rowers. This represents a strategic practice which places Aboriginality in another temporal reality.

CHAPTER TWO

DISCURSIVE STRATEGIES AND THE LEGITIMATION OF POWER

In the previous chapter it was revealed that discourse analysis is a useful practice in exposing the hidden texts embedded in imagery meant to produce national meaning, especially in the case of the National Park. I explored landscape theory and my own landscape perception as affected through my own adoption experience. I also explored traces of Aboriginal presence in the park and revealed their importance in establishing the meaning of the national park through its relationship to Canadian identity. The purpose of this chapter is to identify the discursive strategies used within Canadian nationalist discourses since before Enlightenment, in order to legitimate colonialist aspirations such as the claiming, renaming, transforming and controlling of Indigenous lands in the construction of the national park, and of Indigenous bodies, in their re-presentation against nationalist backdrops.

I separate these strategies under two headings, Primitivism and Nationalism as they each legitimate power in their own right. Their creation was accomplished through various practices. In the case of Primitivism, it is a tradition of thought which utilizes the convention of the noble savage, and has produced the identity constructs, the vanishing and the ecological Indian. The creation of nationalism in the context of the national park was created and maintained through an intermeshing of supporting discourses such as the association of women and nature, and the practices involved in the feminization of the

land which produced the idea that nature is in need of control. This chapter also describes the language of power and the language of the everyday as normalizing practices which empower producing practices. I begin this chapter with a description of *Terra Nullius* which, in this context, is meant to highlight the creation of the idea “empty lands” as a strategy used to legitimate the claiming and controlling of indigenous lands and bodies.

2.1. Canadian Cultural Landscapes and Production of Empty Lands (*Terra Nullius*)

When exploring identity production and Canadian national parks, the term *wilderness*, like the term *landscape*, is a construct whose meanings change as societal values and norms change. Wilderness as a concept was associated with the term *Terra Nullius* or “empty lands” where the designation of wilderness space becomes a legitimizer for the claiming of Aboriginal lands. This use of the term made necessary, the erasure of Aboriginal presence on the land. Later on, this term wilderness became bounded and controlled space, also void of any acknowledgement of Aboriginal territoriality. Ironically, while this concept of wilderness depends on the erasure of Aboriginality, it is dependent on recreations of Aboriginality in order to retain its appeal as wilderness parks. Let us first explore the relationship between wilderness the concept *Terra Nullius*, and the representation of empty lands.

Stemming from within Roman law, the legal doctrine of *Terra Nullius* or “empty lands” became widely used as a legitimizer for the early colonization of the Americas. According to the code of the Emperor Justinian, only unoccupied territories could be subject to the rights of first discovery (Dickason, 2000). The problem of course with the

Americas was that it was quite obviously peopled. To plead ignorance of this matter would have been near impossible had it not been for the power of representation. Unique to English law, in order to attain the right of possession, one had to prove a continuing human presence and habitation, in most cases this meant constructing a dwelling place. Other signs of permanence included the construction of a fence, or the planting of gardens, all recognizable and familiar signs of European possession.

The legal argument against Aboriginal claims to North American lands was that since most Native American people followed a nomadic lifestyle, they were not true inhabitants. This would allow the doctrine of *Terra Nullius* to come into affect. Of course we question the legality of the whole “nomadic” theory by counterclaiming that North American Indians did in fact have a distinctive territory or home ground within which they traveled, which was particular to the seasons and availability of food and shelter. The concept of *Terra Nullius* was a construct meant to represent the availability of lands. From the vantage point of the European explorer, Aboriginal land use practices would have been so foreign as to appear non-existent. Traditional pursuits such as hunting and living off the land caused people to travel following their food sources rather than staying in one area all year round, thereby providing the need to build a fence, or to plant a garden. The absence of these European indicators of human habitation led to the false designation of Indian lands as *Terra Nullius*. According to Scott (1995) Emir de Vattel defined *Terra Nullius* as land that savages “have no special need of and are making no present and continuous use of” (p.389). Native American customs and notions of spatiality fell totally outside of the recognizable life ways of European men. They proceeded to exclude Aboriginal peoples and their human rights, based on their perceived

lack of civility. The doctrine of *Terra Nullius* came from a tradition of European law codes, which were characteristically grounded in the language of the everyday. Patricia Seed (1995) suggested that enactments of authority in far away lands were seen by European citizens as legitimate because of the familiarity of the language. This familiarity of such concepts as *Terra Nullius* would have naturalized the right of European possession of New World lands.

The fact that the American Indians did not function under a recognizable state law excluded them from laying claim as the rightful possessors of the land. This argument lay within the legal concept of *vacuum domicilium* where property rights could only exist within the framework of organized state law. Habitation since “time immemorial” would have no meaning unless it was validated by natural law. Consequently, as Scott (1996) suggests, the concept *Terra Nullius* referred to a territory not accounted for by a state-like entity whose political organization was such that representatives of the state could enter into external agreements with other powers. Early European legal code was self-serving to the colonial requirements of the bodies that formed them. *Terra Nullius* held power by being grounded in the language of the everyday, where as a socially accepted convention, it would naturalize the process of emptying out the category of the “other” (the other being the racialized Aboriginal peoples inhabiting the New World.)

Likewise, the use of language grounded in the every day through the terms “conservation” and “preservation” naturalizes the contemporary erasure of Aboriginal activity and presence in the park. The national park continues to represent empty lands by ignoring contemporary claims of Aboriginal territoriality. Johnathan Bordo (1997) suggests that “for the American project, wilderness is *Terra Nullius* sublimed” (p.32).

Also, the practice of illustrating wilderness space through the use of Aboriginal imagery silences and erases any historic and contemporary Aboriginal presence in the park. At contact, these lands were empty from the perspective of early explorers, empty of what European explorers comprehended, where what went on in these highly affluent societies would have been beyond their realm of understanding.

Within the language of the everyday, lay a language of dichotomies such as savage/ civilized, noble/ ignoble. These opposite concepts or dichotomies would help to dictate and normalize European society. Implicit within the doctrine of *Terra Nullius* was not only the message that wild spaces were in need of control, but that wild people were in need of control. The fact that *Terra Nullius* was used as a legitimizer in the creation of the wilderness park is revealing in that national parks continue to control wilderness and Aboriginal people by: a) ignoring contemporary claims to land, and b) continuously adorning Aboriginal imagery on pamphlets.

The contemporary wilderness park remains not only very much attached to the concept *Terra Nullius*, but is dependent upon its own re-creation of a construct of Aboriginal presence, the primitive noble savage, the original conservationist/ environmentalist, and the park interpreter. It is important to explore the concepts that create meanings in national park pamphlets in order to understand how national parks continue to assert control over wilderness and Aboriginal people. *Cultural landscape*, *contact landscape* and the *contact zone* have been identified as descriptors of the environment through which meanings have been formed and identities produced.

Modern landscape theory identifies the term *contact landscape* as a practice and condition of the production of landscape. Johnathan Bordo (1993) suggests that within

modern landscape theory, the image is a record or a trace of the subject, where the erasure itself is meant as evidence of a subjective trace. The Group of Seven's depictions of the Canadian landscape convey that the noticeable erasure of Aboriginal presence actually has the effect of producing wilderness space. The national parks rely on the modern landscape and this subjective trace of Aboriginality in order to attract tourists. The practice of offering only glimpses of Aboriginality maintains the illusion of empty lands and protects national claims to the protected park. Part of the process of controlling space has manifested itself as the erasure of Aboriginal presence; however, this process fails itself in that it leaves behind a recognizable trace -a product of colonialism.

The nature of interaction that took place at contact created "empty lands" where unequal access to power allowed for the naming of Indigenous territory as empty. The valuation that took place during the initial interactions were determined by the context of radical and racial inequality. Mary Louise Pratt (1992) uses the term *contact zone* in order to explain the dynamics of interaction within the context of discovery narrative:

Contact zone refers to the space of colonial encounters, the space in which peoples historically and geographically separated come into conflict with each other and establish ongoing relations, usually involving conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict. (p.6)

Landscapes were created through the interaction that took place within the space and related characteristics of the contact zone. Beneath the generated expression of Canadian nationalism lay these conditions of coercion, radical inequality, and intractable conflict. The nature of the interaction that took place within the space of the contact zone produced the concept "empty lands," which was used to justify the colonial practice of claiming lands.

Within the contact zone, the *anticonquest* as referred by Pratt describes the innocence behind the colonial project of discovering and claiming lands. According to Pratt (1992), the anti- conquest maintains and supports erasure through the strategic practices of representation, whereby European bourgeois seek to secure their innocence in the same moment as they assert hegemony. In the case of Parks Canada, the process of highlighting the desirable qualities of such a noble race of people through the use of romanticist imagery made the claiming of Indigenous lands more justifiable. Further, the myth of discovery and the seemingly innocent re- ritualizations and re- enactments of discovery that inform most park pamphlets is also an expression of the anti- conquest. For Pratt (1992), the anticonquest's main protagonist is the seeing man- the European males subject of landscape discourse, "he whose imperial eyes look out and possess" (p.7).

Contemporary versions of the noble savage such as the ecological Indian rely on the continual production of the Aboriginal as part of the wilderness which was a creation of romanticism, whose main proponents were Henry David Thoreau and Jean Jacques Rousseau. Comer (1997) locates this system of representation as the *wilderness plot* which exists under the following conditions:

A love of wide open 'wild spaces,' a penchant for the mystical that is also the 'natural' American Indian, the suggestion of redemptive possibility, a disavowal of the industrial or technological, the representations of wilderness as nature." (p.75)

The wilderness plot positions Aboriginal identity as resistant to modern life ways and subject to natural instincts and desires. The construction of the Aboriginal within this wilderness plot fulfills the needs and desires of those who wish to experience something

different. In many accounts, Aboriginal people's close association to "wild spaces" leads to the practice of expressing Aboriginality as land. Goldie (1989) states:

The indigene is often used to present the possibility of nature in human form. In the same way, the indigene's closeness to nature is used to justify an emphasis on the indigene as the land. In the one, nature becomes the human, in the other, human becomes, nature." (p.19)

The erasure of Aboriginal people from the land was achieved through the designation of "empty lands" which took place during the initial interactions of the contact zone which is a trope of conflict and coercion. The production of the noble savage was a creation of the contact zone, expressed through romanticist discourse.

2.2. Primitivism and the convention of the Noble Savage

Primitivism and the *convention of the noble savage* both symbolically and physically erased the presence of Aboriginal people from the land. Rather than producing the good or bad Indian, primitivism provided the conventions (or social practices) used to describe Aboriginal people. Primitivism, as a literary field, informed the imaginative works of European authors in their descriptions of anything Aboriginal.

According to Berkhofer (1979) the author's own hopes and fears provided the foundation for writing about Native Americans and other Indigenous peoples such as those living in Africa or Asia. Furthermore, Native Americans were to provide new imagery for the intellectual, literary, and artistic styles of the day; or as a vehicle for social critique. The convention of the noble savage incorporated virtues found lacking in Europe.

Primitivism as a literary field houses this convention which reflects this practice.

Berkhofer (1979) states:

Primitivism postulated people dwelling in nature according to nature, existing free of history's burdens and social complexity felt by Europeans in the modern period, and offering hope to mankind at the same time that they constituted a powerful counter example to existing European civilization." (p.72)

The *convention of the noble savage* was used to critique both European institutions as well as the nature of the societies that informed them. According to Berkhofer (1979), the use of this convention for this purpose reached its peak with the philosophies of the Enlightenment. Through primitivism, the ideas of the Indian were used as a measuring stick through which to challenge European society, as well as to justify Europe's institutions within the context of this way of thinking. Many Enlightenment thinkers focused on the Indian's inherent proximity with the state of nature in order to fight for moral reform.

