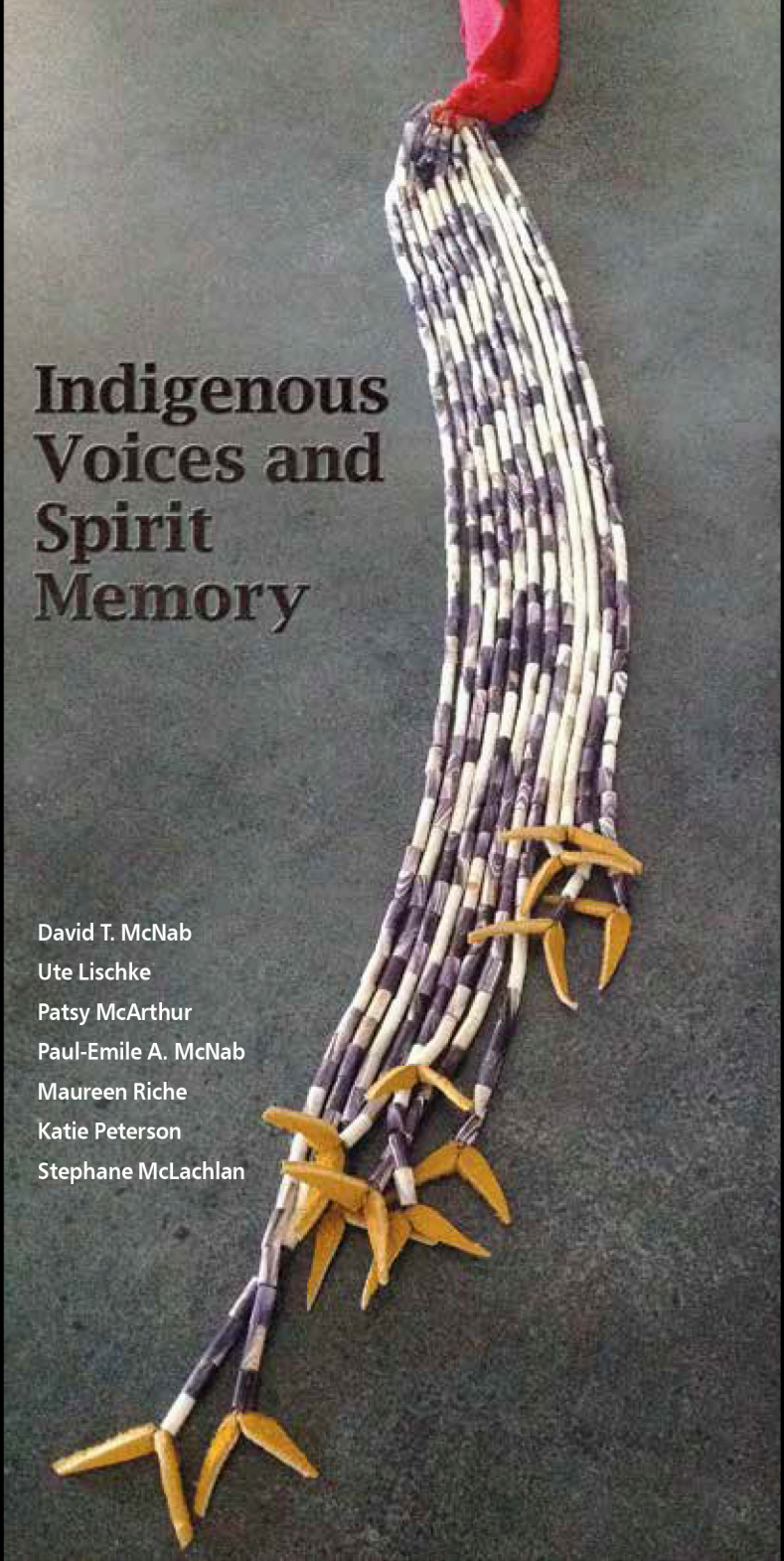
Indigenous Voices and Spirit Memory



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Eagle River Singers at Waka Mne (Lac Ste. Anne).
Photo credit Katie Peterson.

Voices and Spirit Memory in the Journals of Ezhaaswe (c. 1848-1929), Indian Missionary

David T. McNab

Indigenous Voices come from the Land and they always return to the Land and then to the spirit world.[1] This Indigenous knowledge shapes their voices (and that of others-such as Europeans especially through miscegenation) through the spirit memory of their families and ancestors.[2] Indigenous people view their Lands and Waters, indeed all of Nature as the conjoining of Mindscape and Landscape.[3] This chapter explores the meaning and significance of Indigenous voices and spirit memory in the Journals of Ezhaaswe (William A. Elias). Elias's Ojibwa name was Kewayosh. It appears he was born in the Bkejwanong Territory (either at Walpole Island in Lake St. Clair or in the Chippewas of Anderdon Reserve adjacent to the Detroit River) in the late 1840s or early 1850s. He worked as a medicine person, teacher, and Methodist missionary on both sides of the line drawn upon the waters, aka the international border. The finding of his Journals (in the Fall of 2003) which span the period from 1885 to 1928 offer an unusual, if not a unique, opportunity to reflect on this theme. The significance of Indigenous voices and spirit memory from a community perspective from the bottom-up is noteworthy.[4] In doing so, it raises some fundamental questions of what it means to be an "Indian" in the modern world in the 19th and 20th centuries. It also illustrates the fluidity of multiple Indigenous identities as well as Indigenous family histories.

Who was Ezhaaswe: "Indian Missionary"?

Ezhaaswe (William A. Elias) styled himself in his body and voice and identified himself in his Journals as an "Indian missionary". Professor Edmund Danziger has recently written the "Missionaries mattered." Although

Danziger was referring to non-Indigenous missionaries,[5] one could also say that Indian missionaries mattered more-much more. Elias was such a significant figure in late 19th and early 20th centuries.

Elias, however, was not alone in the natural and spirit worlds; there are sacred landscapes.[6] Indigenous people were "not the only inhabitants of their natural world. Neighbours included the spirits of deceased family members; spirits associated with nearby plants, animals, waters, and fish; and the more distant spirits of the high-flying eagle, sun, and moon." These spirits shaped "their concepts of time and space". Rather than "attacking" Indigenous spirituality (which non-Indigenous missionaries did not understand),[7] Indigenous missionaries understood these spirit forces as well as Christianity and blended them in syncretic forms such that Christianity was subsumed within Indigenous spirituality in a highly visible, but cosmetic, outward form(s).

An Odawa/Ojibwa, of the Bear Clan, his father (Jonas Elias or Osahweehonik) or his grandfather had come to Walpole Island from either the Chippewas of Anderdon Reserve or the Grand River community of Chippewa (Ionia County) or from the Odawa of Little Traverse Bay (present-day Michigan) in the late eighteenth or early nineteenth century. Through intermarriage and adoption, he may have had connections with these communities.[8] Elias was also the grand nephew of the hereditary Chief of the Bkejwanong First Nations (Chief Peterwegeshick (In Between Dawn) (c.1817-c.1926)) at the Walpole Island Unceded Reserve in present-day southwestern Ontario. An uncle was Esquageeshig (James Elgin) (c.1831-c.1910), also a prominent Islander who was appointed as Secretary and Interpreter for the Walpole Island Council on August 25th, 1882.[9] He was one of the first Indigenous people educated at Belleville and then Victoria College, Cobourg (which subsequently moved to Toronto and eventually became Victoria University in the University of Toronto), where he was educated and ordained in 1889. His younger brother, Waldron, was a teacher, Interpreter and Secretary to the Council at the Saugeen Reserve for many years.[10]

Elias married Eleanor A. Madwayosh, daughter of the hereditary Chief H.H. Madwayosh from the Saugeen Reserve, in Saugeen Township on August 22, 1876.[11] They met when both were students at the Mount Elgin Institute, a residential school, and were married thereafter. They had four daughters, Dorothea Florence (c. 1880-1885), Lizzie (1885-) and Beatrice (1891-) and his adopted daughter Mildred (c. 1920-1980). Mildred married Emerson Sands of Walpole Island and they had twelve children. There are many descendants on the Island today as well as at the Saugeen Reserve and presently also in California.[12]

His career included primary stops working as a teacher and a missionary at the Parry Island mission which included Cape Croker (1878-1887), Henvey Inlet, French River and Grumbling Point (Point Grondine), (July, 1876-1884), Christian Island (1884-1886), Albert College and Victoria College, Cobourg (1884-1890), Walpole Island (1888-1899), Mount Pleasant, Michigan (1899-1903), Petowsky (1903-08), Parry Sound, Shawanaga (1908-1929) and back at Walpole Island where he passed away on the shores of the St. Clair River in July, 1929. Elias also was educated by his mother in the traditional way as a medicine person beginning in 1871. There are no Journals apparently extant for the war years and, since he was likely too old to serve in the Canadian armed forces (c. 58 in 1914). He also played a significant and pivotal role in the Methodist Church in Ontario and nationally and helped to bring the Church into its union as the United Church of Canada at its key meeting in Sundridge, Ontario in 1925.

Elias' English name reflects that of the meaning of his Ojibwe name "Never gone there" (or "the longest way around").[13] In his life, he always went where others had "never gone there" before. His English name comes from the nineteenth century Christian tradition of the Wesleyan Methodist Church. Elias is an English version of the Old Testament name for Elijah the prophet. Elijah was also known as the "troubler" as one who continually told truths that no one wanted to hear but whose prophecies came true. In his own life Elias was also a "troubler" in a political sense since he was the first Aboriginal person to request enfranchisement under Duncan Campbell Scott's revised Indian Act of 1921. He raised issues of integration and modernism by the very actions of his life. The Department of Indian Affairs, after he became enfranchised, took monies from the Walpole Island trust fund accounts and paid him his share and also gave him his lot on the Reserve without first making a Treaty, thereby seemingly creating an artificial black hole in part of the Reserve.[14]

Above all, however, these Journals contain a plethora of detail about these First Nation communities. Elias was a good story-teller and had a keen eye for detail and his almost daily entries give us an insider's portrait of these communities on such topics as politics, the landscape, the weather and above all, the names-both English and Ojibwa-of the community members. The entries are not humdrum meaningless observations. He was a natural story-teller. They describe the people and the land and the stories which came from the land. Since he knew English well, Elias acted as the recording secretary for the Chief and Council and he often clashed with the Indian Agents who consistently manipulated the written records of what was sent to Ottawa. Sometimes they contain the only written record of what happened during these meetings.[15]

"Indian Missionary"

In the early 1880s while he was at Christian Island, Elias wanted to continue with his education and become ordained as a Methodist minister. He made his request directly to the federal Department of Indian Affairs. On Tuesday, March 9th, 2009, in Toronto, en route to Ottawa, after meeting with George Ritchie, their lawyer, they (Elias & Assance) were introduced to Dr. Oryantikha [Oronhyatekha, meaning "burning cloud," baptized Peter Martin, 1841-1907],[16] and noted he was an "Indian educated Doctor." They then went to the

> Office Methodist Mission Rooms. Mr. Elias interviewed with Dr Sutherland [Alexander Sutherland, 1833-1910][17] venerable Missionary Secretary, discussing about the scheme of Revd. E.F. Wilson [Edward Francis Wilson, 1844-1915][18] Church of England Priest to erect a branch Home of Shingwauk Home somewhere near the Lake Simcoe. Mr. Elias fully objecting the scheme. Dr. proposed by the suggestion of Mr. Elias to erect an Institution some where [somewhere] in Rama to be supervised by the Methodist Church according to the prevailing religion of the surrounding Indian Reserves (Journals, 117).

This conversation was followed by "Mr. Elias acquainted to Dr. Sutherland his mind about attending to [Belleville] College before he is ordained, while he was speaking to him about it. Dr. Burwash [Nathaniel Burwash, 1839-1918][19] entered and who also joined to give his opinion on the question." Sutherland replied that "there would be no difficulty in educating Mr. Elias, as he has been in the service, number of years, and that they can rely upon him for the future usefulness. Then Burwash "stated he would not be the first one to be educated by the Society." He went on that he "would recommend him to go to the Albert College of Belville [Belleville, then a Methodist Seminary]."[Ontario][20] for the first and then after that he can see about going into [added above] the Victoria College." The interview then ended after "Dr. Sutherland promised to bring the matter before the educating committee-to the satisfactory comfort of Mr. Elias feeling that God is indeed preparing his future extensive usefulness-".(Journals, 117-8)

On March 11th, 1886, they arrived in Ottawa. During debates on the Riel resistance movement, after the Metis leader, Louis Riel, had been hanged, they were invited to sit in the Gallery of the House of Commons. Here they had an opportunity

> of seeing Sir Jno. A. McDonald[21][Macdonald, 1815-1891] the Premier [Prime Minister] of Canadian Government." Elias recorded that he was "sitting in a graceful style an innocent figure, but who can tell where the responsibility of the North West Rebellion

> will rest mind you reader the eight millions of dollars had been expended on that memorable target of Indian huts, which had been better to devote it ($8,000,000) in civilizing them by the gospel of Jesus Christ and freely circulating the Holy Bibles. those [Those] poor half breeds would have [added above] learned to be loyal to their Sovereign the Queen Victoria, by first being taught to be loyal to their highest Sovereign Our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ [.]" (Journal, entry of March 11th, 1886,123)

But they did not meet with the Prime Minster himself the next day, as they had been promised.

On Friday, March 12th, 1886, Elias met with Lawrence Vankoughnet, then the Deputy Superintendent General of the federal Department of Indian Affairs,[22] "about the school management fund, to aid him attending the College of Bellville-" Vankoughnet "thought the band of Walpole Island might aid him for one hundred dollars $100.00 at least. providing that Mr. Elias be willing to have his shares deducted to replace the amount thus taken out of the principal money-".[23] It is important to note here that there was a school management fund out of which the monies should have been taken to fulfill the promises of the British imperial, and then the Canadian, governments (by Treaty or other similar agreement) about paying for Indigenous education rather than Indigenous people paying for it themselves.

Subsequently, Elias attended Victoria College in 1887 and 1888 and at least $200.00 was taken from the Walpole Island Trust Fund accounts to pay for his education. On September 9th, 1887 monies ($100) were taken from the Walpole Island Trust Fund accounts. On November 30th, 1887, the monies ($100 without any interest having been paid) were paid by the Receiver General of Canada to the Walpole Island Trust Fund accounts, likely out of the Department of Indian Affairs' School Management Fund. The following year the Indian Agent at Walpole Island, Alexander McKelvey, took another $100 from the Walpole Island Trust Fund accounts to pay for Elias' education and stated that this sum was a loan. However, there is no indication in the Elias Journals that Elias ever received such a loan and the Walpole Island Trust Fund accounts indicate that it was never repaid. It is likely, as noted below from the Elias Journals, that McKelvey took the monies ($100) from the Walpole Island Trust fund accounts.[24]

Elias remained as an Indian missionary in his community for over a decade. He was also an advocate for his fellow citizens and incurred the racism and wrath of McKelvey in the process. McKelvey viciously drove him from his church and community by 1903. He was forced to flee to his father's (or grandfather's) community in central Michigan, in and around Little

Traverse Bay, and Petoskey (where he and his family resided) and vicinity. This story also told about the power of the Indian Department and its Agents in the late nineteenth century through the impact of the trespassers on the Walpole Island unceded Reserve and its citizens in the late nineteenth century.[25]

Elias observed the impact of alcohol on the life of his grand-uncle Chief Peterwegeshick (In Between Dawn) (c.1817-c.1926)) at the Walpole Island Reserve in present day southwestern Ontario. His grand uncle was one of the best sources for both the oral and the written history of the community in the nineteenth century.[26]

After Elias was driven out of his community, he went to central Michigan. In the land of his father's people-the Odawas-Elias once again was confronted by racism. His official title with the Methodist Church in the Traverse City District of the Michigan Conference was "Missionary for Peteoskey and Kewadin Missions". He was befriended by members of the Petoskey family as well as the Blackbirds who also resided in Petoskey and vicinity.[27]

As an Indian missionary, Elias spoke, as did the other Odawa/Ojibwa Methodist preachers. Elias preached usually in his first language, which was Ojibwa but wrote much of his Journals in English which he had learned in the Mount Elgin residential school. In his services, they had hymn books which they used to sing in Ojibwa. At Petoskey and then at Susan Lake, on October 17th, 1904, he preached in the local Methodist churches and recorded the following in his Journal: "The attendence, congregation, composed both white people and the Indians, when I began to open my sermon the white congregation went out. Their excuse in this abrupt leaving they were going to do their evening chores. I was greatly encouraged to do my work as it was expressed in their collection for my support was some thing good to be favourably considered."[28] He remained in Petoskey until about 1911 when he returned to Ontario.

In that year Elias took up his former profession as a teacher in the local Reserve school at the Shawanaga Reserve. He did not reside on the Reserve since he was not from that community. Instead, Elias leased 100 acres adjacent to the Reserve from the Ontario Department of Lands which he retained until his passing in early July 1929 at Walpole Island. In his Journal, in 1911, he stated that, now over the age of 60, he wished to retire to a farm on the shores of Georgian Bay. He built a log home for his family and took up farming as well as teaching and preaching. He subsequently became an itinerant Methodist preacher again after the First World War and through the 1920s. He also stated that he had learned Indian medicine from his mother since at least 1871 and began to practice as an

Indian Doctor well before the Great War (December 13th, 1904) to both the Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities.[29]

Retrospect: What is in a Name?

Everything is in a name .... All of Elias' names reveal a plethora of Indigenous voices. In one voice there are, in the context of spirit memory, many others of the ancestors echoing others through more than seven generations. These voices come to us from the Land. Elias' Journals, and the stories in them, come from the Land. Since the landscape and mindscape in these Journals are conjoined, they are being gifted and going back to the Land.

Danziger has suggested that in this process there was both "accommodation and resistance" in the late 19th century[30] but in the case of Indigenous missionaries, it is abundantly clear that there was much more resistance than accommodation and that is precisely why they mattered more-much more-in the long term in the context of spirit memory. Elias fought constantly against both the Canadian and American empires protecting the Land and keeping his families, his clans and communities and their traditions alive-sometimes successfully, sometimes not for his spirit name meant "never gone there" or "the longest way around".[31] But he lived in a time of trouble and trial-the era of the assimilative residential schools, the corrupt Indian agent and horrific racism in North America.

However, there is no also doubt that he saw Nature around him as something animate and very powerful-he deeply appreciated its beauty and its many gifts of knowledge. Nature is the essence of the Indigenous knowledge and the stories in Elias' Journals. He was able to bridge the borders of knowledge between oral traditions of First Nations, including Nature, and the imperial world of the Euro/American knowledge systems embedded in pen and ink. As the Elders say, we only pass this way once. Elias was able to go to many Places where others have never gone before and for that we must give thanks for what he recorded about his experiences, which are embedded in the spirits in the stories in his Journals.

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Notes

1 By "Land" I mean the natural world including the four sacred directions as well as Earth, Water, Air and Fire. See my "Introduction" to my (edited for Nin. Da.Waab.Jig.), *Earth, Water, Air and Fire: Studies in Canadian Ethnohistory*, Waterloo: WLU Press, 1998, 1-10.

2 See my "A Long Journey: Spirit Memory and Métis Identities", *The Long Journey of Canada's Forgotten People: Metis Identities and Family Histories*, Waterloo: WLU Press, 2007; "Hiding in Plane View: Aboriginal Identities and a Fur Trade Company Family through Seven Generations", *Hidden in Plain Sight, Contributions of Aboriginal Peoples to Canadian Identity and Culture*, David R. Newhouse, Cora J. Voyageur and Dan Beavon (ed), Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2005, 295-308.

3 See my "Landscape and Mindscape conjoined: the Empire of Nature and the Nature of Empire in William A. Elias' (1851-1929) Journals", *The Empire of Nature and the Nature of Empire*, Karl S. Hele (ed), Waterloo: WLU Press, forthcoming, 2013.

4 John M. MacKenzie, *The Empire of Nature, Hunting, Conservation and British Imperialism*, Manchester: Manchester University Press, 1988, "Introduction", ix; *Empires of Nature and the Nature of Empires, Imperialism, Scotland and the Environment*, East Linton: Tuckwell Press, 1997, 1-30; 70-86.

5 Edmund Jefferson Danziger, Jr., *Great Lakes Accommodation and Resistance during the Early Reservation Years*, 1850-1900, Ann Arbor: The University of Michigan Press, 2009, see chapter 5: "Traditional Spirituality versus Christianity", 115, 156-84, 209, 229

6 Lischke and McNab, "Introduction", *Sacred Landscapes*, Rick Riewe and Jill Oakes (ed), Winnipeg: Aboriginal Issues Press, 2009, vii-viii.

7 Danziger, *Great Lakes Accommodation and Resistance*, 157-61.

8 NAC, RG 10, Volume 2118, File 22,610 Part 1, (Microfilm Reel # C-11,162), General Council Meeting held at Walpole Island on August 11th, 1887. Jonas Elias was one of the citizens of Walpole Island who voted against the surrender of the Shooting Grounds for leasing purposes. His father, Jonas, had land on the Island identified as Lot #269 on Walpole Island adjacent to Johnston's Channel. See Nin.Da.Waab.Jig., "Plan of Part Walpole Island Indian Reserve Ontario Surveyed by Wm. Mackenzie O.L.S. 1908", federal Department of Indian Affairs. Visit to the Research Centre of the Ziibiwing Cultural Center of Anishinabe Culture and Lifeways, Isabella Reservation, Mount Pleasant, Michigan, on April 3rd, 2006. I am grateful for the assistance of Anita Heard the Center's Research Co-ordinator.

9 Nin.Da.Waab.Jig. Files, Bkejwanong First Nations, Binder on "Charles Jacobs Family Tree", Reference No. 1672, Ebenezer Watson, Indian Superintendent, Sarnia, to Sir John A. Macdonald, Prime Minister and Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, dated August 25th, 1882.

10 Elias, Journal, #8, 1921-1922.

11 Ontario Archives, Ontario Marriage Index, Microfilm 19, Registration #001369, Saugeen Township, August 22nd, 1876-on-line April 4th, 2006.

12 Visit to Highbanks Cemetery and Nin.Da.Waab.Jig., Walpole Island Unceded Reserve, February 2004. Elias passed away on Walpole Island but he is not buried at Highbanks; perhaps at another place on Walpole Island or in the Bkejwanong Territory.

13 See II Kings in the Old Testament.

14 Elias' land remains a black hole in the unceded Reserve to this day. To date, nothing has been written about Elias perhaps because he was an Indigenous person and was thus seen not to be a part of the written history of Canada. Other than his journals, he left behind only a brief reminiscence of his life (which is in the United Church Archives in Toronto).

15 See my "'those freebooters would shoot me like a dog'", 115-29.

16 *Dictionary of Canadian Biography on-line (DCB on-line)*, accessed on January 29th, 2007: http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBioPrintable.asp?BioId=41098.

17 *DCB on-line* accessed on January 29th, 2007 at: http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41213&query

18 *DCB on-line* accessed on January 29th, 2007 at: http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41898&query=

19 *DCB on-line*, accessed on January 29th, 2007 at: http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=41379&query=

20 Founded in 1857 by the Methodist Episcopal Church as the Belleville Seminary, Albert College is still in existence in Belleville, Ontario. It ceased offering degrees in 1884, effectively taken over by Victoria College, in Cobourg, later Victoria University in the University of Toronto. See their Web Site accessed on January 29th, 2007 at: http://www.albertc.on.ca.

21 For a different view of Macdonald and his relations with the Metis, see Douglas Sprague, *Canada and the Metis*, Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1988. The standard biography is in the *DCB-on-line*, accessed on January 30th, 2007 at: http://www.biographi.ca/EN/ShowBio.asp?BioId=40370&query=Macdonald

22 Douglas Leighton, "A Victorian Civil servant at Work: Lawrence Vankoughnet and the Canadian Indian Department Policy, 1874-1893", Ian A.L. Getty and Antoine S. Lussier, *As Long as the Sun Shines and Water flows: A Reader in Canadian Native Studies*, Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1983, 104-19.

23 Journal #1, 1885-1887, 115-23.

24 NAC, RG 10 Volume 5966, Walpole Island Trust Fund Accounts, 1885-1890. Also see Elias, Journals, "Pocket Journal Cobourg 1887", Journal #2, Entry for March 14th, 1888.

25 On the larger picture of racism in Canada, see my "A Brief History of the Denial of Indigenous Rights in Canada", *A History of Human Rights in Canada*, Janet Miron (ed), Toronto: Scholarly Publishing, 2009, 99-115. Tellingly, this is the first scholarly book published in Canada on the history of human rights.

26 Journal #3.

27 Journal #5, Entry of Saturday, November 12th, 1904, 63.

28 Journal #5, December 13th, 1904, 127.
29 McNab,"'those freebooters would shoot me like a dog'", 115-29.
30 Danziger, *Great Lakes Accommodation and Resistance*, 183-4.
31 McNab,"'those freebooters would shoot me like a dog'", 115-20.

Reclaiming Indigenous Memory through Performance and Humour:

Drew Hayden Taylor's Documentary *Redskins, Tricksters, and Puppy Stew*

Ute Lischke

Introduction

In Indigenous societies, oral traditions form the "distinct ways of knowing and the means by which knowledge is reproduced, preserved and conveyed from generation to generations." Through the preservation and conveyance of such knowledge through the telling of stories, the storyteller is connected to the audience in a shared experience that unites "past and present in memory" (Hulan 7). Contemporary First Nations Literature continues to be profoundly influenced by oral traditions. Armand Ruffo has noted that this results in "a stylistic and thematic hybrid of the oral and written, the past and present, the Aboriginal and the Western (Ruffo 6)." But stories are not only told, they are also performed. One of Canada's leading Indigenous playwrights, well-known author, humorist, and filmmaker, Drew Hayden Taylor (Ojibway, Curve Lake) sees his plays and the performance thereof as an extension of indigenous storytelling. Theatre thus becomes an extension of the oral tradition, a space where indigenous memories and traditions can be reclaimed in order to initiate a greater understanding between Indigenous and settler cultures. Theatre and performance are a means of cultural agency that engage both writers and performers in the process of decolonization and subsequently healing. Because of his mixed background, Taylor often has to deal with his own identity issues when confronted by the racism of contemporary society brought about by the process of colonization. It is racism and issues of identities that he tackles in his work, racism not only from Europeans, but also from fellow Aboriginals on and off reserve. Significantly, Taylor addresses the issues of racism and identity not only through humour, but also

by reclaiming Indigenous memory. Qwo-Li Driskill, a Cherokee Two-Spirit writer, activist and performer, has argued that:

> Colonization is a kinaesthetic reality: it is an act done by bodies and felt by other bodies. Violence is not an intellectual knowledge, but rather one that is known because of damage done to our skin, flesh, muscles, bones, and spirits. It is both our homelands and our bodies that are violated through colonization (Driskill 155).