The social value and use of the noble savage changed along with the ideas and social values of the society's that adopted it as a convention. The Enlightenment, for instance, took it on and used it as a measuring stick in order to highlight either, the civility, and superiority of European social institutions and values; or to offer a critical valuation of the moral reform necessary in order to improve the social structure of European society. The convention of the noble savage was based on idealism, where the state of nature became the topic of the day, rather than the actual people that inhabited the Americas. As an idea, the position of Aboriginal people in North America fell into non-existence as people, hence their erasure from the physical landscape and their entrance into the symbolic landscape of eighteenth century thought.

This concentration of ideas reflected the intellectual atmosphere of the eighteenth century where influential thinkers (influential to the project of the European

Enlightenment) began a tradition of questioning their own institutions as corrupt, and artificial. The qualities that became associated with “living in a state of nature” were held in stark contrast to the qualities associated with the state of European institutions. People said to be living within a state of nature were said to possess “those virtues so many commentators found lacking in their own times,” qualities such as sexual innocence, equality of condition and status, and excellent health (Berkhofer, 1979, p.72). Alongside European conditions such as threats of degeneracy, for example, these qualities would have seemed utopian to visionaries and philosophers seeking reform.

Part of primitivism’s appeal was to temporally set Aboriginal people apart from European society by locating this state of nature in the idyllic past. The placing of Aboriginal people in the long ago and far away has been identified as placing them within the trope of *anachronistic space*. McClintock (1995) describes the entrance into the trope of anachronism as a journey where the white Victorian middle class time traveler travels through imperial progress backward to a time of pre-historic archaic existence. McClintock (1995) characterizes anachronistic space as “prehistoric, atavistic, irrational, inherently out of place in the historical time of modernity” (p.40). In proper primitivist practice, Aboriginal people are written to occupy their own temporal space outside of modern Victorian reality. Consequently, this repositioning leads to the non-reality of contemporary Indigenous people in the minds of dominant society.

2.2.1. *Vanishing Indians*

Portraits and photographs depicting Indians as backdrops to landscape visually seduced their audience through drawing upon the nostalgic needs of dominant European

society. The mission of several early artists and photographers involved in the creation and maintenance of the vanishing Indian, was to preserve the image of the pre- contact Indian. The vanishing Indian was understood as a) the demise of the Indian people through such factors as disease, alcoholism, white encroachment and starvation, and b) an end to a way of life. George Catlin, Paul Kane, Frederick Arthur Verner, Emily Carr, Edmond Morris, and Richard Curtis have all contributed to the construction and maintenance of the vanishing Indian in many of his guises. They each created a visual record of a condemned people and were supported by some of the more powerful people in the upper echelons of Canadian society. Their images were to feed into the nostalgic needs of people who wanted to believe in the existence of a noble race exemplifying everything that modern industrialized, capitalistic society was not.

During the 1800's and early 1900's it was believed that Indians in the photographs, portraiture, and literature were in effect doomed. Artists were made popular through their efforts to represent traditional life ways and culture in order to record the last remnants of a dying race before expiring forever. Rather than depicting the real, these representations were basically fabrications of Indians based on fantasy and imagination. In primitivist fashion, these Indians were not to be associated with anything modern, and any evidence of white encroachment was to be erased. Not only were Indians to be represented as living within a pristine wilderness, but characteristically they were to be unable to change, adapt, or even survive modern industrial society.

In order to create the illusion of the vanishing Indian, Paul Kane would add or deduct certain characteristics or settings in creating portraits of Aboriginal people. He would add clothing and foreign artifacts to scenes that he was recreating which did not

make sense to the customs and cultures of the people that he was depicting. According to Francis (1992), in order to create the image of the vanishing Indian, Kane would add details to the scenery and would also reproduce images of the buffalo with rounder bodies and larger frames to create a style reflecting the romanticist tradition of art.

It has been suggested that Kane, like others, was not in the position where he could have realistically portrayed real Indian people and their life ways with any level of accuracy. Kane had only superficial understandings of Native customs and was virtually a tourist among the Indians. He “showed little concern for Native people after his expedition and he was surprisingly narrow-minded about many aspects of their culture” (Francis, 1992, p.21). The fact that many people, like Kane, were really tourists creating representations of Indian people is interesting. According to Zygmunt Bauman, the purpose of the tourist is new experience; the tourist is a conscious and systematic seeker of experience, of difference and novelty. However, in the same light, Bauman (1996) also asserts that there are boundaries and a certain degree of personal manipulation on the part of tourists in that they need to create the familiar in order to safely process the difference:

In the tourist’s world, the strange is tame, domesticated, and no longer frightens; shocks come in a package deal with safety. This makes the world seem infinitely gentle, obedient to the tourist’s wishes and whims, ready to oblige; but also a do-it-yourself world, pleasingly pliable, kneaded by the tourists desire, made and remade with one purpose in mind: to excite, please and amuse. (p.57)

According to many, the Indian of nineteenth -century Canada, is Paul Kane’s Indian. Paul Kane and others like him were tourists creating images conveying difference while using certain stylistic traits in order to bring Indians into the realm of the familiar. These stylistic traits came in the form of the romanticist tradition which informed the dress, the landscape, and the curvatures of the animals being represented.

The images reflected the knowledge about the West that the painter would have created prior to the experience of the West. It would have been a comforting practice to represent the familiar in a foreign landscape. If it is true that the tourist always expects difference with a degree of comfort and familiarity, the touristic painter would represent difference through means which are familiar to him by the ascription of style.

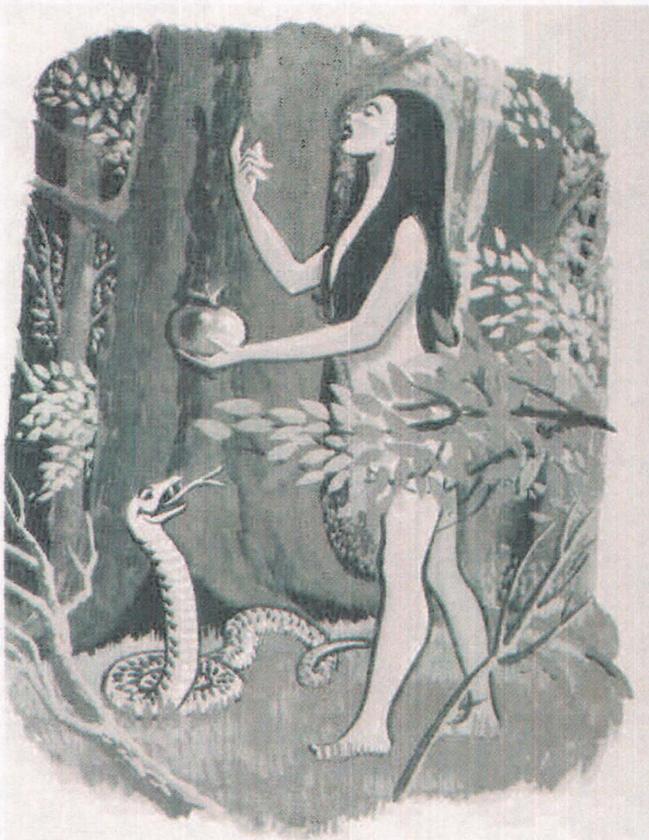
This practice creates images of Indians as constructions representing fantasy and desire laced with foreign familiarity. This style of painting and illustrating imprisons a people's past, making it very difficult to assert a contemporary presence.

Representing the image of the Indian as a backdrop to landscape was another practice associated with the vanishing Indian. Frederick Arthur Verner, an admirer of Paul Kane's work, produced images of Indians which were meant to illustrate their everyday life activities. During the late 1800's, Verner's work had originally consisted of Indians and buffalo, despite having had very little exposure to either. According to Francis (1992), Verner preferred to paint scenes of Indians canoeing on wilderness lakes, or shooting down tumbling rapids, and had a tendency not to create images of the individual, but rather Indian people who were a backdrop to the landscape. The Indian figures in his paintings are said to have been seldom up-close, "rather they are figures in idyllic natural settings with no individuality. He painted postures, not people" (Francis, 1992, p.25).

2.2.2. *Ecological Indians*

The ecological Indian is another consumable imaginary Indian. Drawing upon the tradition of the noble savage, the appeal of the ecological Indian lay in its characteristics,

which have been associated with the noble savage, such as living in a state of nature; inherent harmony, balance, gentle demeanor, and equal access to basic resources. One could trace modern associations of the noble Indian back to roots where Old world mythological creatures were superimposed onto a New World landscape, and where the New World came to be a reflection of Old World desires. “The Garden of Eden,” for example, represents an Old World ideal superimposed onto a New World landscape. The Garden of Eden and its associated characteristics became reflected in the imagery of the ecological noble Indian.



ke . . . there is the villain and scoundrel of the ages

Foul and Loathsome Creatures, 1976

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These characteristics continue to influence modern – day representations of wilderness space, as images of Eve adorn Canadian National Parks promotional literature. The 1976 Parks Canada publication of “Foul and loathsome Creatures,” provides an unusual story about the nature of snakes and other reptiles containing biblical references to the snake as both symbol of the devil and of god. One page in this curious publication displays a picture of a naked Eve addressing a snake while holding a red apple, cloaked by branches. This portrayal of Eden maintains that the mythical locality, the Garden of Eden, continues to influence the ways in which land is imagined as characterized by the use of the symbols of Eden herself, and the meanings associated with her as a metaphor for the innocence of living in a state of nature.

The association of femininity with nature has consequences for our own understandings of nature, with the noble Indian, and ultimately the creation of the image of the ecological Indian. Eve and the noble Indian share certain characteristics, as both are deemed to be within a close proximity to nature, living within a state of nature; both are viewed as open to temptation, and driven by instinct. Both Eve and the noble Indian are also viewed as vulnerable, exposed, and open to the impacts of white encroachment (for Eve, white encroachment is symbolized by the snake.) Both are revered for their freedom, their innocence, dwelling in a utopian context still rich with resources.

These imaginings of the noble Indian have become conventional, their meanings having reached the point of normalization. Their power has been maintained through their unquestionable nature, and their constant repetition. The fact that these images are nonsensical does not matter, as their power derives not from truth, but rather from the supportive structures of the discourse which maintains them. The same can be said about

the unquestioned nature of the discursive practices supporting the idea of the nation and the creation of its subjects.

2.3. Nationalism, Nature in Need of Control: Disciplined and Regimented Wilderness

In the practice of seducing an audience, Parks Canada also relies upon the portrayal of vulnerable, idyllic nature scenes. The scenes beckon the viewer to experience the “taming of the wilderness,” achieved through entering a seemingly untouched wild space, thereby re-enacting the scene of discovery for oneself. Although the irony, of course, is that things are not always as they seem, for that taming is what has occurred before you have arrived at the national park as a practice of its creation. The wilderness has been regulated to the point where, within the park, you are directed as to where to walk, where to stop, and where to go to the bathroom. In order to produce the idea of “nature in need of control,” something had to occur before. The production of wilderness land as feminine was strategic in that it drew upon familiar societal norms and understandings in order to maintain control.

2.3.1. *The Feminization of Wilderness*

The practice of producing wilderness land as feminine was accomplished by the prior subordination of women as a category of nature. The association between women and nature is a practice that had its beginnings in Western thought, a product of the so-called Enlightenment. Sandra Hekman (1990) suggests that the association of nature and women is a historical and cultural phenomenon, which has been used by specific societies to control women and rationalize their devaluation. This association of women and

nature has produced gendered violence against women, manifested in witch hunts, residential school victimization, and many other characteristically volatile acts all in the name of controlling women's "evil natures." The symbol of women has also been used to mark dangerous thresholds where, as will be discussed, female figures were utilized as fetish-like objects to mark virgin territory as in their use on ships' prows (McClintock, 1995).

According to Hekman (1990), within Western thought, nature has always been conceptualized as female; however, the kind of female nature represents has changed with the rise of modern science. Hekman (1990) produces a distinction between the premodern and the modern scientific conceptions of nature. In the premodern era, images of nature reflected two types of females- the nurturing mother and the wild and untamable temptress; whereas the modern era utilized women to highlight the disorderly, uncontrolled forces of nature. According to premodern understandings, women came to be associated with degeneracy, plague, famines, and tempests, while at the same time associated with peace, and serenity (Hekman, 1990). The premodern ideas of subordination and control of women produced certain destructive social and cultural practices such as witch hunts, which, according to Hekman (1990), represented a premodern effort to control nature through the systematic execution of "witches.) These producing practices were also an attempt to destroy the power of women's knowledge.

The emergence of the *mechanical conception of nature*, produced by Francis Bacon in the seventeenth century, transformed the premodern conceptions of nature. Supported by like-minded thinkers such as Descartes, the mechanical conception of modern science focused on the disorderly side of Mother Nature (Hekman, 1990) and

used this to justify male domination through the means of the scientific enterprise. This modern scientific enterprise emphasized objectivity and regulated women's inferiority by using them as a category representing the binary opposites to men's civilized state.

According to Hekman (1990), this mechanistic conception of modern science saw nature as a wild force in need of subordination to dominant mankind. In modern scientific understandings, nature was to be seen as a machine; in this way it would be dissected and understood. Merchant (1980) suggests that the new concepts of nature that changed the treatment of nature in modern science, also profoundly altered the treatment of women, where the new female that emerged was one to be controlled and dissected.

According to McClintock (1995), "the feminization of the land is a *poetics* of ambivalence and a *politics* of violence" (p.28). These practices are revealed through looking at the feminization of the land both as a *strategy of containment* and also as a dangerous reaction of the male in his ambiguous position in what McClintock would call the *creation of origins*. The feminization of the land as a *strategy of containment* was a practice of early explorers, merchants, and conquistadors, born out of their anxieties, fears, and paranoia of being on the threshold of known and unknown lands. It is important to note that the designation of wilderness space came alongside the imposition of male violence. Once explorers had reached the limits of their known worlds, certain rituals were carried out to impose male violence such as the practices of rape and massacre. McClintock (1995) suggests that paranoia and anxiety were warded off by "fantastical rights of imperial violence" (p.26). Through an imposition of gender hierarchy on the land, this feminized land would have constituted the space within which such acts could take place as seemingly naturalized behavior.

The feminization of the land was also a reaction to the ambiguous position of the male in the *creation of origins*. Explorers, conquistadors, merchants, (all being of the male persuasion) obviously do not have the ability to give birth; therefore, in order to claim ownership to control, they are left with the task of creating their own origin narratives. What is required here is to think of origins as the securing of power and property. McClintock (1995) describes the relationship of men and the *creation of origins* as an ambiguous relationship, where male explorer's involvement in claiming discovery called for a re-enactment of a form of birthing ritual as a production of an origin narrative. She suggests that men involved in such acts of "discovery" would have recognized their loss of connection to the originary act of creating the land, and reacted through a re-ritualization of this first act. She compared this imperial act of discovery with the male birthing act of baptism, a Christian practice in which men perform a surrogate birthing ritual. This, according to McClintock (1995), is a process of diminishing women's agency in the birthing scene whereby men re-enact the originary scene of giving birth. As a practice of discovery, this ritual name giving resembles the practice where the children are given the names of their fathers, as though the mother was unfit to provide the name. Naming America represented not only a desire for a single origin, but also reflected the anxieties with the lack of generative power (McClintock, 1995, p.29). The practice of feminizing the land can be traced, as McClintock points out, to practices whose foundations were anxiety, fear and identity loss. This feminization and the violence associated with this process are covered up through the *poetics* involved in the representations of this feminized land.

Women also serve as boundary markers between known and unknown lands. This practice of representing the unknown as female was particularly popular during the early years of exploration. The unknown areas in old maps such as dark seas are represented by the use of sirens, scary looking mammals resembling giant piranhas, and mermaids. According to folklore, the mermaid calls out to the unsuspecting sailor and entices him to join her in the dark sea where he would meet his doom. The wilderness has been imagined as dangerous space, and the image of the innocent looking, alluring woman captures this metaphor. McClintock (1995) examines the position of women in the discovery scene in her work entitled, *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Contest*:

In myriad ways, women served as mediating and threshold figures by means of which men oriented themselves in space, as agents of power and agents of knowledge. (p.24)

The practice of feminizing land originated out of necessity; it was necessary for earlier explorers, merchants, sailors, and conquistadors to produce land as feminine in order to maintain control through balance in a frighteningly dangerous and ambiguous environment. The naming of land as feminine was a feeble attempt towards familiarizing the unfamiliar. This feminization of the land was further produced as female figures were planted like fetish objects on the seemingly ambiguous points of contact (McClintock, 1995). As mentioned, the figures of women as mermaids were used in early map-making to represent unknown, dangerous zones. Female bodies were symbolically placed on ships prows. In order to maintain power and control, men would position themselves against women as boundary markers. This practice made the land navigational by producing two gendered spaces, one male and the other female. Once navigational,

explorers could then use these gendered spaces to assert male power and control over the lands. The ritualized subordination of the land through feminization meant that a whole series of violent acts could then be legitimized as naturalized behavior based on socially and culturally derived rules planted within a pre-established racialized gender hierarchy.

2.3.2. *Sandiland's Nationhood through Regimentation and Discipline Aesthetic*

Just as femininity came to justify certain actions towards the land, the designation of wilderness justified control over park land in the name of Canadian nationalism.

Firstly, let us look at the significance of regimentation and authority as they produce meaning within the national park. The conception of wilderness and its associated values contributes to a dialogue of Canadian nation building. According to Sandilands (2000), once parks are granted national status they immediately belong to a signifying system; they become part of a representational system in which they emulate Canada (p.139). Sandilands (2000) suggests that “the nature of the park was, and is, over-determined by its location in a narrative of nation building” (p.139).

The locality of the national park and the aesthetic value of the park act as only part of its value. Banff as national park, for example, is part of a discourse which elevates the park into producing something greater than itself. Sandilands (2000) suggests that parks are part of a narrative, wherein national parks contribute to create ideas of nationalism:

the ‘emparked’ local space has been designated and produced as a site of national significance and, in the course of being developed and provisioned as a federal signifying space, has taken on the pedagogical task of representing the nation. (p.139)

Sandilands suggests that the nationalist quality of the national park is produced through parks organization, which is structured according to federal administrative dictates. Regulation and control within the park is communicated through various mediums. For example, detailed signage at every turn dictates when, where, and how to walk through national parks. Park space, Sandilands argues, is disciplinarily organized. She notes how visitors' experiences are highly regulated through the permanent institutions of nature interpretation as the content of the tours, while varied, collectively regulates visitors' experiences. Sandilands (2000) suggests that the end result is that, "visitors come to know 'Canada' by participating in the parks as willing and obedient subjects of the federal state"(p.139).

Sandilands (2000) suggests that the diverse quality of the ecosystems which make up Canada's national parks is actually representative of the diversity and uniqueness of the people that make up Canada. Sandilands comments that Canada has attempted to represent ecosystems as Canadian cultural heritage.

Thus, the equation of ecosystems with national heritage is a disciplinary maneuver; diversity can, after all, be captured, protected, and represented in a single national narrative. (p.141)

In capturing the essence of Canadian nationalism communicated through Canadian national parks, parks pamphlets serve as excellent mediums.

2.3.3. *Benedict Anderson's Language of Power*

To come to understand the power of the image and word in creating nationalist meaning making, we turn to Benedict Anderson's description of the *language of power*.

Anderson attributes print as commodity as responsible for creating the popularity of nationalism, and quotes Francis Bacon, “print had changed the appearance and state of the world.” The printed word became an indicator of the differentiation of status, and was widely disseminated. Anderson (1983) suggests that:

The fixing of print-languages and the differentiation of status between them were largely unselfconscious processes resulting from the explosive interaction between capitalism, technology, and human linguistic diversity. But as with so much else in the history of nationalism, once ‘there’ they could become formal models to be imitated, and where expedient, consciously exploited in a Machiavellian spirit. (p. 45)

Anderson refers to the concept *language of power* as the narrative through which nationalisms become communicated. According to this way of thinking, language has the ability to lay the basis of power. People who do not even know each other are connected through the language of power, which has achieved administrative uniformity in the country. In the case of Canada, both English and French have achieved this status, to the detriment of the original languages of this country. In the creation of a nation, it is important to continuously repeat certain symbols, signs, and texts which formulate the language of power. In the case of the national parks, the printing on the green signs and the symbolism of the beaver on the parks emblems all work together to create this language of power. Anderson suggests that the nation is an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign. Anderson (1983) further states that, “it is imagined because the members of even the smallest nation will never know most of their fellow-members, meet them, or even hear of them, yet in the minds of each lives the image of their communion” (p.6).

Nations come into being through discourse and the traditions informing discourse. The discourse of discovery, the discourse of the noble savage, and the discourse of the vanishing and ecological Indian as portrayed through National parks promotional literature are part of this language of power and are called upon to create the “national” status of “national park.” Let us now explore how and why the image of the noble Indian is a creation of the language of power as it is called upon to create the idea of the national park.

2.4. Imperialism and Fantasy

The use of the noble savage imagery in Parks Canada literature depends on its associations with the discovery scene and nostalgia, namely what Renato Rosaldo (as cited in hooks, 1991) would identify as *imperialist nostalgia*. Bell hooks (1991) would link this term to an expression of desire. Rosaldo (as cited in hooks, 1991) defined imperialist nostalgia as “nostalgia, often found under imperialism, where people mourn the passing of what they themselves have transformed,” or as “a process of yearning for what one has destroyed,” thus denying accountability (p.25). The use of the noble Indian recalls the projected innocence of the discovery scene, while masking the imperialistic practices of claiming, maiming, and transforming.

Hooks, in deconstructing mass culture, describes imperialist nostalgia as taking the form of re-enacting and re-ritualizing the imperialist colonizing journey as a “narrative fantasy of power and desire, of seduction by the Other” (p. 25). The spirit of primitivism, according to hooks, lay in the bodies of dark others whose cultures, traditions, and lifestyles become transformed through the practices of imperialism,

colonization, and racist domination. Like the First Nations experience in Canada, lands in national parks have also been claimed, transformed, and altered through imperialist practices. Hooks (1991) suggests that “the desire to make contact with those bodies deemed Other, with no apparent will to dominate, assuages the guilt of the past, even takes the form of a defiant gesture where one denies accountability and historical connection” (p.25). One could argue that through representing “Aboriginality” the park is expressing its will to make contact with the other. Parks Canada representations of the noble savage or Indian as “other” are an obvious denial of accountability for those Nations that no longer have access to hunt and trap within the boundaries of the park.

Eva Mackey, in her article entitled *Death by Landscape: Race, Nature, and Gender in Canadian Nationalist Mythology*, introduces the settler viewpoint of nature which describes the process whereby Aboriginal people’s association to nature stems from the idealization by the settlers towards both nature and Aboriginal people. As part of this process of idealization, both were caught up in the stereotypical views of the day and subsumed within the language of power. This language of emergent nationhood incorporates the binaries civilized/ savage and noble/ ignoble as cultural identifiers. Mackey (2000) asserts that both nature and Aboriginal people fell into the category ignoble/ wild/ savage, as she suggests that rather than embracing the characteristics of the noble savage, the “ignoble savage” plays a key role in defining Canadian identity. In this article Mackey reinforces the fact that in nationalist mythology the nation is often represented as if embodied in the landscape itself. How the newcomers saw the land and associated with the land would have an important influence on not only how they imagined the community, being Canada, but also how they would have seen themselves

as part of that imagined community. According to this settler viewpoint of nature, Aboriginal people were associated as closer to nature. Both nature and the Aboriginal were idealized by the settlers.