In countering the effects of colonization that has often destroyed the ability of Indigenous peoples to reclaim their stories because of their inability to remember, Taylor uses humour and storytelling—processes through which past memories are reclaimed, as a means of healing. This is especially apparent in his documentary, *Redskins, Tricksters, and Puppy Stew* where he demonstrates that humour, performance, and laughter—all elements in reclaiming stories, are a matter of survival for First Nations to counter the effects of colonization. Released by the National Film Board of Canada (NFB) in 2000, this documentary is one of several, including *Hands of History* (dir. Loretta Todd, 1994) which highlights the contributions of First Nations artists in promoting aboriginal cultures through the process of remembering in Canada and beyond. As Canada's national film producer and distributor, the NFB supports critically engaging films and has been a supporter and shown leadership in supporting Aboriginal filmmaking and bridging understanding between cultures. Taylor's documentary on Indigenous humour fits into this mandate in its engagement with humour as a tool for remembering oral traditions as a means of survival and de-colonization.

Often referred to as a cross between Sherman J. Alexie, Jr., (Spokane/ Coeur d'Alene Indian) and Lenny Bruce (stand-up comic) Taylor is a writer of many talents and at home in a variety of genres, who has made the greatest impact as a Canadian playwright and humorist. Influenced by the works of Tomson Highway and Thomas King--he recently commented that he "wants to be like Thomas King when he grows up," (Lischke) he has established his own tradition in the genre of humour by combining a sense of drama with acerbic wit as he creates a sphere in which Indigenous peoples share the world with newcomers to North America. Although most of his writings are derivative, Taylor often refers to himself as a "Playwright-Humorist" who does not want to recreate the gloom and doom of traditional theatre—that of the "dead white man"--, but who prefers to explore the human psyche through humorous situations. This he does by means of his acute sense of observation and his desire to bring First Nation's philosophy, literature, and history, incorporated in their stories, to the attention of non-Natives. In his many travels around the globe,

both as a lecturer, writer in residence, or while collaborating on the production of a play, Taylor has gained a perspective on the human condition and issues of mixed identities. In this regard he is able to share his experiences from an Indigenous perspective and dispels the stereotypes of the humourless stoic "Indian". Taylor has also edited a volume on Indigenous Humour, *Me Funny* (2005) that serves as a companion reader to his documentary in which numerous authors explore and reclaim various concepts of Indigenous humour through their own stories.

Redskins, Tricksters, and Puppy Stew – Humour in Indigenous Film and Media

Before directing *Redskins, Tricksters, and Puppy Stew: Native humour and its healing powers*, Taylor had gained some experience as a director through his involvement with APTN (Aboriginal Peoples Television Network) as well as collaborating with the CBC in Canada, writing scripts for children's and other Indigenous programs. Taylor's documentary has made a positive impact on Indigenous media production because it is an extension of Indigenous storytelling and thus a re/clamation of the oral tradition through the process of remembrance. Much like his work as a playwright, Taylor uses the film to document the careers of Indigenous comedians whose "stories" and performances are a reaction to contemporary social, cultural, and psychological issues affecting First Nations.

Taylor recognizes that it is the non-Indigenous audience who needs to be educated, for example most are uncomfortable with the prospect of laughing at Indigenous people and do not understand the healing powers initiated through the telling of stories and humour (*Seeing Red* 24). Taylor recalls that the audience needed some kind of permission to laugh. Used to the portrayal by the mainstream media, mostly Hollywood, of either the tragic, downtrodden, miserable "Indian" on the one hand, or the "noble savage" on the other hand, Taylor argues that the audience needs to learn and understand that contemporary Indigenous people are much like the rest of society, but above all, human.[1] Taylor conceived the idea of *Redskins* in order to break down these stereotypes. *Redskins, Tricksters and Puppy Stew*, as the title suggests, aims to overturn the conventional representation of the Indian—one that is set in stone and perpetuated both in print and film media, and concentrates on toppling this representation by asking the question, what is Indigenous humour?

The title obviously plays with the connotations of what the three words "Redskins", "Tricksters" and "Puppy Stew" bring to mind when related to Indigenous people. In fact, Indigenous people are constantly bombarded with disturbing images, whether through mascots that label sports teams, such as the reference to the American National Football team, the

"Washington Redskins" located in the American capitol, or the "Atlanta Braves" or the "Cleveland Indians", or the labeling of products through such stereotypical names as Red Man tobacco, Big Chief sugar, or the use of Aboriginal imagery by businesses for commercial use. Such labels and images, when used by sports teams, are demeaning and suggestive of "some settler 'bounty hunter' holding up a bloody scalp—a red skin'" (Bellfy 30). These issues are significant since they all relate to the question of "identity" of Indigenous peoples in a colonized society. Taylor's documentary addresses these questions through performance and humour. The role of the "Trickster" is significant here since stereotypical images are presented or contested through performance and the "reclaiming" of bodies.

Performance, whether it is through stand-up comedy, gestures, or the use of wardrobe and props, relates to how the trickster can shift-change, tell a story, and teach a lesson. The reference to "Puppy Stew" is taken directly from *The Dead Dog Café Comedy Hour,* a radio show on Canada's CBC Radio One created by Thomas King that ran from 1997 to 2000. Set in a fictional town and café of the same name in a town called Blossom, Alberta, this setting is taken from King's award-winning novel *Green Grass, Running Water* (1993). Although different characters appear in the book, the radio broadcast borrowed heavily from the novel. Featuring Thomas King, who plays himself, Floyd Favel Starr (Jasper Friendly Bear) and Edna Rain (Gracie Heavy Hand), all Aboriginal Peoples. Much like the novel, the radio program consisted of socially relevant satire and political repartee--with much self-mockery and cheeky humour that relies on the tradition of indigenous storytelling. In one episode Gracie threatens to wring a dog's neck and make her favourite dish, puppy stew. Of course the assumption was that the pet dog on the show would end up in the stew. The dog/coyote metaphor is related to the trickster figure and sacred in Aboriginal culture and the title of Taylor's documentary certainly plays to all the elements inherent in its title.

At the beginning of the documentary Taylor makes a joke and asks the question "What is a Native vegetarian?" The answer is "a very bad hunter". This sets the stage for Taylor to ask himself what exactly is Indigenous humour as he sets off on his road trip to explore its meaning. From the foothills of the Rockies in Canada's west, to Toronto, a city in Ontario that hosts one of the largest segments of the urban Indigenous population, Taylor interviews and follows the escapades of seven Aboriginal entertainers. All the participants in the documentary, through their performance and their stories, elaborate on the significance of humour in Indigenous cultures and its significance of remembering various sites, sounds and traditions that have triggered these memories and their importance in terms of healing the wounds of the past. In the twenty-first century, as Indigenous urban

populations grow, and during a time when many families are just now coming to terms with the effects of residential schools on their families and communities, the remembrance and telling of stories has become even more significant.

In *Redskins* Taylor explores the question, "What exactly is native humour?" through performance and storytelling. His informants are a number of First Nations individuals who work in the field of humour. Stand-up comics Don Burnstick (Cree) and Don Kelly (Anishinabe) each provide different views. As a child, Burnstick initially found humour to be a short-term way to prevent his father from being physically abusive. After years of living on the streets and abusing alcohol and drugs, he discovered humour to be a bridge between cultures and this is what he uses in his performance. Burnstick plays the "Redskin guy" as he pulls out his "Redskins" sports bag for the audience to pull out his various props; redskin stuff to show you are a redskin, rubber boots as the "redskin" cowboy boots and a garbage bag used as an "Indian suitcase". His stories are self-directed and full of self-mockery as he uses both his baseball cap and his hair to play at various representations of stereotypical images of the "Indian"—the "stoic Indian", the "Cree", "Ojibwe", "Métis", or even a "Cree from Saddle Lake First Nation". The skits are interspersed with serious moments when Taylor conducts the interview. We discover that Burnstick had a difficult personal journey, one of fifteen children, an abusive father and a life filled with alcohol and drugs. He learned that by being funny, he could break the tension in his home, or even stop his dad from beating his mother. The documentary cuts from interview to performance, until all of the subjects have been introduced. In this way the audience has the benefit of both participating in the performance, as spectators, but also learning from the life stories of these individuals whose re-remembering of certain sights, sounds, and traditions, has brought them healing. This has a humanizing effect and erases the lines between Indigenous and non-Indigenous listener. We are the participants in the humanness of laughter, which is universal.

Fellow comic and stand-up comedian Don Kelly did not have such a dismal childhood, but nevertheless has encountered racism. Like Taylor, he does not "look native". The offspring of an Indigenous father and a mother who is not just Swedish and Irish but downright pale, he has red hair and his mother's complexion. For example, he recalls that people will say classic things to him, such as, "you're not Indian; you don't drink and collect welfare." In order to put his audience at ease and to highlight Indigenous vs. non-Indigenous relationships, Kelly always starts off by introducing his Aboriginal name, "Runs Like a Girl". This gets a good laugh as he says therefore he prefers to be known by Kelly so that his audience takes him seriously. He notes that majority culture audiences are initially uncertain

about whether or not his humour will be aggressive towards them but that they will eventually recognize that his humorous stories skewer the stereotypes of the "Indian". In a very lighthearted moment, at the end of the interview, both Taylor and Kelly are seen taking two chairs, tiptoeing over a snow-covered roof patio to suntan themselves holding a foil-covered board as a sun reflector, overlooking the Parliament Buildings in Canada's capital.

The documentary cuts to a rehearsal of King's "Dead Dog Cafe". We watch as the actors tape the show, discuss changes. In the Café, an "Indian Tourist Trap", "dog" is a main menu item. This is very suggestive of the White-Dog Feast, a midwinter festival among certain North American First Nations where a white dog was sacrificed to the creator as a thanksgiving. Of course, we hear that "black labs" are best used in stews since they have more meat per pound. All the while, the audience is aware of the pet dog "Cuddles" barking in the background. References are made as to whether or not Cuddles will end up in the stew pot. In the interview that follows between Taylor and King, he recounts how the "Cuddles for stew joke with Gracie" got a lot of mail and a severe reaction from non-Indigenous audiences. King explains that the audience simply did not understand that it was a joke. Here it is important to note that non-Indigenous audiences relate differently, through their memories, about Indigenous peoples and their remembrance of the past. Taylor has said that these differences can be accounted for in the fact that Indigenous people use humour with "permitted disrespect" (Taylor 2005, 28).

Indigenous writers use the trickster in their stories, here the dog/coyote image, quite naturally; they gravitate towards it, because it is part of their culture and storytelling. Herbie Barnes, an actor, director and comedy improvisation instructor and co-founder of a sketch comedy troupe, describes Indigenous humour as an "exploration of the dark side." In this regard, he has founded "ArtsAlterNative", a space where Indigenous youth achieve group therapy through performance. For Barnes, the significance about comedy is that it is about entertainment and laughter--the telling or stories--, but that he also has to leave the audience with something to think about. He emphasizes that the signifiers for Aboriginal culture are stories, humour, and the trickster. Like storytelling in Aboriginal culture, humour is also transforming; it can take one to another place. Whereas most people have a fear of going to the next place, he encourages the youths he is working with to "go and slay the dragon".

Sharon Shorty and Jackie Bear are humorists from the Yukon. Jackie Bear is a singer/performer who met Sharon Shorty in a bar. Both are passionate about the elders in their lives and are fascinated by watching elderly

women in their communities. Their grandmothers reared both in their traditional culture and ironically, as Sharon and Jackie became roommates, their own grandmothers were roommates in a senior's home in the Yukon. Ironically, a sketch one of them had made of a traditionally dressed elder was the impetus for their first gig in a community hall. Their stories and performance best reflects how specific sites, sounds, and traditions trigger memory from a distinct indigenous perspective. Watching the elders both laughing and crying as they were performing made them realize that they were on to something. They created the alter egos of Sarah and Susie, two elderly Indigenous women, who "speak" to First Nations audiences about their daily activities--and their love of Bingo and Kentucky Fried Chicken. As performers, they have come to recognize that the characters of "Sarah" and "Susie" keep the spirits of the elders in their audiences alive. Their performance is also an act of decolonization. Their appearances interweave, as do the others in the documentary, with their personal stories. This enhances the significance of the telling of stories and the power of healing. Furthermore, by dressing for their performance in the clothes that have been donated to them by other elders who have watched them perform, and by wearing the stockings that actually belong to their grandmothers, they are reclaiming the past. And while they've been making people laugh across the country with their portrayal of two elders, they also play a role as community healers. Their stories/histories are also universal. As one Chinese lady told them after a performance, "you remind me so much of my auntie! You have made me laugh."