Mackey (2000) explores the traditions of painting Canadian landscapes in order to illustrate the use of the ignoble in creating nationalist imaginings. The traditions that she identifies are the pastoral, as opposed to the uncontrollable wilderness tradition of illustrating landscapes produced by the Group of Seven. These welcoming and pleasant spaces became associated with the noble. On the other hand, the paintings of the Group of Seven illustrated landscapes as dark, uninviting, dangerous spaces, thereby epitomizing the ignoble savage. According to Mackey (2000):

The landscape paintings of the Group of Seven do not sustain and construct colonial national identity by inviting colonizing humans to penetrate nature, as the picturesque tradition does. Instead their paintings reject the European aesthetic in favor of a construction of a nationalist aesthetic based on the sense of an obliterating and uncontrollable wilderness. (p.127)

According to this settler viewpoint of nature, wilderness is a place where one can get lost, it is an overpowering place, wherein lies the possibility of death (Mackey, 2000, p.127). This process and experience of wilderness emulates the relationship between the self and other where the other becomes represented as the dark, dangerous unknown within the language of nationhood, or the language of power. The production of Canadian national identity continuously relies upon the production of its other, being the noble savage of the wilderness.

The experience of discovery implicit within this settler viewpoint of nature defines the experience of being Canadian. The narrative of discovery captivates an audience through illustrating the heroic deeds involved in penetrating inhospitable

wilderness. The accompanying fear of borderlessness and uncontrollable space as opposed to the regimented and controlled space of the National park for instance, illustrates the self/ other paradox, and the binary nature of the language of power.

As a creation of the language of power, Canadian nationalist identity lay on ambiguous foundations in that it relies upon the constant repetition of binaries in order to assert itself. These oppositions inscribed in language form signifying systems comprising of the binaries good/ bad, man/ woman, civilized/ savage, and self/ other. These binaries rely on their other in order to both provide substance to the self, and to orient self as power and agent of knowledge. For example, the civilized comes into existence through the difference produced through its proximity to a “savage” state. Wilderness and the associative values of wilderness became produced through becoming part of a signifying system (the language of power) which is heavily reliant upon these binaries. The fact that the wilderness parks depends on its regulatory, and regimented control in order to sustain itself, further exposes its ambiguous position. Furthermore, the production of the wilderness park also depends upon the language of power and the repetition of the word through print languages to create its nationalist status wherein, the ambiguous discourse of nationalism necessitates the use of repetition of its signs, symbols, and text.

CHAPTER THREE:

CONVENTION OF THE NOBLE SAVAGE AND IDENTITY PRODUCTION

This chapter will explore the vanishing Indian and ecological Indian as identity constructs and will situate them as products of discourses created for economical, political, and social reasons. This chapter enters into a discussion of the context under which these identities were, not necessarily born, but under which they retained popularity. This chapter looks at the representational practices of the Canadian Pacific Railway and their economically driven participation in the re-construction of the vanishing Indian and identifies the socio-political context which supported the representation of the ecological Indian. I situate the production of Iron Eyes Cody and Grey Owl as identity constructs born out of environmentalism and social change.

3.1. The Vanishing Indian and the Canadian Pacific Railway

As an associative discourse of the noble savage, the vanishing Indian is a construction based on the belief that Indian people are doomed. Like the national park, the Canadian Pacific Railway depends upon the tradition of the vanishing Indian in order to make an impression on early Canadian consumerism. Both Canadian enterprises simultaneously launched huge promotional campaigns relying upon the images of the vanishing Indian in order to capture nostalgic longings of the affluent and adventurous. The Canadian Pacific Railway was the first to entertain the idea of creating a national park in the area of Banff.

Their interests lay in the Banff Hot Springs and the potential of developing a spa resort. A federally protected park in the midst of the Canadian Rockies, attainable through their own railroad, would be economically beneficial to their interests.

In order to promote the railway, General Manager William Van Horne commissioned photographers and landscape painters to produce images of the unique landscapes that make up the Western frontier. Van Horne was selling an idea of what it meant to be Canadian. Through producing visuals of the landscape, would-be tourists had access to glimpses of a journey comprised of exotic wilderness and Indian country. Francis (1997) observed that “the CPR created Canada, not by binding it together with steel rails, but by reinventing images of it that people then began to recognize as uniquely Canadian” (p.27). The Canadian Pacific Railway has played a leading role in imagining the country into being, so much so that in marking its completion, the November 7, 1885, hammering of the last spike at Craigellachie, British Columbia, has been heralded by some as Canadian Independence Day. Photographic images of the Western Indian supplied the necessary nostalgia needed to supplement the creation of the idea of Canadianness.

Part of the process of coming to know Canada via the CPR involved the reconstruction of the vanishing Indian, where experiences of the vanishing Indian became part of the landscape aesthetic of the west. Through the distribution of promotional material depicting these images of Indians along the tracks, the affluent and adventurous had expectations of seeing the Indians in their natural settings. For the tourists, seen from a railcar at stopping places, Indians as vestiges of the authentic west were markers of Canada’s authenticity as a nation. Of course, the vanishing Indian is a construction of the

imagination, which calls for preserving an ideal image, not the real. The appeal of the image of the vanishing Indian is that it speaks to the social consciousness of people within Canada as well as the artistic who use them as mediums to preserve Indians as in a state of nature before their inevitable doom. The selling point of the CPR in reproducing these images was that a ride on the CPR is likened to a time machine where one can witness the last remaining wild Indian of the plains at a safe distance. As Francis (1997) observed, “the railway realized that wild Indians were a surefire tourist attraction, every bit as exciting as the tribes of the darkest Africa, yet available from the safety and convenience of a railway car” (p.26).

According to Francis, the marketing of the imaginary Indian reached its peak, not with a particular product, but an experience- the experience of railway travel. Adventure for the tourist lay in the experience of journeying, of getting to their destination. As “other” the vanishing Indian fed touristic desires to experience difference. Margary Tanner Hadley (1987) suggests that “the CPR was not interested in providing entertainment for the masses; its concern was exclusively with the affluent traveling elite” (p.63). For the tourist, railway travel was an opportunity to witness the constructed other from an environment befitting the affluent. Van Horne purposefully created a familiar- to- home environment inside railway cars in order to provide tourists with a safe, pleasurable experience of difference. The CPR offered first class accommodations in the form of comfortable sleeping cars with oversized berths, richly upholstered seats, mahogany, satinwood paneling, and elegant dining cars. The image of the vanishing Indian answered the call for the spectacle that was required to keep the travelers entertained.

The Western Plains Indian appealed to Canadians by feeding a nostalgic need for difference through representing the dangerous “other.” Being a train ride away, Canadians would not have to travel to Africa to experience the other. The image of the Indian implied a certain degree of danger, especially during the first year of completion in 1885, as this was the time of the North West Resistance. The fabricated threat of Indigenous warfare was used as a tool through which to acquire the funds for the railway. This threat produced the feeling that the railway was necessary to ensure the safety of the West from “rebellious” Indian and Metis people.

The Canadian Pacific Railway provided the opportunity for people to transgress, to step across boundaries, where on the other side of the tracks would exist a people which posed such a threat to Canadian nationalism and yet still managed to symbolize what it meant to be Canadian. The Canadian Pacific Railway utilized the conventional vanishing Indian discourse to heighten the novelty and spectacle of witnessing Indian people in everyday activities- while they are still there. The vanishing Indian also came to symbolize those ideas that were lacking in modern industrialist society. The Canadian Pacific Railway promoted opportunities to witness a people living a more natural life, unfettered by the chaos of technological, industrial society.

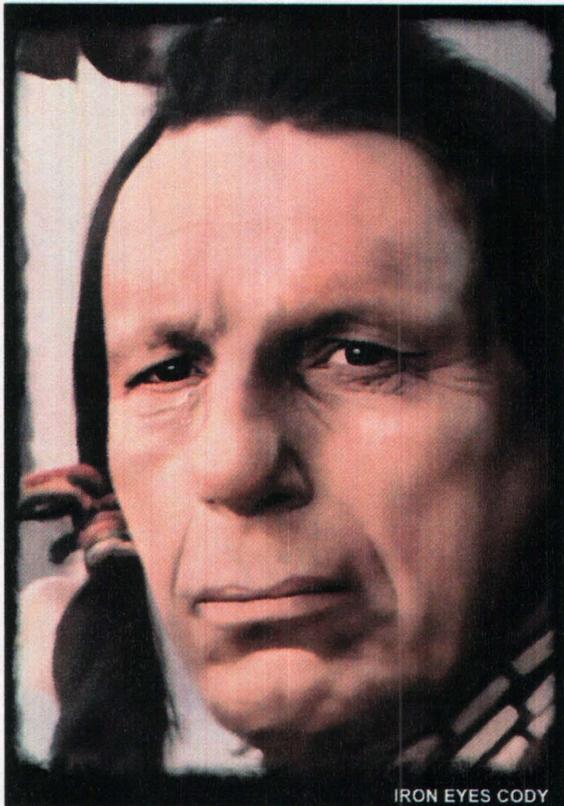
The practice of using the vanishing Indian as a promotional tool is not unique to Canada. In the United States, the Santa Fe Railway also launched huge promotional campaigns which used the Indian as the prototype for pre-industrial society symbolizing freedom, nobility and simplicity. Painters commissioned for the Santa Fe Railway painted scenes of Pueblo Indians performing their everyday activities to be reproduced in the railway company’s promotional literature. In the United States, the Pueblo Indians

quickly became a well known symbol of the railway, symbolic of the exotic, picturesque landscape. As in Canada, images used by the Santa Fe railway's advertising department would have been carefully planned to convey specific cultural messages which made use of nostalgia and romanticism. The images of Indian life that the CPR and Santa Fe Railway created for the public where decontextualized snapshots meant to represent the lives of First Nations people. Leaving distorted impressions in the minds of the public, these images efface history, identity, community and culture.

The CPR provided Canadian photographers the opportunity to increase their credibility by producing images of the spectacular Canadian scenery. Photographers commissioned by the CPR photographed everyday activities including the setting up of camp, food and hide production, and ceremony. Re-creations of the vanishing Indian through photographs were valuable through their exoticism and their entertainment appeal. Trueman, William Hanson Boone, and Otto B Bell were notable Canadian photographers commissioned to Western Canada. Both Trueman and Boone supplied the CPR with Indians and mountain scenes. The CPR, on occasion, would provide Boone and others with the faculties and sometimes a railway cart in order to assist the photographer in producing images for brochures, guide books, travel accounts, and magazines. Photographs were popular in that they were easily reproduced and transferable through a number of print mediums.

According to Berger in his work *Ways of Seeing*, the photograph changed and challenged the way that people saw and related to the world. Before photography, every drawing or painting used perspective which showed the spectator that he/she was the unique center of the world. According to perspective as a convention of art, the visible

world is arranged for the spectator. Perspective makes the single eye the center of this visible world which means that you as viewer are a part of the whole. Appearances travel in as everything centers on the eye of the beholder. In other words, the visible world is arranged for the spectator. The camera demonstrated that there was no center, and changed the way that people saw. The camera, in effect, reproduces and takes the image, or person away from time, place, history, setting and environment. As we know, reproductions distort. In this way decontextualized images made it easy to view Aboriginal people as a vanishing people, as solitary, without context and community. The CPR attempted to relieve the Euro Canadian guilt associated with the conquest of Indian lands, by preserving the last remaining vestiges of a seemingly dying culture through photographing the noble savage.



Iron Eyes Cody as the Crying Indian, 1971. *Reproduced with permission of Keep America Beautiful, 2003.*

3.2. The Ecological Indian

The ecological Indian was produced by the United State's socio-political environment of the period between 1963 and 1973, where issues such as oil spills, the use of pesticides, sentiments of anti-war, civil rights, and anti-pollution came to the forefront. Krech (1999) attributes the iconic image of Iron Eyes Cody as being a poster boy for the environmentalist movement, and of much more significance to me, as a "paramount example of the Ecological Indian: the Native North American and environmentalist and conservationist" (p.16).

Iron Eyes Cody is best identified as the Crying Indian in the "Keep America Beautiful," anti-pollution campaign. As an icon, the Crying Indian visually left a lasting impression on its audience. By heightening the awareness of the destructive affects of polluting, the noble ecologist, through the image of the Crying Indian, became iconic. Cody's message was "Pollution: it's a crying shame. People start pollution. People can stop it." This campaign and other appearances in television introduced Iron Eyes Cody (later exposed as the son of Italian immigrants) as a household name. The "Keep America Beautiful" campaign was meant to have an impact on the consciousness of a nation. Seeing a man cry is considered by some to be disturbing, seeing a noble Indian cry because of the actions of white men, is a crime. This was only part of the message being conveyed. Krech (1999) brought forth the idea that "through the Crying Indian, Keep America Beautiful cleverly manipulated ideas deeply ingrained in the national consciousness" (p.15). The message was that there were very real differences between the ways in which Native Americans and Americans of European descent think about and relate to the land. The message was meant to implicate white Americans for their

treatment of the land as polluters, therefore leaving behind an unsettling impression on the audience.

He shed a tear for land and resources, which by implication, he and other Indians treated kindly and prudently (as conservators might) and understood ecologically. But after arriving in North America, Europeans and their descendants ruined its pristine, unspoilt nature. (Krech, 1999, p.16)

The tradition of the ecological Indian is a construct based on particular associations and assumptions that Indians are closer to nature, and that non-Indians are part in partial responsible for its destruction. The ecological Indian, as extension of the noble Indian, uses guilt as a tool to transform dominant social consciousness.

In order to expose that the term *ecological Indian* is a metaphor rather than a representation of the real, Krech explored the scientific and mainstream definitions of the terms preservation, conservation, ecology, and environmentalism. According to the scientific meaning of ecology, nature in the absence of man was self-regulating, in balance, or in equilibrium. Man, if he were imprudent, could disturb harmonies producing exhausted regions (Krech, 1999, p.23). The thinking here was that nature, without the destructive intervention of humans, was within balance. The ecological Indian within this context serves a purpose where the idea is that the Indian's closeness with nature would raise him above those who would destroy the balance. The images spoke to everyone else who contributed to its demise. In the words of Krech (1999) "in a balanced, harmonious, steady-state nature, indigenous people reproduced balance and harmony" (p.23).

Now the paradox is that ecologists have abandoned this way of thinking and now believe that natural systems are not inherently balanced or harmonious. The consequence

for the idea that Aboriginal people have an effect on the ecology by keeping it in balance, is that it becomes discredited. The non-critical use of the phrase “the ecological Indian” exposes the non-sensical quality of colonial discourse. The ideological positioning of Aboriginal people into the collective consciousness, via imagery, has, more often than not, employed strategies of the unreal. Their power is not in their logistics; rather their power is through their repetition.

Like his American counterpart Iron Eyes Cody, Grey Owl became the iconic messenger of conservation and preservation for the Prince Albert National Park and, ultimately, the nation during the 1930's. His image continues to be incorporated into Parks Canada promotional literature. He served as park employee at Prince Albert National Park and also provided lecture tours to Britain (to be revealed as his country of origin). In proper imaginary Indian fashion, Grey Owl was a construction of both one man's fantasies about himself as an Indian man, as well as a nation's imaginings about itself as a wilderness/ conservation area.

Archibald Belaney as a young boy growing up in Hastings, England, with his maternal grandmother and two Aunts, felt passionate about his love for Indians, acquired through literature. Once in Northern Ontario, friendships with Ojibway people in the Bear Island area provided the means through which to learn to hunt, trap, and make a living off the land. Adopting the name of Grey Owl, he spent a great deal of time and energy looking the part of what he thought to be a real true Indian; perfecting the stoic gaze, dying the hair black, and darkening his skin by using henna. His message of conservationism has retained audience, despite the fact that his true identity had been exposed at the time of his death. The image of Grey Owl was powerful in the sense that

his image was a reflection of society's imaginings of how a real Indian should look. The association of Aboriginal people with a spiritual connection to the land helped to authenticate his message of conservation. Like Iron Eyes Cody, his American brother in a sense, Grey Owl attained celebrity-like status, with thousands of fans both in Canada and abroad.

In 1931, Grey Owl was hired at Riding Mountain National park and given the distinction as "caretaker of park animals," however was most likely hired as an advertising medium. As noted by Waiser, Grey Owl was first recognized by the National Parks in 1930 by J.C Campbell, director of publicity, after having gotten word that there was an Aboriginal man in Quebec lecturing about conservation with the help of his two beavers Jelly Roll and Rawhide. Grey Owl would have stood out to Campbell not only for his ability to gain an audience in the area of conservation, but also through his accomplishments as an author who had produced at that time his first of four books, *Men of the Last Frontier*. Through Grey Owl, Campbell "believed that he had found a wonderful vehicle by which to promote Canada's national parks and the values for which they stood" (Waiser, 1989, p.76).

As a promotional tool, Grey Owl was highly effective, as he was living the idyllic life of the noble savage by raising beavers and seemingly living in harmony with nature. His original hiring during the 1930's in the midst of a depression attests to the interest in the park of Grey Owl's ability to gain audience. Having a celebrity as a permanent resident in the park attracted many tourists from all over. Archibald Belaney would, on occasion, act very "ignoble" by going on drunken bouts in the nearby town of Prince Albert, Saskatchewan. During these instances, parks commissioners J.B Harkin and

Wood would do everything that they could to cover up his actions for fear of them leaking out to the greater public. The image of Grey Owl was, as even they could attest, difficult to maintain. The attitude of the park was clear, upon Grey Owl's death, during the debate as to what was to happen to Grey Owl's beavers at the Prince Albert National Park, Park's controller Williamson has been quoted as having said,

In the case of Grey Owl there was a decided advertising value to the Park, but with his passing it would seem that the beaver feature might be allowed to quietly fade out of existence. (Waiser, 1989, p.85)

Obviously, the value of the conservation message itself lay not in the actual existence of beavers thriving at Lake Ajawaan, but as an expression of a prophetic Grey Owl and his ability to seduce an audience.

From the 1930's to the present, the image of Grey Owl stood for something greater than itself. The image became a metaphor for Canadian identity during a time of social transformation through the environmental movement. The "back to nature" discourse which attained popularity in Canada strengthened and reinforced some of the ideas inherent in Grey Owl's messages. As an icon, Grey Owl answered a call. People, both Aboriginal and non- Aboriginal, didn't really seem to care that he was not an Indian at all. Being iconic is so far removed from the life of the everyday that, through what he stood for, Grey Owl no longer existed as a person, as anything real.

The treatment of the image of Grey Owl is an illustration of the exposure of colonial discourse for what it really is. Through dominant society's eyes, there is recognition that imaginary Indians are just that – imaginary, a production of domination, not real. The acceptance of Grey Owl as a white man posing to be a Native man is the acceptance and acknowledgement that the stoic, environmental Indian belongs within this

realm of the unreal, and that he exists as a production of racial domination. Therefore, the ideological positioning of Aboriginal people into the collective consciousness via imagery such as the ecological Indian always reflects upon the creations and expectations of non- Indian people towards Aboriginal people.

CHAPTER FOUR: CRITIQUE OF IMAGES THROUGH THEORY

After having explored two identity constructs in the previous chapter, the purpose of this chapter is to expose the seemingly innocent practices which work to recreate these identity constructs. I do this through a critical analysis of the actual illustrations and textual accounts taken directly from National park promotional literature. I acknowledge and address the importance of naming the strategies employed to situate the construction of the vanishing and ecological Indians within the larger discourses of primitivism. As you will recognize, these seemingly innocent practices produce the ideas of Aboriginal peoples as wards, as racialized spectacle, as without history, and most of importantly, as without identity beyond that which fits within nationalist narratives.

4.1. Primitivism

The creation of the idea of Canada involved imagining the acts of discoverers as innocent. Pratt's (1992) term the *anticonquest* describes this practice whereby nostalgia provides a justification for imperial acts of conquest. Language normalizes innocence through its incorporation into the language of power or the language of the everyday. Pratt describes the innocent acts of discoverers by identifying the role of the *seeing-man*. As Pratt's main protagonist of the *anticonquest*, the *seeing-man* is the European male subject of landscape discourse. Pratt (1992) describes the *seeing-man* as, "he whose

imperial eyes look out and possess” (p.7). Consider the captions of this 1999 Canadian Visitors Guide:

Your ancestors crossed perilous oceans to claim this land.
Isn't it time you dropped by to see what they have done with
it? (Canada, 1999, p.1)

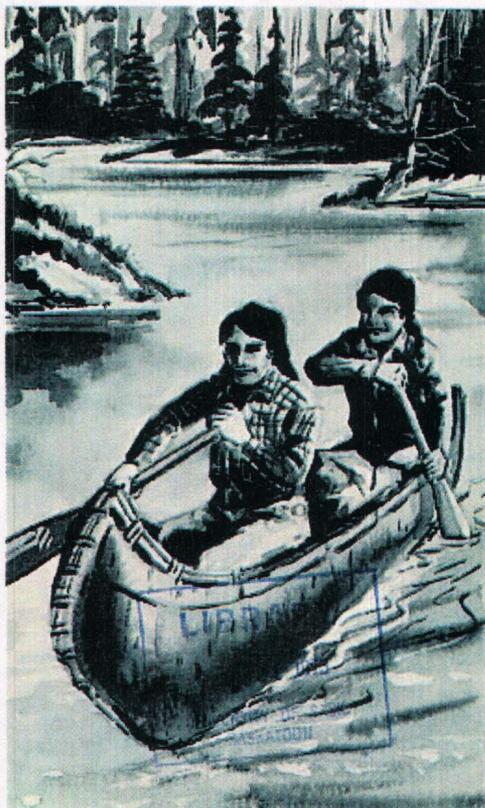
This brochure conveys the “innocence” behind the practice of claiming / conquering Indigenous lands, and also utilizes the subject position of the *seeing- man*. The reenactment of the discovery scene is necessary to create national identity and meaning. Innocence is projected to justify the conquest of land, and this innocence can be conveyed through the use of the language of power or language of the everyday. In the case of the national parks, the tourist is meant to take on the role of the *seeing- man*, summoned by the ecological Indian to rediscover himself and what it means to be Canadian.

Romanticist literature created the association between Aboriginal people and wilderness landscapes which were later to become national parks. Romanticism achieved this association by producing the subject position of the vanishing Indian who relies on heroic deeds such as counting coup to create the racialized spectacle embedded within the narratives. The first person credited with suggesting that the state establish national parks was painter George Catlin, famous for his highly romanticized versions of Aboriginal people during the 1830's. His suggestion came from a desire to show the vanishing and doomed people for all to see. Francis (2000) has suggested that “Catlin's vision of national parks was crucially reliant on forms of racialized spectacle in which Native people's own interests in the politics of the land were nowhere to be seen” (p.131).