A key point made by the participants in the documentary is that First Nations communities, after all the tragedies that have happened, are now "moving into a space where we can have humour." King remarks in the documentary:

> Those things that hurt in life, those things that continue to hurt about being native in North America, I can handle those things through humour. I can't handle those through anger because, if I get angry about something, it just gets away from me. It just consumes me. I've got to keep coming back to humour as my sort of safe position. And I think I can make more of an impact. (*Redskins*)

For King, the telling of stories is significant in order to keep the culture and tradition of First Nations alive. When so often the majority culture image of First Nations peoples is derived from newspaper headlines that trumpet negative happenings, such as financial mismanagement on reserves, or brief television clips which focus on "violent" acts, like road blockades or protest marches, *Redskins, Tricksters and Puppy Stew* offers an alternate

view, one overlaid with the voices of all races joined in shared stories and laughter. And at the root of humour, there are truths in the context of individual experiences. In this documentary First Nations communities, after all the tragedies that have happened, have moved into a space where their stories have entered into public fora. Indigenous stories and humour have been and continue to be a source of survival:

> Native humour comes from five hundred years of colonization, of oppression of being kept prisoners in our own country. With legalized attacks on our culture, our languages, our identities and even our religion, often the only way left for Native people to respond to the cruel realities of Fourth World existence was in humour. Humour kept us sane. It gave us power. It gave us privacy. (*Me Funny* 69)

Indigenous humour--embedded in storytelling-- stems from a source of survival and is a reaction against the world. It has healed the pain of many by the creation and maintenance of balance. Humour and storytelling remain synonymous and are highly respected aspects of Indigenous cultures. By interweaving the personal stories of his subjects with their performances, Taylor has created a documentary that emphasizes storytelling and humour from an Indigenous perspective. But, above all, Taylor has succeeded in showing that humour has been an essential tool in the healing process of Indigenous peoples going through the process of decolonization. As Susie and Sarah say their farewell to the audience, they mention that they are going hunting for moose meat. Their departing words are "Goodbye Col. Sanders!" and turning back to the audience, "keep on clapping", an indication that they have succeeded, through their transformation and performance as two traditional elders, in engaging in the process of decolonization. Connecting with Taylor's joke at the beginning of the documentary—about the bad hunter-- the message is that Col. Sander's is being left behind and the hunt for moose meat will ensure that the freezer will be full. The performing "bodies" in this documentary have been instrumental in creating art and in telling stories, re-creating a past, and instilling memories that are sites of healing and resistance engaged in a process of healing the wounds of history. The sites of memory for Indigenous peoples include remembering through stories, humour and performance. Performance, then, is a site of memory and a place for "permitted disrespect".

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Notes

1 Chris Eyre, the prominent Native-American filmmaker and the director and producer of such films as *Smoke Signals*, *Skins*, *Edge of America* and *Imprint*, debunks society's fixation of the dying Indian. His films avoid the depiction of First Nations peoples as "victims", a role often explored in Hollywood films. His films are an attempt at a realistic portrayal of Native people as human beings, both negative and positive. Also see Ward Churchill, *Fantasies of the Master Race: Literature, Cinema, and the Colonization of the North American Indian*. San Francisco: City Lights Books, 1998; Lenore Keeshig-Tobis, "Goodbye, Wild Indian" in *Walking a Tightrope. Aboriginal People and Their Representations*, Ute Lischke and David T. McNab (eds), Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005, pp vi-x; Ute Lischke and David T. McNab, "Show me the money": Representation of Aboriginal People in East-German Indian Films", in *Walking a Tightrope. Aboriginal People and Their Representations*, Ute Lischke and David T. McNab (eds), Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 2005, pp 283-303.

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Some Historic Saugeen Métis Families and the Significance of Genealogy:

Detroit River and Goderich Area

Patsy McArthur

From the early 1800s an identified distinctive Métis population is found to have traded within a cohesive regional trading network located along the eastern shoreline Lake Huron proper, from above Sarnia to the Killarney area. The contemporary Historic Saugeen Métis community located at Southampton, Ontario descends from this historic Métis community. Assessment of this Métis population/community and its activities through factual records and oral history brings clarity to the area's development, while challenging traditional local history – indifferent to a Métis presence prior to settlement.

By the late 1800s, the Detroit river system had the largest Catholic group of French Canadians, outside of Quebec, and descendants of these old Métis families trading in the Saginaw Valley began settling about the Lake St. Clair and Port Huron regions.[1] Pressed by the depletion of game, relocation policies, and the Michigan Treaties of (1795), 1809, 1819, 1836, Métis began to relocate their trading up the Huron shoreline on the Canadian side to the site of present-day Goderich. Among them were descendants of ancient Michigan territory Métis trading families who had chosen to inhabit the Great Lakes and the environs of Michigan since the beginning of the French period of trade, among them namely, by date Chevalier (1700); Bourassa (1733); Cadotte (1742); Beaulieu (1752); Solomon (1761); de Lamorandiere (1784). Joining them were Métis families recent from the Northwest, relatives and friends with ancient ties, already dismissed as irrelevant to the Western trade, along with those from Quebec contracted by Detroit barons for the still lucrative Lake Huron trade.

In 1822, these "Indian Traders" were recorded on the British Lake Huron shoreline when Lieutenant Henry Wolsley Bayfield, surveying Lake Huron, arrived at the mouth of the Menesetung River, "Red River" as it was then called. Later in 1827, surveyor, Mahlon Burwell accompanying Tiger Dunlop to the area for the Canada Company, journalized "a dozen or so log cabins, comprised the whole town of Goderich, most the latter being inhabited by French Canadians and half-Breeds."

Rare accounts of Goderich's early days are summarized in known works - 1) Lizars sister s' "In the Days of the Canada Company, 1825-1850",[2] 2) Major Strickland, "Twenty-Seven Years in Canada West: The Experience of an Early Settler[3]; and 3) HBC Lake Huron Headquarters, Lacloche Daily Journals recorded by Trader John McBean.[4] Among the many comments are:

1) In the Days of the Canada Company, 1825-1850:

   Certain it is that in the two hundred and ten years elapsing between Champlain and Gooding, the Minnesetung was a frequent calling place for the Jesuits on their way from Georgian Bay to Detroit. The Fur-traders, too, made it a stopping place, and it was through the Hudson's Bay service that the site had upon it the huts of a few half-breeds, as well as the Chippewa wigwams, when Galt and Dunlop took it. These employed, when discharged, - for the term of the service was short - happened to settle there on their course downward to Montreal, the point of return. Gooding himself, after 1826, often brought a priest with him from Windsor. In that year, accompanied by Frank Tranch, he had come from the mouth of the Grand River in a small vessel laden with stores for the Indian trade.

2) *Twenty-Seven Years in Canada West*:

   I was quite delighted with the situation of Goderich, though the town-plot was only just surveyed. Three frame-houses were in the process of building. …I bought a small log-house and town-lot, or rather the good-will of them, from a French Canadian, putting myself in his place with the Company, with whom I completed the purchase. The situation was very pretty, commanding a fine view of the Lake.

3) HBC Lacloche Post Journal Entries:

   August 23, 1827. This morning Mssrs. Alex. McKay and Henry Sayers with each a boat loaded with goods, provisions set off for their respective posts, the former with 3 men for Saguingue and the latter with Jean Bpte Flamand Interpreter and 3 men for Isle au Sable.

   September 7, 1831. There is a new village at Maitland River, and the opposition there is "numerous and strong.

> June 5, 1833. …this afternoon Lacert & family encamped here on his way from Goderich to Sault Ste Mary's.
>
> August 21, 1833. Lariviere (Joseph) was discharged and left this for French River and thence for Goderich

Some accounts of early Goderich suggest that in 1818 Goderich was visited by for the first time by Lake Huron's first steamer Walk-in-the-Water,[5] and a few later by a British gunboat on an exploring expedition with John Galt and Dr. Dunlop. One oral history relates how Edward Petit of Port Huron, son of trader Anselme "Cut Feet" Petit family's early experience with the Steamer Superior, visiting Goderich for the lumber trade. In a Port Huron historic paper of 1872, the following 1828 account is attributed to Edward Petit of Port Huron, who traded up the Canadian shoreline as a young boy:

> During that year, and at only 15 years of age, he (Edward Petit) engaged in the Indian trade and spent the winter on the Canadian side, near the Sauble. He took supplies of shot, powder, calicoes and blue broadcloth, one and three-fourth yards of which was called a blanket. The Indians gave for them maple sugar and fur: - otter, beaver, mink, martin and bearskins. On the early visits of the Steamer Superior he has a distinct recollection. About four times a year she was accustomed visit this place for wood, dry pine being deemed the only wood suitable for steamboats. A Mr. Hatch had a contract to supply the wood. The captain of the boat charged all who went on board to visit her, one shilling each. "Our whole family," say Mr. Petit, "visited the boat, and going on board and stood in mute admiration of the most beautiful thing we had ever seen. - We thought we were in Heaven."[6]

William Goodings and Francis Deschamps are by consensus the first recorded traders at Goderich having come from the Detroit River area. The latter's father, Jean-Baptitste Deschamps, of Port Huron, one of the earliest to have come up the Detroit river, is said to have died in Goderich in 1830. Also named from numerous accounts and documents are Edward Petit, Peter and Francis Andres, Francis Duchesne, Pierre Payette, Thadeus de Lamorandiere, Jeremie and Jean-Baptiste Martel, Francois Desmarais, Michel Duchesne, Louis Tremblay, Jean-Baptiste Rouleau, Antoine Leturge, Jean-Baptiste Bizaillon, Augustin Gonneville/Granville, Joseph Lange Sr. and Jr., Lec Dobies, Alexandre McIntosh, Peter Laforge, Charles Belland, Benjaman Baron, Solomon Cazelet/Causley, Joseph Normandin, Louis Cadotte, Louis and Joseph Belhumeur, John Cameron, Francis Tranchemontagne, Achille Cadotte, among others – a mixture of Detroit river and early Michgian trading families, and Métis families from

the Northwest on their way to Detroit, but rather ended their journey at the "Red River", later named Goderich.

These early 1800s Lake Huron proper traders are revealed to be mainly of French descent – 1) From Detroit and Michigan old trading families, including descendants of old resident trading families from the 1700s Bourassa, Cadotte, Chevalier, de la Ronde, de Lamorandiere, Solomon, Sayer, Beaulieu, and others; - 2: NWC Traders from the North West who entered the Lake Huron trade; and - 3) A relatively few Quebec engagés with contracts for Lake Huron, intermarried with the former groups. Their names are found in the early 1830's Petition to bring a bilingual Priest to Goderich. St. Peters was founded in 1834 and Canada Company land records of the area.

Details are given here of particular Goderich Métis families, some members of extended family trading groups, who are among the earliest in the area :

> Francois Deschamps, a trader from Detroit, came to Goderich with the Goodings, who became a prominent Goderich trading family. Francois was born in Detroit in 1805, son of Jean-Baptiste Huneault Deschamps and Therese Tremblay. The latter, Jean-Baptiste, is included in those few said first to have ventured up the Detroit River system in the late 1700s to the area of the Black River, present day Port Huron, and is believed to have died at Goderich in 1830. In the 1833 trader Francois Deschamps received a Canada Land Grant in Goderich Township. Here he resided with his Métis wife, Charlotte Duchene, of the Duchesne Métis trading family from the St. Clair region that traded in the Saugeen territory from the early 1800s into the 1860s. Many of their church records are found in St. Peter's, Goderich. Francois Deschamps returned to the Port Austin area of Michigan in the early 1870s.
>
> The Duchesne Métis trading family at Goderich and in the Saugeen territory, were descendants of Mackinac Surgeon/Trader Jean-Baptiste Henry "Kasegans" Brillant Beaulieu and Francoisse Sauteaux Itagisse dit Chretienne who by the late 1800s were trading in the Saginaw. Descendants and extended family trading at Goderich from the 1820s were Michel Duchene, Francis Deschamps (Charlotte Duchene); Francis Andres (Jeanne Duchene); and extended families Peter Andres and Jean-Baptiste Deschamps. Victoire Andres, daughter of the late Francis Andres and Jeanne Duchesne, was married at Southampton in 1862. The same year Victoires' widowed mother, Jeanne Duschene/Andres, born 1818 at the Riviere St. Clair, Michigan, in 1862

at Southampton married Augustin Casse St. Aubin, also from St. Clair, Michigan. They returned to reside there soon after.

Francois Desmarais Sr. Francois went from Quebec to the Red River area in very early 1800's, took a country wife, (Elizet) Marie Suzette Sauteaux and had a large family. Francois left the 'Red' in 1820 when Marie Suzette died, he soon remarried and then settled at Goderich. He died at Stoney Pointe, Ontario. A son, Paul Desmarais, was born at Goderich, February 28, 1833. Francois was granted a Canada Company Land Grant on Front Street, Goderich.

Goderich Trader "John Rouleau" was a son of trader Charles Rouleau of Detroit, founder of Rouleau, now Rulu, Nebraska. Charles had interests the mid-west based on the lands belonging, under the provisions of the 1839 Treaty of Prairie du Chien, to his wife, Jane Chauvin. John was granted a Canada Company Land Grant on Front Street, Goderich, where his daughter, Felicity, was born in 1831.

Augustin Gonneville, Maskinonge, was engaged in 1803 by Alexander McKenzie of the XY Company to trade at the head of the Red River. He later traded for the NWC at Fond du Lac, and Nipigon. After 1821 he traded in the Albany District for the HBC, and in the HBC Lake Huron District in 1827, and then in Lake Huron for Goodings at Goderich. He brought his family from the North West and son, Augustin Jr., was born at Saugeen in 1827. Augustin Sr. was awarded land patents in Goderich Township in 1829 and in 1870 Augustin Jr. was granted a patent on Front Street, Southampton, following a lengthy presence on the shore. Augustin Sr. was a second cousin to the wife of Saugeen's earliest recorded trader, Pierre Pichet - Monique Desaulniers descended from early Mackinac Métis families Bourassa and Chevalier.

Etienne de Lamorandiere was a Kalamazoo trader and founder of Killarney. Three of his children traded in the Saugeen territory - Adelaide (Loranger), whose son, Alexander Loranger, was born at Saugeen, April 20, 1833; Thadeus who was described in his Saginaw obituary as being born in 1814 at Mackinac, married in 1837 to Métisse Josephine Farling; and having died in 1897 at Saginaw, was said to be an "Old French gentleman, from a distinguished Family", a Fur trader and interpreter. These two de Lamorandiere siblings retired to Saginaw and are on the Gruet Rolls of "Indian" Bands. A third sibling, Frederic de Lamorandiere, Interpreter, was invited into the Cape Croker band.

> John Cameron and Francis Tranchemontagne were both mix-blood traders from the Northwest whose Métis families were eventually invited into the Saugeen Ojibway band. John traded up the Saugeen Peninsula prior to settlement. Cameron Lake near Tobermory is named for him. The Francis Tranchemontagne family had close ties to the Killarney Métis community. Joseph Lange and second wife, Marguerite Prisque Legris, had two daughters marry into the Wikwemikong Reserve and one daughter, marry Jean-Baptiste Proulx of Killarney.

Equally interesting vignettes are yet unwritten about others amongst the Goderich traders, namely: 1) the Cadottes – Achille and Louison Cadotte. The latter came to Goderich with Tiger Dunlop, then traded in the late 1820s for Etienne de Lamorandiere as far as the Killarney area. In the early 1840s Louison toured Europe with painter, George Catlin's travelling exhibit, and returned with an English wife. He died in 1871 in the Sault area as did Achille; 2) the trader Joseph Lange/Longe Sr. extended family that included Longes, Causleys, Beausoleils, Granvilles, who had kinships with other early area families Ducharme, Deschamps, Desaulniers all who were early traders at Goderich and Saugeen ; and 3) the Cazelets /Causleys who became Sarnia's "first family" and whose family members were an influence at along the shoreline from Sarnia to Southampton into the 1900s; and numerous traders, independent, or otherwise, who were engaged by the Hudson's Bay Company for the Saguingue post. Prominent independent traders such as Askin, Roulette, Rochebleve, and Mitchell of the Mackinac area were known to have traded along the British shoreline of Lake Huron.

The Significance of Genealogy to the Important Work of Providing a Comprehensive Account of The Development of the Lake Huron Shoreline

For the last century and a half, little to nothing has been added to the first few accounts made by early travelers through lower Lake Huron. County histories, over a century old, have left a smattering of names such as Andre, Deschamps, Payette, Longe, Belhumeur, Cadotte, Cazelet, Gonneville, but with no real depth or understanding of who these families were, nor the significance of their presence. This has left a gap in the Lake Huron's shoreline history that has been filled by traditional history, written from viewpoints of the writers' values and often containing more myth and lore than fact.

Genealogy challenges traditional history. It confronts presumptions and the values of traditional history with a vast collection of historical facts –

individual events and people's voices. Genealogy as a study provides proven descendancy, but once completed, the further study of individual events and people's voices provides the facts for accurate recording of history, thus counteracting misunderstandings. Thus, genealogy provides insight into the development of the Lake Huron shoreline through the study of individual groups, relationships, and kinship, and giving reason for the community's survival into the 21st century.

Patsy McArthur is a historic Saugeen Métis author.

Notes

1 (McGown, Mark G. Michael Power: The Struggle to Build the Catholic Church on the Canadian Frontier. McGill-Queen's University Press, 2005.143.)

2 In the Days of the Canada Company: the story of a settlement of the Huron Tract and a view of the social life of the period, 1825-1850. Lizars, Robina,; Lizars, Kathleen MacFarlane. Toronto: Montreal: W. Brigges; C. W. Coates, 1896.

3 Twenty-seven years in Canada West, or, The experience of an early settler. Strickland, Samuel, 1804-1867. Strickland, Agnes, 1796-1874. (London : R. Bentley, 1853)

4 HBCA/FILM

5 Note: The Walk-in-the-Water was replaced in 1822 by the steamer *Superior*, the second steamboat on the lakes. The former was wrecked Oct 31, 1821 on Lake Erie. Source: "The Wreck of the Walk-in-the-Water, Pioneer Steamboat On The Western Lakes". By Mary A. Witherall Palmer, A Passenger on its Last Trip, 1821. Online. http://www.maritimehistoryofthegreatlakes.ca/documents/walkinthewater/default.asp?ID=c1

6 A Historical Paper prepared by Mrs. B. C. Farrand, of this city for the Pioneer Society of Detroit. the Port Huron Daily Times - Monday Evening, June 17 1872. A paper prepared by request of the Pioneer Society of Detroit by Mrs. B. C. Farrand, of this city, was recently read before that Society. http://www.rootsweb.ancestry.com/~mistcla2/Farrand_Pioneers.htm

7 Kenneth Mølbjerg Jørgensen. *Writing History and Relations of Power, Management and Philosophy* No. 5, 2006. Copenhagen Business School Press DK, 2007. PDF. Online. http://vbn.aau.dk/files/18718637/Writing_History_and_Relations_of_Power

The Memory of Miikaans

Little Roads, Paths within the Bkejwanong First Nations Territory

Paul-Emile A. McNab

The Walpole Island First Nation is located in the St. Clair River region, including the River and the Lake of that name, in southwestern Ontario. Walpole Island is the third stopping place in Anishinabeg (also known by anthropologists as Ojibwa, Odawa and Potowatomi peoples) history and culture.[1] Walpole Island borders both Ontario and Michigan and is home to a mixed environmental landscape of farmland, forests, industrialized areas, urban areas, natural beauty and to a number of rare animal and plant species. The traditional rights of ways on the WIFN before the turn of the twentieth century, consisted mainly of Indian trails (little roads or paths known in Ojibwa as Miikaans), which intersected and connected to canoe routes along the waterways. These were the main rights of ways to, on and from Walpole Island.

In the 18th century (before road development), the WIFN used Indian trails and canoe routes along the waterways and these were the main rights of ways to, on and from the territory. These rights of ways were environmentally sound and sustainable using the logic and practices of Traditional Knowledge. The waterways were an integral part of Indigenous knowledge by traveling by land and water, which are connected in a sustainable environmental way. The canoe routes travelled by Aboriginal peoples for centuries were connected with the Indian trails which led to one body of water to another. These trails and paths connected by water were observed and adopted by the earliest French traders and explorers.[2]

Indigenous knowledge, which was readily shared, was the only means of survival for these explorers. However, the increase of European settlement

in the 19th century, in what became southern Ontario, led to the use of the Indian Territory. This imperial process led to the eventual cutting of forests (for the development of roads and railroads), the cultivation of soil (for farming) and the "raising of flocks and herds".[3] The impact of modernity on the traditional Ojibwa way of life had a tremendous effect on their daily life and which would extend into the early 21st century. For example, as early as 1811 the Upper Canada enacted a law that all roads passing through Indian Reserves were "common and public highways". This legislation is still part of Ontario's legislative framework and yet there has never been any Treaty much less compensation for this loss of use of the land for roads within First Nations' lands in Ontario. Moreover, First Nations' still have to pay a share of the maintenance costs even though these highways are "public" and not just used by First Nation citizens.[4]

This historical process has been illustrated by a local historian, Victor Lauriston, who acknowledged that these roads were built on previous trade routes. He also noted how only the white man constructed and used roads for many purposes. Lauriston wrote in his book *Romantic Kent, The Story of a County:* "From early times, the Indian traveled the wilderness; but the Indian had no wheeled vehicles. Till the white man came, he lacked even the horse. Overland, he followed a winding course, taking advantage of the high ground and skirting tricky swamps and difficult hills. The earliest pioneer roads - mere bridle paths - in many cases followed these trails".[5] Non-Indigenous roads which were constructed both and on and off reserve lands in the name of progress soon became legal as well as environmental issues in themselves changing the Indigenous landscape of southwestern Ontario. However, before the construction of modern roads, the use of Miikaans (trails and paths) was quite prevalent across southwestern Ontario and on the WIFN Territory specifically.

One of the earliest English explorers and fur trader named Alexander Henry came to Lower Canada in the 1760s. He noted in his memoir, *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories between the years 1760 and 1776* that:[6]

> On the 18th of June we crossed Lake aux Claires, which appeared to be upward of twenty miles in length. At its further end we came to the carrying-place of Toronto. Here the Indians obliged me to carry a burdern of more than a hundred pounds weight. The day was very hot, and the woods and marshes abounded with mosquitoes; but the Indians walked at a quick pace, and I could by no means see myself left behind. The whole country was a thick forest, through which our only road was a foot-path, or such as, in America, is exclusively termed an Indian path. Next

> morning at ten o'clock we reached the shore of Lake Ontario. Here we were employed two days in making canoes out of bark of the elm tree, in which we were to transport ourselves to Niagara…On the 21st we embarked at Toronto, and encamped, in the evening, four miles short of Fort Niagara, which the Indians would not approach till morning.[7]

Before the arrival of explorers such as Alexander Henry, Aboriginal peoples used Miikaans as their well defined travel routes which connected with the existing waterways. Both documented written history and Aboriginal oral traditions and story-telling confirm the existence of these rights of ways. Edwin C. Gullet wrote in his *Pioneer Travel in Upper Canada* that these routes as "well-traveled trails, often worn from six-inches to a foot into the ground, were followed through the woods from one body of water to another, and these paths were observed and used by the earliest French explorers and traders".[8]

To the southern Ojibwa, Miikaans were used for centuries, well before European contact and settlement in North America. However, Miikaans are not located on any current maps, they still exist through traditional Indigenous knowledge and are passed down through Aboriginal story-telling and traditional ecological knowledge.[9] What is Traditional Ecological Knowledge? According to a report on October 19th, 2000, by Dr. Dean M. Jacobs and Victor P. Lytwyn entitled *Traditional Ecological Knowledge,* which can be defined as the following:

> Aboriginal people have traditionally acquired knowledge orally, through verbal lessons communicated by skilled teachers. That knowledge was passed from one generation to the next, and preserved in oral tradition. Written communication has been a recent development in many Aboriginal communities, and as much traditional knowledge is still passed along verbally. Elders figure prominently as keepers of traditional knowledge and they are responsible for passing on their knowledge which comes from countless generations of oral teaching not amendable to being recorded in writing.[10]

However, there has been considerable debate pertaining to the importance and validity to oral and written history.

Historians such as Bruce Trigger argue against the uses of Aboriginal oral history: "It is of interest when oral traditions confirm other sources of information about the past, but, except when they do, they should not be used even to supplement such sources".[11] This is a common theme among non-Aboriginal scholars who either doubt or claim the usefulness

of traditional knowledge and argue that it does not remain constant over a "period of long term cultural memory".[12] However in 1997, the Supreme Court of Canada determined in the Delgamuukw case "that Aboriginal oral tradition needs to be recognized in the same manner, and be given similar weight, as the written history of non-Aboriginal people in Canada".[13] This legal argument determined that Aboriginal oral tradition is a form of knowledge that, although it is different, it should be equal to and be given weight and substance to written knowledge.[14]

The use of the paths, trails, roads, and bridges on the Unceded Walpole Island Reserve has occupied this historical research based on the federal Department of Indian Affairs' records over the last hundred years or so. This use involves the initial construction and maintenance of the roads and bridges on the Reserve and the arrival of the automobile to the WIFN. There were varying opinions expressed about the uses of the traditional rights of ways and as well as the construction of roads and the advent of the automobile. The interviews were done to seek clarity to those of the federal and provincial written records. A preliminary oral history has allowed for the clarification of the issues raised in these records.

A series of six interviews were conducted at the Walpole Island Heritage Centre on the WIFN in June 2009. The purpose was to obtain and learn about traditional rights of ways on the Island and on the traditional territory. These interviews were completed as an oral history project to gain an understanding and perspective of Anishinabe story-telling and history. The selection process for the interviews was made through previous contacts and discussions through Dr. Dean M. Jacobs and meeting with the Heritage Centre Committee members, and Elders, Eric Isaac and Reta Sands. The discussions were conducted with residents and community members such as elders, ex-Chief and Council members. The process also depended on the availability of the interviewees. My selection began by calling the community members and scheduling the interviews.

The list of interview candidates was suggested in conversation with Mr. Dean M. Jacobs at the Walpole Island Heritage Centre and Mr. Eric Isaac a member of the Heritage Centre Committee. The interview preparations by developing sets of questions, maps and materials that were obtained from the Walpole Island Heritage Centre. Each of the candidates were approached and individually asked to participate in the study. The candidates were chosen and derived from their own personal historical knowledge of the community. All of the chosen candidates signed a consent form authorizing the use of their information for this work.