The repetition of the narratives make the use of the vanishing Indian convention. As a construct of romanticist literature, the themes of the vanishing Indian continue to be incorporated into Parks Canada literature through racialized spectacle as this 1921 pamphlet describing Paradise Valley in Lake Louise attests:

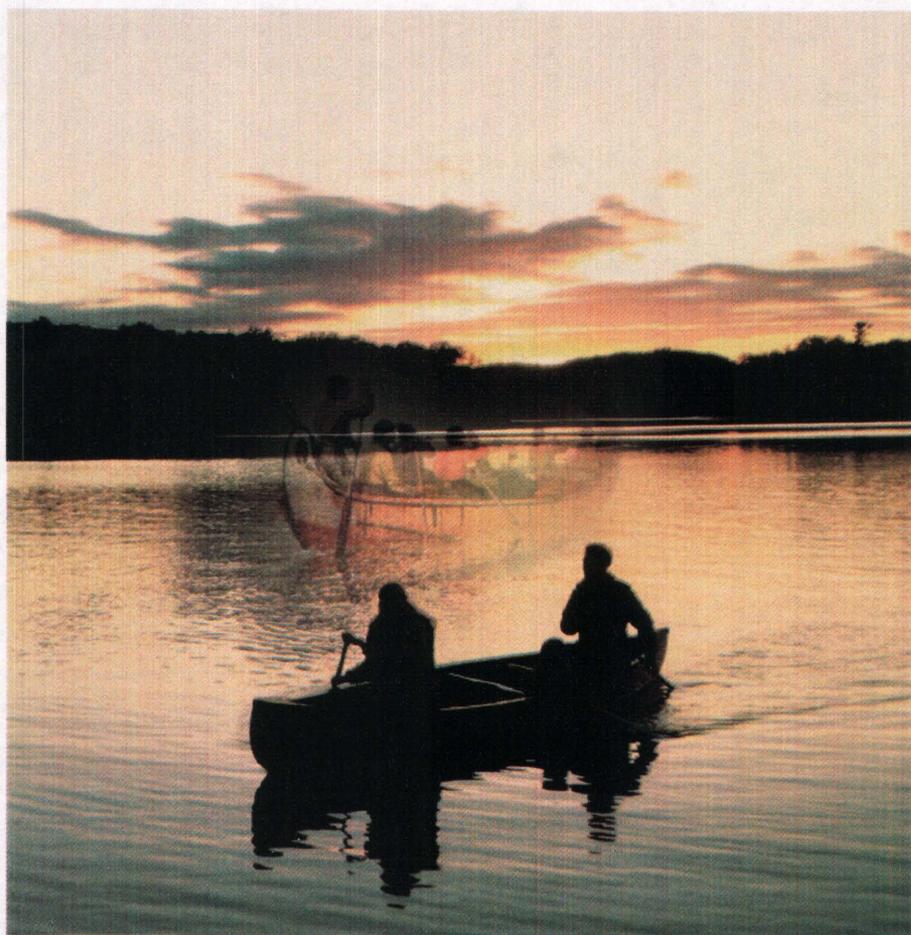
The landscape retains the same primitive and original beauty which it has worn for 10,000 years. Here, through dateless centuries, the immense forces of nature have waged war against the savage strength of the peaks but though scarred they are still unconquered They still lift their lofty foreheads 6,000 feet from the valley into the serene light of heaven, like 'a council of eternal and immovable chieftains' seated under the blue tepee of the sky." (Williams, 1921, p.51)

In this text, the terms primitive, war, savage, scarred, unconquered, chieftain, and tepee, produce a stunning narrative by using racialized spectacle to sell the idea of the national .



Bagwa Canoe Route: Prince Albert National Park, 1974
Reproduced with permission of the Minister of Public Works, 2003

As indicated by the style of dress, the fabricated Aboriginal identities in this 1974 Prince Albert National Park brochure are given a contemporary presence, yet the vessel through which they are traveling comes from an earlier period in their history. The style and water-colored form of the depicted landscape resemble a Group of Seven creation. In this particular portrait, the trace of Aboriginality is illustrated through the canoe itself. Since detailing, especially in the facial area, is left out, the identity of the Aboriginal rowers is neither central nor necessary for this brochure to send its message. Rather, their importance lay in their trace of Aboriginality. In this portrait, the Aboriginal rowers are important only in that they serve as backdrop.



Canada's National Parks and National Historic Sites: Share the Wonder, 1999
Reproduced with permission of the Minister of Public Works and Government Services, 2003

The 1999 image *Share the Wonder* illustrates the conditions of the act of discovery. This image presents two very different positionalities, the first being the noble savage of the wilderness conveyed through the Indigenous paddlers, and the other, the *seeing-man* in the form of the two leisurists in the foreground. This image shows the transitional zone where the modern tourist comes to experience the archaic primitive represented by a backward facing canoe hovering off in dreamlike quality to its archaic time. As the Indigenous canoe drifts off into the mist, a narrative unfolds as though the two non- Indigenous paddlers are dreaming them into existence. The Indigenous paddlers seem to fulfill a nostalgic fantasy of the tourists in their reenactments of discovery. Of course, this symbolic journey, this transition from modern to archaic, is meant to represent the innocence of the subject position of the *seeing-man* and his role in discovery. While the non- Indigenous leisurists have the opportunity to experience both the archaic and the modern at this site, the Indigenous paddlers can only exist in the realm of the archaic.

Daniel Francis, in his article entitled *The Ideology of the Canoe*, speaks of the canoe as a vessel under which Canada was carved. The canoe created the idea of the dominion of Canada. Explorers and Jesuits (all usually equipped with Indigenous paddlers) participated in this carving out of Canada. The canoe acts as a time machine, a way of retrieving a past history, past wilderness, and a sense of self somehow altered through the experience of time travel. In *Share the Wonder*, these two rowers, positioned underneath the fur brigade, are experiencing this phenomenon through a symbolic journey into the past. Canadians rely on the canoe and their Indigenous paddlers to take them back to the conditions of wilderness; as part of this condition, lays the construction

of the Indian as tour guide. This condition of wilderness is a place far away from the every day urban reality and reaffirms a sense of self as part of the wilderness. However, Canadians are also confronted with the threat of wilderness which is also fairly consistent with popular imaginings of the Indian. For example, during the 1885 resistance, the image of the Indian in Canada was depicted as a threat to the safety of the incoming immigrants. Wilderness is conveyed as dangerous in the minds of Canadians, as is the threat of Indian violence. *Share the Wonder* is significant in that it is a deliberate call by Parks Canada to participate as the *seeing-man*, to reenact a journey of discovery by crossing thresholds in order to discover self through experiencing the primitive.

Returning to the *Bagwa Canoe route* paddlers and their anonymity as not only faceless, but nameless subjects, they serve as backdrop to the untamed wilderness which they are meant to occupy. In imagining Aboriginal people, the failure to name or to identify Indigenous bodies is a tool that has been used to erase Aboriginal presence. The process of unnamng contributes to the production of the archaic noble primitive. Trinh (1989) has suggested that “naming is part of the human rituals of incorporation, and the unnamed remains less human than the inhuman or the subhuman” (p.54). The use of this practice in representing Canadian National parks indicates that this tradition of the vanishing Indian is alive and well.

The archaic is a construct meant to justify certain practices, such as the claiming of lands. The categorization of the Indian as belonging within the realm of the archaic is meant to highlight subordination and cultural backwardness. The designation of Indians as archaic was a creation of the idea that Indians occupy space in another temporal reality. Parks Canada relies on various techniques to produce the archaic, such as a

manipulation of clothing and environment. *Share the Wonder* blatantly displays a disappearing act. This disappearance is not original, in fact, it strikingly resembles Edward Curtis's *The Vanishing Race*. As the first photograph in Curtis's series entitled *The North American Indian*, *The Vanishing Race* displays a group of Navajo on horseback disappearing into a desert haze. In Curtis-like tradition, *Share the Wonder* illustrates a twentieth century portrayal of the vanishing Indian. Francis (1992) suggests that Curtis meant to show "that the Indians as a race, already shorn of their tribal strength and stripped of their primitive dress, are passing into the darkness of an unknown future" (p.39). Quite literally, the scenes depicted by both Curtis and Parks Canada through *The Vanishing Race*, and *Share the Wonder*, illustrate the vanishing Indian as fading into mist, or dust.

This enactment could also be read as symbolic of a journey where the Indian enters what McClintock would define as "anachronistic space," which is a different prehistoric, temporal reality transforming the Indian into the archaic. McClintock (1995) describes the entrance into the trope of anachronism as a journey where the white Victorian middle class time traveler travels through imperial progress backward to a time of prehistoric archaic existence (p.40). Positioned within anachronistic space, Aboriginal people occupied their own temporal space outside of modern Victorian reality. This repositioning, leading to the modern non-reality of Indigenous people, also provided Europeans with a technology of surveillance and measuring stick through which to evaluate and expose their own imperial progression.

4.2. Nationalism and the Feminization of Wilderness

National parks imagery uses both premodern and modern conceptualizations of nature in prescribing the association of women and nature. Premodern concepts stress the healing, rejuvenating, and life giving qualities (which some women convey beautifully) of landscape scenes. These qualities are found lacking in popular culture's representations of femininity which focus on sexual attractiveness. The characteristic Mother Earth representation is expressed by Parks Commissioner J.B Harkin, in his forward to a 1929 Parks Canada publication:

Getting back to the wilderness is 'getting home.' 'Is not the earth Mother to us all?' "Is it not from Nature we draw life?' Among the mountains wee come close again to that Ancient Mother, nature, who alive and miraculous alone keeps the secret of perpetual springs of life.
(Canadian Parks Service, National Archives of Canada, 1915-1929)

This quote also incorporates a modernist position, as it refers to the "secrets of perpetual springs of life." This phrase is alluding to the Enlightenment metaphoric practice of stripping off a woman's veil to reveal and scientifically deconstruct nature's secrets. Modern conceptions focus on nature's utility as available and open for exploration.

In premodern texts, the position of women as healers, nurturers, and life bearers determines the conditions of nature and wilderness space. Consider this quote taken from the same 1929 Parks Canada publication:

National parks are maintained for all people- for the ill, that they may be restored, for the well, that they may be fortified and inspired by the sunshine, the fresh air, the beauty, and all the other healing, ennobling and inspiring agencies of Nature. (Canadian Parks Services, National Archives of Canada, 1915-1929)

Premodern and modern conceptualizations of nature inform contemporary society in that these projections have been adopted by various people and continue to shape identities.

Specific women's groups and movements exist because of this association. This portrayal becomes problematic, as the Mother Earth narrative in nationalist discourse has been created to justify modern scientific practices of exposing and claiming Indigenous lands. The simultaneous use of both premodern and modern conceptions of nature reveals the almost schizophrenic quality of colonial discourse in building a nation.



Jasper National Park

“The feminizing of land is both a *poetics* of ambivalence and a *politics* of violence” (McClintock, 1995, p.28). The innocence of the Indian Princess image juxtaposed with the danger implied through the cracked perch, and tumultuous waters beneath, illustrates the practice of covering up the politics of violence with the poetics of ambivalence. Here the rough waters below can be read as a metaphor for an uncertain future. The repetition of this narrative is partially responsible for the illusion of the vanishing Indian.

The images replicated on the pamphlets, which I have collected, strategically utilize both the traditions of the noble and ignoble Indian. On the one hand there is an inviting, pastoral theme imbedded within the pictures. For example, the appearances of

the Native princess and the chief are calm and inviting, indicating a controlled environment similar to that of the pastoral tradition of landscape painting which emphasizes balance and harmony. However, the cracking rock on which they are seated, and the rapids below, illustrate this settler view of nature as uncontrollable, and dangerous; implicating space where one could either become lost, or perhaps die. The same could be said of the uses of darkness and shadow in the *Share the Wonder* image and the *Bagwa Canoe Route* paddlers, where the strategic use of shadow in these images creates this sense of uncontrolled, unwelcoming, dangerous space.

As suggested by Sandilands (2000) the deliberate portrayal of wilderness as dangerous space is used to justify the control of national identity production:

Parks are nature-spaces, and it is no accident that we find in them an articulation of the disciplinary authority of the state with a powerful discourse of natural law or, more benevolently, environmental citizenship ...in the parks, the state speaks frequently as nature, with cartoon fish telling us about the perils of using phosphate soap and trees, like needly wardens, asking us to stay on the state-designated trails. (p.139)

According to Sandilands, Parks Canada utilizes disciplinary authority in order to assert Canadian nationalism. The 1969 pamphlet (see appendix one and two) in the form of a child's comic book uses the subject position of the park warden to represent state authority in enforcing environmental citizenship. The front cover displays the white/middle class Martin family addressing the white, uniformed park warden while he presents the handy National Park rulebook. Surrounded by Canadian symbolism, (mountie hat, beaver emblem, Canadian flag, and the administration building) the warden begins the process of establishing a sense of nationality through laying down rules and park etiquette.