The first interview was conducted on June 11th at 11:00 a.m., with Jim Miller, who is a retired Professor at the University of Western Ontario and a

former Anglican minister at the Walpole Island Anglican Church. Mr. Miller resided in Port Lambton, Ontario, just north of WIFN. Mr. Miller provided valuable knowledge as to the first owner of an automobile on the Island, Reverend Simpson Brigham, who was also the first Aboriginal Reverend at the Anglican Church. According to documents obtained through the Ford Museum, Henry Ford came to Walpole Island in the early 1900s and befriended Mr. Brigham. Correspondences between Ford's personal secretary E.G. Liebold and the Indian Agent, Archie Highfield, suggest that Ford had donated the first farming equipment to Walpole Island. Miller is not a resident of Walpole Island or an Aboriginal person. However, he had extensive knowledge of the written local history and has written articles on the history of the WIFN and the first automobile (a Ford Sedan) used by Mr. Brigham in 1921.[15]

The second interview was with Clarice Nahdee on June 12th at 9:00 a.m., who was working at the Walpole Island First Nation School as a teaching assistant Nahdee (a descendant of Oshawana, Tecumseh's military lieutenant in the War of 1812-14) was born in Sarnia in 1952, but grew up on Walpole Island. Nahdee's stories included, those of her childhood experiences growing up on the Island in the 1950-60s. She recalled the poor road conditions and the short trips across the St. Clair River to Algonac, Michigan. During the summer months there was the ferry crossing, which was far more accessible than the nearby town of Wallaceburg, Ontario. Nahdee clearly recalled the extreme amount of dust on the roads, explaining that during the summer months it was difficult to breathe and that she could not open the windows to her home. She also recalled "the use of oil on the roads" to try and keep the dust down. She remembered, traveling to Algonac, rather than Wallaceburg, Ontario. The access to Algonac was much easier as she described, although for such needs as health care she had to travel off the Island to Sarnia. The Miikaans, as complex Indigenous infrastructure, linked the Island through the lands and waterways, to the mainland territory, both in the U.S.A. and Canada.[16]

The third interview was conducted with Patrick Isaac on June 15th, 2009; at 8:47 a.m. Mr. Isaac is a former band councillor and administrator with the WIFN on the Island. Mr. Isaac had immense experience of the roads on the Island as a respected elder and member of the community. A former residential school survivor, he provided traditional knowledge from his previous experiences with the former Indian Agent Fred Hall who "made his blood boil", because Hall had complete control over their affairs: "well, Jesus Christ all mighty, he controlled our money and he overruled chief and council". According to Mr. Isaac, the traditional trails and paths were: "all over the place" and "through the bushes", but he choose not to recall their

exact location on a map. However, he could recall and back up the claim that the initial construction of roads and the automobile were for the purpose of the summer cottagers and that they were in his words "pampered" by the Indian Agent and the Department of Indian Affairs. He could also recall the use of calcium chloride and the use of oil in order to keep the dust down, like the other respondents. When asked about the current uses of trails he said: "there are still trails, we don't like to give them, too many white people coming over and stealing them" (crops).[17]

The fourth interview was conducted on June 15th, 2009, at 1:06 p.m., with Donald D. Isaac. Mr. Isaac is a former Chief at Walpole Island (1970-72) and resides on the Island. He is also a veteran of the Second World War. Mr. Isaac had left the Island and had a business in Brantford, Ontario, while maintaining his job as Chief in the early 1970s. He still maintains farmland on the Island. He was involved in a court case that involved his right to travel freely on the Island without a license for a commercial truck. Mr. Isaac's case was documented in the Windsor Star in 1972 and is quoted directly during the interview. Mr. Isaac also recalled the "wild horses" and the "roads through the bushes; however they aren't located on any map now". He used to ride his bicycle through the paths in the past. He was a farmer on the Island and his family was given a tractor via Henry Ford's donation in the early 1920s. Mr. Isaac also recalled the use of oil, (like many of the respondents) in order to keep the dust down on the roads.[18]

The fifth interview was with Reta Sands on June 15th, 2009; at 3:33 p.m. Mrs. Sands is a respected Elder, a linguist expert of the Ojibwa language and a member of the Walpole Island Heritage Centre Committee. She provided a wealth of information and provided valuable discussion and could identify the meaning of paths and trails in Ojibwa as "Miikaans". These Miikaans "were dredged out in the marsh and on tops of dredge cuts". Asked about the current situation regarding the paths, "They are now Snye sub-division, five-hundred feet from the corner, coming in on a short cut, and little path in there. Probably, the "ghetto" (an early Indian Affairs subdivision away from the St. Clair River) now, paths, Tecumseh to River road, there must have been paths in there. The shortest way to the mainland, Aquash road most traveled road to town, how they made it. My Grandfather used to walk to work in town (Wallaceburg). He worked in Wallaceburg at a glass factory. He was shot in the First World War (Rufus Armstrong)."[19]

The sixth interview was with Eric Isaac on June 15th, 4 p.m., Mr. Isaac is one of the most respected elders on the WIFN. He was born on the Island in 1930, before leaving to the Mohawk Residential School at eight years of age. He came back to the Island at a young age and could recall as child

the construction of the roads and bridges. He recalled the use of Indian ponies and wagons used to build the roads, as he recalled: "watching them build the roads from his home off of the Chief's road digging a ditch with horses". Mr. Isaac is a member of the Heritage Committee and a former employee (the Roads foreman) at the WIFN's Department of Public Works for many years. He is now retired and was a valuable asset to both story-telling and oral history across the WIFN and its surrounding traditional territory.[20]

A preliminary oral history of the rights of ways on the Walpole Island First Nation, was to listen, learn and a better understanding of Anishinabe oral history through storytelling and traditional ecological knowledge. The experience of working with a unique perspective on traditional aboriginal story-telling was extremely beneficial for story-telling and traditional knowledge. The responses given by the interviewees during the oral history process were significant in what was said, and not said.[21]

The majority of the respondents had heard from their family members about the use of traditional trails, paths or what Reta Sands described as "Miikaans". Five out of the six (excluding Jim Miller a non-resident) could identify the environmental effects of the roads, in terms of the amount of dust that the gravel roads produced as a result. The answers also revealed the use of calcium chloride, liquid waste oil in order to keep the dust down. This was paid for partly through "band trust funds" for the main benefit of the summer cottagers, the environmental effects on the use of calcium have not yet been explored on Walpole Island. This evidence is backed up in the Indian Affairs records on Walpole Island Roads.[22] Pat Isaac also mentioned the issue of calcium and summer cottagers and remembers the Indian Agent overruling the chief and council to pay from their own monetary (trust fund) accounts.[23]

A few of the interviewees had attended residential schools and therefore had left the Island at a young age, usually between six or eight years of age. Eric Isaac attended the Mohawk Residential School near Brantford, Ontario. Many had also left the Island at a young age (18) for military service in the Second World War (Donald D. Isaac) or had just left the Island to seek employment or school. However, many of the respondents recalled the poor condition of the gravel and dirt roads. The majority of them did indeed use traditional Indian trails for walking and bicycling in their younger days. Also, Eric Isaac pointed out the use of Indian Ponies on the Island and the use of these Ponies for the construction of the roads. (This information is included in the Indian and Northern Affairs Canada files on roads). In fact, in 1939, the Indian Agent James W. Daley confirmed the use of Indian Ponies on the Island and their lack of usefulness toward

the construction of the gravel roads and inability of the Indian Ponies.[24] The study of trails and roads (Miikaans) was important in understanding Indigenous knowledge on the WIFN, which is not available through primary documents (written records) and from secondary historical sources.[25]

According to oral traditions during the winter months, the St. Clair River would freeze over and many residents of Walpole Island could simply walk across the frozen river to Algonac, Michigan. Walpole Island (before the construction of the Chenail Ecarte Bridge in 1970) there were two ferries that connected Walpole Island and the mainland. The first was (the Snye ferry) which connected to the Ontario side which was to either the close by towns of Wallaceburg or Sarnia. The other method of transportation was to Algonac via the International border crossing.[26]

The signing of the Jay Treaty in 1794 (which, "the signatories to the Jay Treaty were aware of the rights and freedoms that First Nations People utilized and expected, especially for unimpeded travel throughout their Aboriginal Territories. These systems and relationships developed to include European Nations, who further cultivated and encouraged the pre-contact relationships and utilized the pre-existing networks and systems for their own use, benefit and profit")[27] the inhabitants at Walpole Island simply walked across the frozen St. Clair River to Algonac.

Retrospect

The use of Miikaans, were used for centuries across the traditional territory of the current WIFN and all across modern day Canada. Both the trails and waterways comprised the traditional rights of ways. The Europeans encountered a vast and large area that was foreign and unforgiving, in terms of climate and space. The Ojibwa had paths and trails that were well defined and linked to the rivers and lakes. In fact, Europeans depended and relied on these trails during the spring and summer months traveling paths and trails by foot. Traditional Indigenous knowledge continues to play an important role in the construction and expansion of trails and paths into the 21st century. The newcomers to Upper Canada did not survey and plan new roads through the wilderness on their own. They used and followed the Ojibwas' travel in order to accommodate the new settlers. They followed the trade and hunting routes linked to the rivers and lakes.

A current resident of Walpole Island Clarice Nahdee stated in a interview conducted on June 12th, 2009 at the Walpole Island Heritage Centre, that she remembered both the conditions of travel and living on Walpole Island in the 1950s:

I think that without the roads and bridges, we wouldn't have gotten any healthcare. I can remember, there was nothing here, one little grocery store

here. If I needed to get anything, we went to Algonac or Wallaceburg. I hated it, we'd have to go so far, to do anything. I had to go to Sarnia or Chatham for healthcare. I was more likely to go across to the U.S. The only time we really used the ferry was to go to school. I remember the trips to Algonac, Michigan, it was easy, more stores, just much easier.[28]

It was always best to take the shortest way around the Bkejwanong Territory whether it was on land or by the waterways both then and now.

Miikaans continue to play a significant role as Indigenous knowledge and infrastructure of the Bkejwanong in the early 21st century. As always, the survival of Indigenous people, especially in sacred places, has always been wholly dependent on such knowledge. Miikaans clearly linked Walpole Island to the Canadian and American Islands as well as to the mainland Bkejwanong Territory.

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Notes

1 *The Mishomis Book: The Voice of the Ojibway*, p. 3-5.

2 *Pioneer Travel in Upper Canada*, p. 1.

3 *Nin.Da.Waab.Jig*. *Walpole Island: The Soul of Indian Territory*, p. 31.

4 *"Roads and Rights": Public Roads and Indian Land in Nineteenth-century Southern Ontario,* p. 67-68.

5 *Romantic Kent, the story of a county: 1626-1952,* p. 146.

6 *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Accessed online at:http://www.thecanadian encyclopedia.com/index.cfm?PgNm=TCE&Params=A1ARTA0003707

7 *Travels and Adventures in Canada and the Indian Territories,* p. 179-80.

8 *Pioneer Travel in Upper Canada*, p. 1.

9 *Walpole Island Oral History Project*.

10 *Traditional Ecological Knowledge. A Presentation to State of the Lakes Eco-System Conference 2000*, p. 3.

11 Ibid.

12 Ibid.

13 *Traditional Ecological Knowledge. A Presentation to State of the Lakes Eco-System Conference 2000*, p. 4.

14 Ibid.

15 *Walpole Island Oral History Project*.

16 Ibid.

17 Ibid.

18 Ibid.

19 Ibid.

20 Ibid.

21 Ibid.

22 *Correspondences concerning the construction of Roads on Walpole Island*. Federal Archives of Canada: RG 10, Indian Affairs Records, Headquarters Files, Microfilm Reel # C-12, 229, Volume 7726, File 23,040-1-7.

23 *Walpole Island Oral History Project*.

24 National Archives of Canada. Indian Headquarters File. *Walpole Island Agency – Correspondence, Labour Returns and Accounts concerning road work done on the Walpole Island Reserve 1937-39*. Reel RG-10-C-12029.

25 *Walpole Island Oral History Project.*

26 Ibid.

27 *Jay Treaty*, Accessed online at: http://www.akwesasne.ca/jaytreaty.html

28 *Walpole Island Oral History Project.*

Some Reflections on the Making of *Legend and Memory* (2002): Indigenous Voices in Film

David T. McNab

Legend and Memory (2002): The Beginnings-2000-2001

The making of *Legend and Memory: Ontario's First Nations* (David Hawkins, dir., TVO, Studio 2, 2002) a documentary film came from a simple request from David Newhouse, then Chair in the Department of Native Studies at Trent University in Peterborough, on September 19th, 2000. David e-mailed us (John S. Milloy, also at Trent) whether we as historians would be interested in assisting TV Ontario (TVO) in making a film for Studio 2 on Ontario First Nations on their history. TVO is a public television network specializing in education programming, among other things. John Milloy was busy working on Aboriginal health policy after completing his major work on the residential schools issues. I e-mailed David Newhouse back stating that I would meet with TVO to see what could be done working with them. He gave me the name of the film director, David Hawkins and his telephone number.

I called David Hawkins early in October and told him (pretty cheekily) that I would act as the historical consultant and guide them in the making of the one-hour film documentary for Studio 2. But I had 2 conditions. I told him that these conditions were as follows: 1) There must been no voice as master narrator like *Canada: A People's History* then currently being made by the CBC at a cost of millions of dollars. I wanted the voices of the Indigenous people of the First Nations to come through loud and clear to tell their own stories free and uninterrupted by a master narrator; 2) TVO had to shoot the film only in the Places of the Indigenous historians and not in a studio in Toronto. I told them (David and Daniel Kitts-also a co-director of this documentary) that this would cost TVO "big bucks". To my

surprise, David said yes to both my conditions and invited me to come up to the TVO headquarters at St. Clair and Yonge for a free lunch (it cost TVO $3.68 in the TVO cafeteria) to talk it over in downtown Toronto, ironically near the Indian Affairs regional office for Ontario. We met and agreed on what was to be done to line up the making of this educational film for TVO. The only issue was that I told them that Michel Gros-Louis, a Wendat from Wendake, near Quebec City in Quebec, would have to be interviewed in French. I told them to use sub-titles in English and they agreed. I was to line up the First Nations historians (but not Metis ones) and assist in editing and re-editing the script.

During the Fall of 2000 and the Winter of 2001 we worked away so that the filming could begin in the Spring of 2001. It was a highly agreeable process and things got done on schedule. TVO met the conditions I had set. Shooting began in all parts of Ontario and Quebec-from Walpole Island in Lake St. Clair in the south to Peawanuck on Hudson Bay and from Wendake and Montreal in the east to Mantoulin Island in the west. We covered the four directions. I was only present once at Walpole Island in August for the filming and they caught me on camera for a few seconds only once. The purpose of this paper in pedagogical and I have not gone back to interview the film directors or the participants, most of whom are still living and part of the natural world.

Legend and Memory aired on Studio 2 on Good Friday, March 23rd, 2002 and was shown a few times thereafter that year. It is still available on the TVO website as an educational film. It was nominated for a Gemini award in the Fall of 2002. It did not win a Gemini because it was up against the CBC's multi-million dollar extravaganza *Canada: A People's History*, which won. *Legend and Memory* was the first time that First Nations' historians in Ontario told their own independent and sovereign stories and histories from their Places.

Two of the historians interviewed in the film, Rodney Bobiwash, an Anishinabe from Georgian Bay then residing in Toronto, and Norm Jacobs, then the Six Nations wampum keeper for the Haudenosaunee Confederacy, passed away into the spirit world and went home. When I see them again in the film (I had known them personally), I thank the Creator for having made the film since they imparted much Indigenous knowledge in it. *Legend and Memory: Ontario First Nations* is an apt title for the film. It does approach Indigenous stories and storytelling in legend-origin or creation stories-and memory-oral traditions.

The hosts of the film were Paula Todd and Steve Paikin who briefly introduced it to the Studio 2 audience. They described it as the First Nations' own version of their histories-stories-of the land now known

as Ontario and how it changed through legend and memory. The film is divided, not necessarily chronologically, into the following four parts: 1) Representations of "Indians" as First Nations' peoples and their Creation stories; 2) Traditional Societies; 3) Contact and Conflict; 4) Learning and Legacies. Each part is filled with stories about Places. Within each part, every segment is shot lovingly by Place. Each Place literally introduces each community and its "historian"-Elder and/or storyteller. Fifteen Elders/storytellers/historians are interviewed; seven are female and the rest male. Each part is filled with Indigenous knowledge, which is not at all surprising since such knowledge comes from Places. The following description is not intended as an analysis of this documentary film. Instead it only gives some indication of what I have found of interest by my students in the context of teaching courses in Indigenous Thought.

1) Representations and Creation Stories

The first part opens dramatically with Ron Wabegishik, the medicine person and historian from Wikwemikong, Manitoulin Island, stating that he once heard an Elder say that in time there would be no "Indians" left; we would all be facsimiles of "Indians". Eddie Benton Banai, an Anishinabe Elder, is up next at Nin.Da.Waab.Jig., the Walpole Island Heritage Centre in which he says that Nature and human beings are part of the world that the Creator made and that human beings were created last. Benton-Banai states unequivocally that we have forgotten our history-our Creation stories and we have to go back to them. Our history is not contained in written records left by white people-our stories are not "simple" as "savages" as we have been portrayed. We must return to and must have our view of ourselves as Indigenous people in which "women come first".

At Tyendinaga, Alan Brant tells us the Haudenosaunee story of sky woman. Gary Warrick, also a Haudenosaunee and an archaeologist from Wilfrid Laurier University in Brantford campus, talks to us about the Beringian hypothesis and how Iroquoian people lived at Crawford Lake near Toronto. Jan Hill, one of the clan mothers, tells the Haudenosaunee worldview and how the world was created on the back of a turtle.

Benton Banai then asked the most important questions: from whence did we come? Where are we going? The Original Person asked these and other questions so that we could begin to understand the universe. Ron Wabegishik reiterated that Mantoulin Island was a "shrine"-a sacred place within the natural elements of Earth, Fire, Water and Air. As such, we are all equals in this life as part of all my relations. Louis Bird, the Cree historian at Peawanuck, says that human beings came from the sky-the stars. While all these creation stories are different, they have very similar themes about

where we came from and were we are going. We are only a small part of the natural world and we were created last; we do not know everything. The first part ends with the worldviews of First Nations, their creation stories and the primary factor that human beings are part and parcel of Nature and the Natural World.

2) Traditonal Societies

The second part opens with a scene from a powwow at Tyendinaga. We are told that Indigenous people are international and that they are responsible for sharing their traditions among all cultures. The traditional societies were comprised of Clans and Confederacies.

For the Haudenosaunee, Jan Hill reiterates that the major clans are turtle, bear and wolf. The Confederacy is matrilineal and the male chief are chosen by the clan mothers to speak for the whole Nation. Ron Wabegishik states that there are seven primary clans among the Anishinabe and then gives some understanding of their functions within the traditional societies. Benton-Banai then tells the story of the Anishinabe Migration from the East to West along the seven stopping places: 1) Montreal (Isle d'Helene), 2) Niagara Falls, 3) Walpole Island, 4) Manitoulin Island, 5) Bawating (Sault Ste. Marie), 6) Spirit Island, 7) Madeleine Island. He notes that the Three Fires Confederacy was spiritual. This does not mean that the Confederacy was not political or economic for it certainly was. The Lake Chiefs represented the people and spoke for them. The centre of this Confederacy was at Walpole Island.

Jan Hill tells us succinctly about the political organization of the Iroquois Confederacy. She notes that the role of Chiefs who were always male but that they were always chosen by the clan mothers. The Chiefs also were the speakers for the Confederacy.

In each Confederacy, the relationships were governed by peace, mutual respect and trust. "Wars" were settled by a system of treaties by meeting and discussing things at which the sacred pipe was smoked. (Ron Wabegishik) The significance of this form of gathering to ensure peace through the sacred pipe was that their "mingled thoughts" might be raised discussed and then turned into peace (Benton Banai).

Brant Bardy then related how this understanding of peace was achieved by the Haudenosaunee through the example of "The Peacemaker" at Tyendinaga. This example showed the Great Law of Peace which the Iroquois Confederacy still followed to this day. Gary Warrick then indicated that the Confederacy had always practiced this Great Law for thousands of years even in the Longhouse with their everyday living arrangements. The objective was Peace not war. Life before the arrival of the Europeans

was different but the basic political and everyday principles of Indigenous knowledge were there prior to contact with Europeans.

3) Contact and Conflict

Jacques Cartier stands for all that was changed through contact and conflict. The primary change was wrought by the differences that the Europeans brought with them to Turtle Island. But change was present in every age on both sides of the contact equation. Every Indigenous Nation had knowledge through prophecy that the Europeans were coming and so they were prepared for what was to happen. George Sioui told the Wendat story of the arrival of Jacques Cartier to Stadacona-now Quebec City. They wished that Cartier and his men had no women with them and needed women to help them make a home in the "new land". The Wendat offered (to assist them and to build a friendship with Cartier and his men) a niece of Chief Donnacona to Cartier as his wife. Cartier refuses this gift of friendship and the niece became the "object of the sailors" rather than Cartier's wife. Louis Bird stated that the northern Cree had the "vision" of what was coming-the arrival of the large sailing ships, which were unknown to them. The Cree admired that the Europeans brought with them "co-operation" on a larger scale unknown to them.

In the recent (2001) homecoming of the Wendat, Michel Gros-Louis, a Wendat, historian talks about the original homeland of Wendake on the shores of Georgian Bay in Ontario (just north of present-day Wasaga Beach). He tells the story that the French missionaries were really to blame for the decline and the fall of Wendake by the mid-17th century through the spread of disease among the Wendat. It was not the Iroquois who were responsible for the destruction of the Wendat but they were blamed by European historians ever since. The Wendat were scattered to the "four winds", until recently when the homecoming occurred. George Sioui added that the Wendake nation was small but strategic. The French missionaries, being in the vanguard of change brought about the takeover of Wendake and provided the pretext for the need for conversion and taking the land. The most important issues were "commerce" (trade) and land then and now.

Louise Pothier, a curator at the Pointe-a-Calliere Museum of archaeology in Montreal shows us the Champlain belt, which represented the very first treaty between the French, and the Indigenous Nations in 1610. She then told us all about the Great Peace of 1701-which was then being celebrated as the 300th anniversary of the Treaty through a re-enactment of it. That Peace Treaty shaped modern Canada and brought together the Europeans and the Indigenous Nations under the diplomatic initiatives and

customs of the Great Law of Peace, which the European Nations accepted. However, no non-Indigenous federal or provincial government ever recognized that Treaty. In the summer of 2001 this view changed when they both gave monies to support the re-enactment of the Great Peace. George Sioui described the significance of this re-enactment in 2001 at Montreal. French hegemony over Quebec colony was never possible. The key historical actor was Kondiaronk (c. 1649-1701), who was a Wendat Chief and who passed away into the spirit world during the negotiations that led successfully to this Great Peace.

Okwaho (George Thomas from the Six Nations) observed how significant firearms were, which Europeans brought to Turtle Island, and how they changed quantitatively warfare in North America. Instead of peace, there was large-scale warfare. The Indigenous practices of warfare were based on hunting and Indigenous warriors could not understand how the Europeans would throw away their lives in such a large scale. Thomas states that the Elders had told him that re-enactments would be one of the ways in which we should remember honour and respect our veterans then and now. For them, warfare was conducted as hunting and survival such as tracking-defensive warfare. In all of these wars fought for European empires in Europe and in North America, the Iroquois, after the American Revolution, were dispersed on both sides of the international border, which was established by the Treaty of Paris in 1783. Thereafter, Joseph Brant was influential but he "was never a Chief in Confederacy. He was a captain in the Indian Department". This is a significant interpretative change in the history of this period since Brant has always been regarded as a powerful chief.

The film shifts to Manitoulin Island and Mike Trudeau who was born in 1881. The historians are two women-Rita Trudeau Corbiere and Helena Trudeau who were descendants of Mike Trudeau. The story is about Drummond Island (near Manitoulin Island) and the War of 1812. The focus is on Head Man, Nebocomb and on his vision quest. He acquired the powers of the eagle which he relied upon to help defeat the Americans at Detroit. In spite of saving Canada from the Americans, using his Eagle powers to shape shift and see what (and how many) the Americans were doing. The result was the loss of Drummond Island-their homeland after this War. This interpretation is not in the textbooks on Canadian history. It is a powerful story.

We are then introduced to Norm Jacobs, then the Keeper of the Wampum Belts for the Haudenosaunee. Jacobs shows us the original belts and explains their significance-namely the Friendship Treaty and the Two Row wampum. Jacobs explains that the Iroquois kept their memory through

these belts, which were made of shells. It was a "jog your memory" and that was the way that our way of "talking the truth". The Two Row Wampum is shown as images of a canoe and a sailing ship going down a river side by side on their journey together. Jacobs tells us that the Six Nations, as a result of this Two Row wampum, retained their citizenship rather than to adopt Canadian citizenship. He also spoke about the 1924 raid on the Six Nations by the RCMP, which seized some of the wampum belts in the Confederacy's Council house. Thereafter, this action hindered how the Six Nations read the wampum and their treaties.

Rodney Bobiwash speaks of the oral history of the Anishinabe regarding the 1792 Gunshot Treaty. He noted that written and oral evidence of this Treaty exists by which the Anishinabe shared the land around the Great Lakes as far as a gunshot could be heard but retained all the waters, lands under the waters, islands, and peninsulas.

Dr. Dean M. Jacobs, former Chief and then Director of Nin.Da.Waab.Jig., the Walpole Island Cultural Centre, talks about the history of Walpole Island as an unceded reserve. There has been no treaty covering the Islands, which are still today regarded as a reserve. Dr. Jacobs takes us through the wetlands of Walpole Island and speaks how their citizens regarded their lands and waters as well as managing their landscape. He spoke about the St. Anne Island Treaty of 1796, which he regarded as an "illegal" taking of some of their lands, known as the Chenail Ecarte Reserve after 1796. Edward Benton Banai then participates in a re-enactment of this Treaty 205 years after its negotiation.

With respect to Treaty #9, Louis Bird points out that the Cree people had no understanding of the contexts and the basic premises of the ownership of the land, as understood by Europeans. How could our ancestors have understood answering the question, which the treaty negotiators asked them-how could we give up the land to which we did not "own". John Bird was his grandfather and a negotiator and signer of the treaty. The question remains: what are we giving up since nobody owns the land-there is "no such thing to them". They signed because of the promises of the Crown that they believed would care for them in the future. These promises were not kept. When I was at Winisk and Peawanuck in June of 1984, Louis Bird asked me to give them a copy of the treaty, which I did. No one had as yet given them a copy of Treaty #9 of 1929-30, although it had been promised more than fifty years previously.

4) Learning and Legacies

The last section sums up where we are today: how can we keep our Indigenous knowledge of our traditional societies and what legacies are

today the result of the stories which we have from these historical experiences of the last five hundred years of contact. Benton Banai speaks about how Indigenous people have to return to the principles and values of our traditional languages and cultures in a modern context. Jan Hill echoes that theme showing today how important Indigenous languages are to their cultures. Who we are? And where are we going? Dorothy Lazore, a language teacher at Akwesasne, shows us what can be done in the classroom with young people. The Indigenous languages must be restored and preserved and taught in the classroom. The original languages were spoken and later they were "written down by Jesuits". Jan Hill speaks about how difficult this task is because of the sad legacy of the residential schools in which children of a many generations were "not to speak Indian but English". So as a result, there has been little or no teaching of languages on reserves or otherwise until recently. Here the film includes historical images from residential schools from the 19th and 20th century. In Canada, the last residential school closed down only in 1996. The legacies of the past have been horrific, including sexual and physical abuses since the late 19th century. They have been still widely felt today across the generations of those who survived them. The loss of languages and cultures is paramount (Dickason and McNab, 427-57).

And yet, Indigenous people have survived. As Renee Ojeebah shows in his making of a canoe at the end of the film, the canoe still is made and used and will be in use "long after the passenger train is gone". Indigenous knowledge and values and principles are still here today, which will help us to survive now and in the future. A Wyandot woman, Ishgooda, ends the film. She states that Indigenous people have a genetic memory of what Home means to them. There is hope and survival. Indigenous people are part of Nature. And Nature is mindscape and landscape conjoined (McNab, 2010).

Retrospect

The basic lesson of this chapter is that, if you want to hear Indigenous voices in films, at least in Canada, you may have to create them for yourself. I was fortunate to have done so and it was a good experience for my students and me. Perhaps, as university teachers, we should be more proactive in seeking out such opportunities to enrich our courses by creating films with Indigenous voices in them. This process is also necessary for Indigenous survival, as is shown in *Legend and Memory*, and as contained in the Anishinabe word "Nindinawemaganidok", or my relatives. As Louise Erdrich has written, "we speak of everything that has existed in time, the known and the unknown, the unseen, the obvious, all that lived before or

is living now in the worlds above and below." It can also be an individual healing process, which reconciles and restores balance.