The pages of the booklet are filled with messages conveying public responsibility through describing what not to do. For instance, the children of the Martin family are told not to touch the animals, nor to pick the flowers. Later in the narrative, the family is taken on an organized hike with “the man in charge” the naturalist (representing another authoritative presence.) The naturalist enforces more rules and regulations, “everyone who passes through our national parks should leave them neat and tidy, so that others can enjoy them as well” (For Future Generations, 1969, p. 9). Towards the end of this pamphlet, the warden, as the voice of state authority, provides a lesson on the social responsibility of making sure that fires have been completely extinguished. In this pamphlet the visitor’s experience of the park is highly regulated; the people are told where to walk, what to do, what not to do, and are basically fed the kinds of information that the interpreters and other authority figures want you to know in the park. Aboriginal presence in the park is prominently displayed on page eleven in association with historic violence. “These deposits of iron oxide flowing down from the mountainside were once used by Indians as war paint” (For Future Generations, 1969, p.11). Here again, we see the relationship of Aboriginality, the land and state authority working together to create this idea of nationhood and national identity in seemingly innocent, yet harmful ways.

A look at the Parks Canada brochure entitled *Discover Canada’s National Parks* which illustrates a collage of images of natural landscapes, buildings, flora, fauna, and humans, prominently displays a tactic where the diversity of land itself is representative of the diversity of the people that work for Parks Canada. In this collage there are random images of Native looking park wardens and a woman gazing at a totem pole placed amongst these images of different landscapes. These images communicate a particular

national narrative through emphasizing diversity. Sandilands (2000) suggests that the danger lies in the fact that this focus on heritage and so-called integrity:

invokes a sanitized institutional history that displaces the racial, gendered, class, and other power relations involved in the ongoing struggle for the representation of Canada, including its natural landscapes (p.141).

The representative multiplicity of identities that are sometimes illustrated through park iconography such as the Aboriginal park warden is misleading in the sense that this modernized image of interlocking Aboriginality and state authority erases the history of park practice.

CHAPTER FIVE

THOUGHTS AND REFLECTIONS

This chapter describes some personal and social consequences of the identity producing practices addressed in the previous chapters. In doing so, it acknowledges that there is a desire to answer the call and participate in the re-production and maintenance of these discourses. Within this final chapter, I also offer some thoughts as to how these identity constructs fit within the discourses and practices associated with nation building (which I understand to be an on-going, and silencing process.)

Nationalist meanings have influenced my own identity production as an Aboriginal child in an urban environment amidst a non- Aboriginal family. In seeking answers to questions about Aboriginality, the national narrative via museums and heritage sites was my reference, until exposed to cultural landscapes in my birth place.

Both Sturgeon Lake and the Prince Albert National Park are landscapes imbued with cultural meanings which have been subject to symbolic and physical transformations as impacts of colonization. Aboriginal adoptees in an urban context also experience change and transformation, which means that upon returning to our birth places, our understandings of landscape will be considerably different from the views of others. Previous to learning about my birth family, my imaginings of my home community belonged somewhere in the realm of fantasy fed by popular culture's imaginings of Indians.

According to Cosgrove, landscape depends on the subjectivity of the spectator and the objectivity of the perceived place. Textual illustrations and photographic images do not allow for the interaction between the spectator and the land to take place. The official version of landscape created by Parks Canada for the public relies solely on objectification to communicate its message. Portrayed as backdrop to land, Aboriginal people become objects as well. Aboriginal people become representations of the national narrative; our image is utilized as backdrop to Canadian identity. Through adopting identity constructs such as the ecological Indian, Aboriginal people use Canadian identity in order to create Aboriginal identity.

As predominant identifiers to young Aboriginal children in white homes, when one falls short of replicating images such as those advocated by the Prince Albert National Park, then there is the belief that you are not a “true Indian.” The fact is that Prince Albert National Park images are unattainable because they are snapshots from a fanciful past. For their creators, the importance of these images lay not in the presence of Aboriginality in itself, but rather the message that the trace conveys. The princess on the rock overlooking the rapids is not an attainable image because she is not real. She is a simulacrum, disconnected from anything real, a symbol used to represent a particular way of thinking. Once as a child curious to know about my Aboriginal heritage, my mother sent away for some information of Native Americans (with good intentions) from the Royal Ontario Museum, which comprised of a couple of pamphlets and a large poster displaying articles of hide clothing and Aboriginal people performing various tasks such as preparing hides and building tepees. I remember feeling very let down after this experience of “learning about my heritage.” This heritage, housed in the museum, was

the nationalist construction of me. These objects had no roots, no meaning for me besides the fact that they had been made by Aboriginal people. They were simulacrums, symbols manipulated on paper to represent someone else's vision of Aboriginality. An important study which could assist Aboriginal adoptees in finding themselves could include examining adoptee's views of land. Descriptions of landscape produced by those influenced by two ways of seeing would form a cultural landscape which could then aid in the formation of supportive programming for Aboriginal youth.

5.1. Thoughts on the Practice of Erasure

Canadian National Park's painted on images depicting Aboriginality erase Aboriginal presence from the landscape by effacing history and community. The vanishing Indian produced by the intellectual tradition primitivism, is a creation of two practices, the first practice being the idea of the noble Indian as living in a state of nature, and the second, illustrating the Indian as stopped short in the period of antiquity without future. By producing the vanishing Indian, the admirable qualities of the noble Indian can be appreciated and loved from a safe, non-threatening distance.

For Aboriginal adoptees, Hollywood's versions of the vanishing Indian narrative have the potential of serving as reference points in their constructions of Aboriginality as bare back, counting coup riders, or Indian princesses falling in love with non- Aboriginal men despite their father's cautions. As a young woman growing up in a non- Native, urban community, the first Native that I met was a primitive construct, a fabrication of some Hollywood producer's mind. The ideas that I had formulated in my mind after having seen *Dances with Wolves* or *Little Big Man* were filled with loopholes and with

confusing messages. I remember feeling uncomfortable watching *Dances with Wolves* with family members, thinking that they could sense my level of insecurity. Hollywood constructions of Indians incorporated compassion, kindness, and communal strength into their characterizations; yet contrasted these expressions with stark violence. I remember falling madly in love with the character “Wind in His Hair” in *Dances with Wolves*. The vanishing Indian narrative was portrayed by illustrating Indians in their final hour. In this way, the movie invites viewers to experience a reenactment of a vanishing people. We consume Hollywood fabrications of Indians as willing subjects. Through Hollywood, the language of power creates knowledge of Aboriginality. We believe that we are free agents in choosing our own identity constructions, when perhaps we are not- they choose us.

Images of Aboriginality are made powerful through the values they represent. The noble Indian’s ability to thrive in wilderness space represents a contrast to the technological life ways of contemporary dominant society. Canadian National parks provide the opportunity for Canadians to temporarily adopt the experiences of the noble Indian, to return to their own environments changed and transformed with a new sense of rigor. The erasure of contemporary Aboriginal being within the park provides a safe, non-threatening degree of difference. The ability of Canadian National Parks to manage, regulate, and control experiences of Aboriginality, places them as part of the discourse of Canadian nation building.

Familiar images of Aboriginal people convey the mysticism and spirituality associated with the imaginary Indian. Daniel Francis (1992) observes that imaginary Indians are represented as a part of the land and appeal to the non-natives conviction that

“Native people experience the natural world in a way that is qualitatively different from the rest of us” (p.188). Set as a backdrop against Canadian nationalism, the use of Indians is pure utilitarian. Francis (1992) describes this process whereby, “the advertisement is only indirectly interested in the Indian, however, it is more interested in making the Indian a symbol for Canada” (p.188).

Deloria provides an alternative way of looking at the processes of adapting Indian imagery through exploring *going Native* as a response to feelings of alienation. The dualism associated with the noble/ ignoble Indian expresses non- Native frustrations towards adapting to a new world. In this way, “going native” is almost a compulsive need. According to Vine Deloria,

Non- Natives have experienced a persistent sense of alienation in North America ever since the first Europeans arrived here, and try as they might they seem incapable of adjusting to the continent. In their search for ways to feel at home, the newcomers have looked to the first inhabitants of the continent: Indians, the original possessors of the land, seem to haunt the collective unconsciousness of the white men, and to the degree that one can identify the conflicting images of the Indian which stalk the white man’s waking perception of the world one can outline the deeper problems of alienation that trouble him. (Francis, 1992, p.189)

Deloria describes the experience of “going Native” as an attempt to conquer feelings of non Indigenous alienation and identity loss. By adapting the values, perceptions and lifestyles of Aboriginal people, others are able to transcend aspects of their own reality that trouble them. Francis (1992) notes that this transformation could happen either through taking on the identity of the other, as did Archie Belaney when he turned into Grey Owl, or by “appropriating elements of Indianness and making them representative of mainstream society. The image of the ecological Indian is one, which has been used to represent the values and concerns of mainstream society” (p.190). The

noble savage, as a product of appropriation, has been reimagined in a contemporary context while retaining its historic temporality.

5.2. Thoughts on Vanishing and Ecological Indians as Produced Identities

The vanishing Indian was, and continues to be, integral to Canadian identity construction as it expresses a particular consciousness as savior. As suggested by Francis, the image of the vanishing Indian retained its popularity because it set a moral tone which spoke to Canadian society in a particular way. Francis (1992) suggested that, “to the extent that they (Euro Canadian society) suffered any guilt over what had happened to Native people, whites relieved it by preserving evidence of the supposedly dying culture” (p.36). In other words, through embracing the image of the vanishing Indian, Euro Canadians relieved the guilt associated with the takeover of lands and the spread of diseases. Through representing the vanishing Indian, one was preserving the evidence of a seemingly dying culture. According to Francis (1992) “whites convinced themselves that they were in this way saving the Indians. By a curious leap of logic, non-Natives became the saviors of the vanishing Indian” (p.36).

As stated earlier, the ideological positioning of Aboriginal people into the collective consciousness via imagery such as the ecological Indian, always reflects upon the creations and expectations of non-Indian people towards Aboriginal people. The produced imaginings lead to the dehumanization of contemporary Aboriginal existence and experience. Images of the noble savage are meant to define a people as static, unchanging, and exuding very little deviance from an unreal ideal. In effect, what the ecological Indian does, as noted by Krech, is that it masks cultural diversity. More

importantly, as stated by Krech (1999) the ecological Indian is dangerous because it “occludes its actual connection to the behavior it purports to explain” (p.27). Because it has entered into the realm of the unconscious, the tradition of the ecological Indian stops us from actually experiencing and learning about the many unique and diverse relationships that Aboriginal people have with the environment.

5.3 Vanishing Indians and Nationalist Discourse- Applying Benedict Anderson

The force through which these images speak to people becomes stronger the more that they are repeated. Images such as the Indian princess, the vanishing and ecological Indian reenact the story line of Canada’s creation whose characteristics are representative of National identity. In the case of imaginary Indians, both the sentiments of death and their transcendence of death achieved through repetitious vanishing, are practices used to create the idea of Canadian nationalism. According to Benedict Anderson (1983) in his work *Imagined Communities*, nationalism is described as being connected to the past through memorializing the dead and linking fatality with continuity. In his discussion of the cultural roots of nationalism, Anderson (1983) refers to the grave sites of unknown soldiers as “saturated with ghostly national imaginings” (p.9). He sees the cultural roots of nationalism as tied to this idea of continuity, thus linking religious thought and transcendence with the expression of national identity. According to Anderson, with the dawn of the Enlightenment and the dusk of religious thought, people still needed to believe in the continuity of being.

The century of the Enlightenment, of rationalist secularism brought with it its own modern darkness. With the ebbing of religious belief, the suffering which belief in part composed did not disappear. Disintegration of paradise: nothing makes fatality more arbitrary. Absurdity of salvation; nothing makes another style of continuity more necessary. What then was required was a secular transformation of fatality into continuity, contingency into meaning.
(Anderson, 1983, p.11)

Anderson (1983) further suggests,

Few things were better suited to this end than an idea of nation. If nation states are widely connected to be 'new' and 'historical,' the nations to which they give political expression always loom out of an immemorial past, and, still more important, glide into a limitless future. (p.12)

Thus, the vanishing Indian fits neatly within national discourse and has become an expression of nationalism. The repetition of the vanishing Indian through dominant discourse is the process of transforming fatality into immortality. The repeated practices by Parks Canada of representing vanishing Indians (in *Share the Wonder*, for example) immortalize the demise of Indian people. While the identity of the people on board the canoe (like the unknown soldiers grave) remains unknown, these images still are "saturated with ghostly national imaginings." The qualities and characteristics of the noble savage (like the brave soldier of war) are immortalized, the spirit (which has been subsumed as the spirit of the nation) lives on. The nation holds tight to the qualities of the noble savage as an expression of self. Further, the nation needs to rely on its historical past in order to ensure a future. In this way, the future of Canada relies on the nation's constructions of Aboriginality in order to exist. Anderson also considers the importance of what he calls a "territorialization of faith" which foreshadows the language of many nationalists. This practice becomes expressed as one asserts that "our nation is

the best.” By extension, I believe that this territorialization is what is responsible for the creation of the expression “Our First Nations” or “Canada’s First Nations people.”

Expressing itself as a sentimentalization, this practice dehumanizes Aboriginal people.

5.4. Thoughts and Reflections on Indians and Nationalism

Through focusing on the ignoble/ noble characteristics of the imaginary Indian, Mackey’s settler view of nature reveals the importance of contradiction as a tool in informing National identity. As part of popular culture, Parks Canada literature incorporates this contradiction into their imagery. In regards to the element of danger absorbed into settler views of nature, it has been revealed that there is a desire and need to conquer dangerous spaces in creating Canadian identity.

In wilderness we find these elements of darkness, of threat, and how we deal with these qualities defines us as Canadians. Canadians are constantly trying to recreate a conquering of wilderness space through the means of popular culture which provide humorous portrayals of Canadians conquering their own fears. Television commercials, for example, create wilderness as spectacle, as a space needing to be conquered. An automobile commercial prominently displayed a black bear singing opera whilst a luxury sedan sails by with the occupant listening to the song on the radio. In this scenario, wilderness space and those inhabiting wilderness space become constructions of fantasy. The message here is that wilderness space serves as a convenient backdrop; providing entertainment as we conquer not only its space, but those occupying its space as well.

The “I am Canadian” beer commercials illustrate a similar scenario where wilderness is set as the backdrop of Canadian identity. In these commercials we see

young, beer guzzling partiers in a rustic looking log cabin located somewhere in the “great Canadian Wilderness.” This is yet another illustration of our longings to be completely comfortable in the wilderness. Popular cultural images transform these wild spaces into something that we can relate to in our contemporary, technological society. Seen through a drunken haze amongst some of our closest friends, or from the vantage point of a souped up luxury car, wilderness becomes manageable- the threat has been controlled, conquered. These commercials illustrate to me that fear, in association with longing and intimacy, constantly pervades the modern Canadian association of wilderness illustrated through popular culture. Wilderness speaks to us in ways that force us to respect it; it forces us to confront ourselves and challenges our notions of self identity. We fear that which we don’t know, and in the case of confronting ourselves with wilderness, we have to create ridiculous scenarios so that we can feel comfortable within these spaces.

5.4.1. *The Indian and Visitor as Wards of the Nation*

The use of the Aboriginal in Parks Canada pamphlets is strategic in their positionality to visitors. Both Aboriginal people and visitors within federal jurisdictions become wards. The difference between the two lay in their levels of complacency.

Sandilands (2000) has provided the following description whereby,

Visitors come to know ‘Canada’ by participating in the parks as willing and obedient subject of the federal state. (p.139)

Just as visitors experiences are regulated, Aboriginal experience is regulated through an assimilative tool of the federal government, the Indian Act. This act controls the

movements of Aboriginal people, as the regulatory sanctions of the parks control the movements of visitors.

5.4.2. *Some Thoughts on the Production of Safe, Non-threatening Difference*

The presence of the Aboriginal in the national park has to conform to the etiquette of the park, and has to fit comfortably within this picture of state authority. To mimic the illusion of innocence behind the claiming of Indigenous lands, Aboriginal presence in the park has to be soft, surreal, complacent, and non-threatening. For the interests of the tourists, the difference that they seek must be controlled by the parks. This point is made clear through the following quote,

While most tourists remark that they want to see ‘something a little different’ the success of any tourism enterprise rests on ensuring that difference ‘do not disturb’ or, at least that the spectacle is manageable and predictable for the consumer.
(Francis, 2000, p.67)

Aboriginal difference in the Prince Albert National Park itself is expressed through indicators of past Aboriginal presence where interpreters will describe how specific plants were *once* used as medicines, or point to plaques such as the one at Hanging Hearts Lakes, describing a battle scene where Cree hearts were said to be hung on nearby trees. Grey Owl, the not -quite Native man, provides a safe, racialized spectacle. This degree of comfortability would be totally upset by the acknowledgement of any real, contemporary Aboriginal presence, such as the Aboriginal land claim.

I had the privilege of spending the summers as a child with my grandparents at their cottage on Wallaston Lake in Ontario. This cottage, a picture of which I look at as I write these few pages, is a symbol etched in my memory of the loving family that I had

been adopted into. The smell of the wood stove (which in retrospect smelled a lot like sage) woke me up in the mornings to be accompanied by the smell of bacon and coffee in the kitchen. Forever my sense of home, the magical quality of this place is that no matter where I am, I have the ability to remember- to be home. This cottage represents the love that surrounds me as I take these steps to search for my identity.

Landscapes become less scary when we come to realize that we are home; we begin to formulate intimate attachments to the land when we can realize that no matter where we are, we are home. Wilderness is simply a construction, created to symbolize danger; however, on land, within landscape, we can find comfort and love. The constructions of identity that I discuss in this thesis are based on the association of wilderness with danger and fear epitomized through the other. The other (being the noble savage of the wilderness) can only perpetuate misunderstandings about Aboriginal people regardless of the innocent façade. The concentration must be on providing the space to begin the process of becoming familiar with self through exploring land as home, rather than as something to be feared. Familiar images depicting Aboriginality in nationalist discourse sever connections to the land as home. Land and people become categorized and controlled by becoming wards of the nation. The process of identifying Aboriginality on land, requires that we begin to disassociate with the noble savage of the wilderness, and the control that goes along with this construct. Treating wilderness as landscape will enrich experiences of self- informed by natural processes.

CONCLUSION

Within this work I have identified and discussed the significance of the vanishing and ecological Indian, their characteristics, and their place within nationalist identity production. This work has illustrated how nostalgia and longing towards the other has played an important role in the construction of Aboriginality. Through critiquing nationalist discourses, representations (and their associative meanings) illustrate the deliberate manipulation of images of the Indian in order to fulfill nationalist agendas. This manipulation of imagery was necessary in order to justify and accommodate certain colonialist practices such as the claiming of Indigenous lands and their transformation into the nation's wilderness spaces. National innocence has taken the form of adorning the ecological/ noble Indian of the wilderness on park's pamphlets, to act as symbols of the presumed values of dominant society. The practices employed in creating these images employ the use of illustrating the Indian as the primitive, as existing in another temporal reality. The Native princess, the Voyageur canoe paddling back into the mist, and the stoic Grey Owl, all exhibit qualities meant to illustrate this disconnectedness with contemporary existence.

The professor that I introduced in the first chapter as the first person I had met who shared my experience of being an Aboriginal child adopted, told me that in order to know where you are going, you have to know where you have been. The writing of this thesis has been my opportunity to assess where I have been in terms of coming to understand the influences which have contributed to my own understandings of self. The

struggles that I have faced up until this point in time have been in trying to figure out who I am and where I belong. Since having applied this post structuralist inquiry into the nature of nationalist discourse, I have come to realize that my experiences have shaped who I am, that I come from a loving family, and also have the opportunity to find out what it means to be an adult coming into another family. The portrayal of Aboriginality within nationalist discourse has incorporated this obsession with difference. The experience of coming to honor my Nana and Grampie, I have realized, is quite similar to that found within Aboriginal culture. The values of love, respect and compassion I had witnessed all along as a child through being a member of my adoptive family in Ontario.

My experiences of having lived on a reserve have opened my eyes in a lot of ways to the differences that cannot be ignored where, regardless of the situation, Aboriginal families exude power through their laughter. In retrospect, the belief that my birth mother was this Indian princess (a belief acquired through Hollywoodized imagery) is quite humorous, however she is a very beautiful woman.

In this thesis I have touched the surface in exploring the implications of race in creating nationalist discourse. An important research question for future research should expand on how the national park creates a gendered space, and how gendered space influences the use and interpretation of dominant discourse's use of the Indian in national parks. The discourse of discovery was created out of the systematically ingrained subordination of women. The act of discovery informed the creation of parks, as the very first park was created as a result of the so called "discovery" of the hot springs in Banff. *Share the Wonder* invites the tourist to participate in this process of discovery. The Western notion of territoriality is about the possession and reinscription of hierarchies.

The imposition of hierarchies through renaming, and physically altering the landscape; and the creation of false borders around the land, are means through which to establish hierarchies. These hierarchies are also deeply masculine practices. The representation of women and Aboriginal people are constructed in language in a similar way- used by the romanticist tradition which places both as part of the landscape. Native people are made out to be part of the landscape, just as women are embedded into the rocks, waters, lakes, streams, etc. In the picture of the Indian princess and chief sitting on the ledge, they are made to be part of the landscape. Women and Aboriginal people are represented as threshold figures in *Share the Wonder*, where contemporary explorers situate themselves in relation to them. Like the mermaids represented in uncharted land, like the monsters which symbolize unknown waters in early maps, it remains a practice to use Aboriginal people and women as threshold figures, meaningful for those who wish to position themselves in the park atmosphere.

The national park is an invented community in the sense that the park reinforces those perceived values and beliefs that it feels that everyone should have. The idea of community is constantly being forced a place in the park. The park is meant to simulate a community (in this case, a community of strangers) with a common bond- to experience difference. Where do Aboriginal people see themselves in relation with this imagined community, do they see themselves as a part? I would suggest not. Sustainable communities and the wilderness landscape are not intersecting discourses. The wilderness park is a constructed community of politics and economy. The families that once protected and thrived in co-existence with the land have been replaced with a family of tour guides and park administrators. For people like me who have been removed from

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APPENDIX 2

For Future Generations: The National Parks of Canada, 1969

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the place now known as the Prince Albert National Park, we are on a constant search for that place where exists that trust between the land and the instinctual personal connection. The notion of community is a combination of both relationships between people, and relationships to place. Dialogue between the reserve communities and the national park are integral to the creation of real community.

Further studies are also required to address the experiences of being adopted. Perhaps, more need address the relationship between place, home, and identity construction. Searching for self identity is difficult enough, add on to the equation a national construction of self that claims to know you, forces one to begin the lengthy process of deconstruction. The power of language is a deeply ingrained social force, hence, it is crucial that we continue to intersect and challenge it by using our own power as creative, determined survivors.

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p. 4 - illustration of Indian chief and Indian princess

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If you have any questions or would like additional information, please do not hesitate to get in touch with me.

Best regards,

Krystyna Dalkowski
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