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Re-Membering Qimuksiit: Narrating the Sled Dog Slaughter of Canada's North

Maureen Riche

"Remembering," according to Homi Bhabha, "is never a quiet act of introspection or retrospection. It is a painful re-membering, a putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present" (1994). To say that Canada's Inuit, or any other indigenous people in this country for that matter, currently exist in a traumatic present might seem to be a glib statement of the obvious. Nonetheless, the facts are real and startling and bear repeating: alcoholism; crime; broken families; unemployment rates exceeding four times the national average; crowded and sub-standard living conditions affecting almost 40 per cent of Inuit; a youth suicide rate which tops a tragic and almost incomprehensible eleven times the national average globally (Goinet; Health Canada). The Inuit of Canada's North—Nunavut, Nunavik (Northern Quebec), the Northwest Territories and Nunatsiavut (Labrador)—continue the struggle to make sense of it all, and to dig deep into a painful past ravaged and scarred by colonial interventions into a once solid, stable and holistic way of life. In recent decades, and particularly within the last year, a large part of this intense and difficult memory work has centred on stories of the demise of the qimmiq, or Inuit sled dog. A chorus of voices has emerged in various forums to decry the forced decimation of the qimmiq population, and to demand an apology and compensation. In this regard, the re-membering has grown to be anything but a quiet act, and one not without a large measure of controversy.

Stories of Slaughter: Some Emerging Themes

In the 1920s, there were 20,000 Canadian Inuit Dogs—qimmiq— in the North. By 1970, there were less than 200 (Montcombroux 11). The Inuit maintain that one of the main reasons for this dramatic reduction, to near extinction of the qimmiq population was a mass slaughter of Inuit sled dogs by government and police officials in the 50s, 60s, and 70s. The Inuit elders claim that police and government officials stationed in Nunavut and Northern Quebec, acting on a direct order from the government, killed tens of thousands of their dogs. They feel that this systematic slaughter was carried out in an effort to force them off the land, to encourage them to settle in communities and to more easily assimilate them into the white way of life: to quote-unquote civilize them.

Efforts to have these stories told, recorded and heard by federal and provincial governments and their agencies have been underway in earnest since the late 1990s. In 1999, the Makivik Corporation, an entity created to administer the James Bay and Northern Quebec Land Claims Agreement, began travelling through its 15 communities in the North, collecting elder testimony, and filing official complaints and petitions with government. In 2005, the stories finally began to get attention and action. In January 2005, the Makivik Corporation submitted an official brief to the federal and Quebec governments, entitled "The Slaughtering of Nunavik Qimmiit". The 27-page, 10,000-word submission was timed to coincide with the debut of an Inuit-produced 54-minute documentary on the slaughter, Echo of the Last Howl. Echo was screened on January 19 at the Katittavik Community Centre and Town Hall in Kuujuaq, Quebec for an audience of elders, regional organizations, government representatives and the media. Community leaders and elders were subsequently invited to speak before Ottawa's Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in March 2005 during two special sessions devoted to exploring the potential of a public inquiry into the dog slaughter. The committee meetings were a milestone, to be sure, but also a non-starter, as deadlines to launch the independent inquiry came and went. Instead, on April 25, 2005 the Minister then responsible for the RCMP, Anne McLellan, sent a formal request to then RCMP commissioner Giuliano Zaccardelli to begin "a comprehensive review of the RCMP actions regarding sled dogs in the North between 1950 and 1970" (Final Report 3). In effect, the RCMP was asked to investigate themselves. Not surprisingly, when the RCMP final report was released in 2006, the police force concluded that there had been no systematic slaughter of Inuit dogs in the North. The review carried out by the RCMP did not include any testimony from Inuit elders.

Frustrated with the RCMP findings, the Qikiqtani Inuit Corporation opted to mount their own inquiry, and the Qikiqtani Truth Commission (QTC) was struck in January 2008. The QTC has since travelled to 13 communities across the North hearing the testimony that was lacking in the RCMP review. Also in 2008, the Makivik Corporation spearheaded its own review, independent of the work being carried out by the QTC. It was helmed by retired Supreme Court Justice Jean-Jacques Croteau, and also involved consultations with leaders and elders in their communities. In March 2010, Croteau submitted his final report to Makivik and the Quebec government. He verified the deaths of 400 dogs in Nunavik in the time period in question; he affirmed that some were shot, some poisoned, and still others were killed in makeshift gas chambers. On the basis of the stories he collected and reviewed, Croteau concluded that the federal and Quebec governments owe the Inuit an apology and compensation for the loss of their dogs (Croteau 2010). The QTC's final report, which will likely affirm Croteau's findings, is scheduled for release in fall 2010. In the meantime, a second documentary film, this one a production of Piksuk Media and the National Film Board of Canada, debuted in June 2010. It included video footage from the QTC hearings, as well as new interviews with elders and retired RCMP members. That documentary is entitled Qimmit: A Clash of Two Truths.

Despite the ongoing debate over the veracity and reliability of stories concerning a systematic slaughter of Inuit sled dogs, some things seem to be beyond dispute. That the dogs are no longer a prominent feature of the Northern Canadian landscape appears to be a given. That the decades unfolding from the arrival of colonial agents in the continent's Northern reaches were tumultuous ones for the Inuit cannot be denied. Upheaval followed upheaval; trauma was layered upon trauma; insult was added to a seemingly endless assault of egregious injury. The Inuit encountered disease and death; forced relocations; environmental degradations; loss of language, religion and culture; loss of their own children; and myriad other abuses. That these people are engaged in an ongoing project of "painful re-membering", that there is a monumental need to undertake a collective "putting together of the dismembered past to make sense of the trauma of the present" seems a painfully straightforward proposition. Yet, questions remain, and the singular question my research aims to answer is this: why dog stories? What, precisely, is being re-membered through the narration of an alleged dog slaughter? The flashpoint for so many of these explosive testimonies, all of which smolder with the resonant tumult and pain of the colonial project, is this core narrative of the fate of the Inuit sled dog. Why?

As the most basic level, of course, the answer seems obvious. The sled dog was an absolutely vital component of the Inuit way of life, and its demise was a key factor in the rapid-fire changes that swept across Canada's North in the mid-20th century. Prior to the "snowmobile revolution", the dog sled was the primary means of transportation and access to far-flung hunting grounds. Dogs meant you could travel; travel meant you could eat. Any of the past or current literature on the breed will speak to this utilitarian aspect of the Inuit's only domesticated animal. Ian Kenneth MacRury, in his Master's Thesis The Inuit Dog: Its Provenance, Environment and History, states that "the association of the Inuit and their dogs was an enduring and significant aspect of life in the Arctic region for over a thousand years. The one was dependent upon the other for their mutual existence in an extreme environment" (39). A 2009 compilation of the oral history of Nunavut, Uqalurait, further acknowledged this significance by structuring the collection of stories, which spanned topics from astronomy to animal skin preparation, like a qamutiq, or dog sled: the two main sections of the book represented the sled runners; the five themes were the lashings that held the sled together. And then there is perhaps the single most telling testament to the sled dog's significance to the Inuit way of life: when Nunavut became Canada's newest territory in 1999, the qimmiq was named as its official animal.

The voices of the Inuit elders as they recount the loss of their dogs also speak eloquently to the centrality of the dogs to their survival. "They were the most important resource in our life," Naala Nappaaluk says in the 2005 Makivik brief. "They were our basic tools for living" (3). Mark Uninnak testified to the unique skills of the dogs, saying they:

> …were survival tools. In a blizzard, where you can't see anything, they could bring their master home. They are the real reason why people survived (...) the Qimmiit were the first ones to realize when the ice was dangerous, the first ones to recognize danger... the Qimmiit are the reason why I am alive today. (Ibid.)

In the various collections of testimony in various media, the elders tell stories of dogs saving Inuit from drowning; of dogs leading their owners back home in zero visibility conditions; of dogs locating precious breathing holes of seal and other sea mammals; of Inuit surviving starvation by killing and eating the flesh of their prized qimmiq. The dogs' knowledge of the land was unparalleled; their endurance and loyalty unmatched. Time after time, the elders canvassed for the Makivik brief, testified—concisely, eloquently—to the importance of their qimmiq:

> David Oovaut: "They were the most important part of our lives" (4).

> Eva Ilimasaut: "They were our most treasured possessions" (Ibid).
>
> Paulusie Weetaluktuk: "In the past, a man without dogs wasn't a man" (3).

Yet the stories of the sled dog slaughter reveal that sled dogs are remembered as much more than just tools, property or prized possessions, and that their deaths were more than just the loss of an artifact of material culture. The stories the elders tell are more complicated, more layered than that. (Even the use of the term slaughter lets the listener know there is more going on here than the simple remembrance of an individual animal, or team of animals. "Slaughter" is far from a neutral term: it carries highly significant connotations, hinting at both the sheer number of alleged deaths and also the laying of blame on some outside, powerful force, namely the colonial agents). These narratives are derived from one day, perhaps even one hour or less, in a personal experience, yet in the telling they bloom much larger and more colourful than the initial seed of loss planted decades prior. Instead of death stories, they become life stories: carefully crafted, intricately woven, expansive, riveting. They are rooted in a singular pain, but ripe with a far more elaborate pathos and purpose. Consider the testimony of Joanasie Maniapik before the House of Commons Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development in March 2005. Recalling the day his dogs were killed, Maniapik includes some incredibly vivid vignettes, particularly the removal of the harnesses from his dead animals, and the memory of the shooter's rifle, post-mortem, laid innocently against a nearby rock. He remembers:

> I went down to see what was happening and I saw two police officers. There was an officer and an assistant, and all my dogs were dead. Their rifles were placed against the rock. I took one of them and I wanted to break one of their rifles. I don't know the reason why I didn't do that. I regret to this day that I didn't break their rifles. I was in so much pain. My life was destroyed. I tried taking their harnesses off. As I was trying to take them off, I was crying. (Canada)

The tenderness with which he tends to his dead dogs makes for an incredibly poignant image, as the present day narrator works through the memory of their killing at the hands of two police officers. Undoing the harnesses while dealing with his rage, confusion and pain, it becomes clear that these animals are more than just tools of survival. It is the harness which literally connects dog to man in this working relationship; removing it is a recognition that the relationship has come to a tragic end. It is a severing of ties: reluctant, sad and painful. The touching moment with the animal, however, is in stark contrast to the moment of confrontation

with the police officers. It is the image of the rifle which dominates this excerpt: a symbol of colonial power, and the impossibility of challenging it. If only he had the courage to destroy the weapon, could he have reversed the fate of his dogs? Of his people? There is so much more going on here than the simple loss of property. The harness represents traditional Inuit knowledge, connection and life. The rifle represents colonial intervention, defiance and death.

These are intricately meaningful metaphors deployed by a skilled storyteller, and they have much to tell us about how the Inuit piece together these fragments of their past in order to make sense of the trauma of the present. The death of a dog may be, sequentially speaking, a simple event comprised of one or two narrative clauses: the officer kills the dog; the owner reacts. But these are not simple stories. Consider the testimony of another elder, Jamesie Mike, who recounts yet another dramatic tale of slaughter, this one in the documentary Qimmit: A Clash of Two Truths. He, too, uses the image of a gun; here, it is an item of exchange, of bribery perhaps, an artifact of filthy colonial lucre. Mike also uses another remarkable image in his story which, like the harnesses above, speaks to the intimacy between Inuit and qimmiq. He recalls:

> The policeman was dragging [the body of my] my dog to the dump. It was down by the shoreline. I told him my dog had a puppy, but he didn't believe me. I squeezed milk out of its nipple, so he could see for himself. When he realized this, he got all flustered, and tried to give me his 30-30. I didn't want it. (Qimmit)

What emerges in this excerpt is the seemingly nonnegotiable chasm of cultural misunderstanding regarding the value of a dog that divides the police officer from the Inuit man. To the police officer, the dog was refuse, a piece of technology that was no longer functioning, or no longer worth having, and so to be tossed aside like so much garbage . Further, the dog is seen as a strictly material possession, expendable and exchangeable, its value equal to that of a big game rifle. To the Inuk, of course, this seems a strange and confusing insult: what use is a gun to hunt with, without dogs to take one to the seal holes, or to the caribou herd? Similar to the harness-rifle dichotomy in the previous story, the opposition created here is "dog as litter" versus "dog as life form." The Mountie sees an inanimate object, exchangeable for one of the same or equal value; the Inuk sees a living being, and a mother, still producing milk even after the officer's bullet has stopped her heart. It is a gesture of great pathos and intimacy between Inuk and qimmiq—to reach out and touch the animal's nipple in order to induce lactation suggests a relationship without body boundaries or taboos. That it occurs in support of the maternal connection between a

bitch and her pup adds yet another layer of intimacy and connection. It belies a relationship so close and tender, in fact, that it appears to embarrass the dog's killer into his awkward and misguided attempt at reparation.

In the collected testimony alleging an Inuit sled dog slaughter, from 1999 to the present day, we can see a complexity of themes and narrative strategies emerge. The importance of the sled dogs to the survival of the Inuit is explicitly expressed by several elders, as is the impact of their loss on the ancient, nomadic hunting and fishing way of life. Radiating out from this basic premise, however, we can also begin to delineate a far-reaching and more intricate web of meaning being woven around this core narrative event. The residual anger and resentment at the colonial powers in the North at that time, for example, are quite evident. In the 2005 Makivik brief, several of the stories are grouped together under the headline "Iligasutuq", which refers to the feeling of intimidation Inuit often felt in the face of the white men who were new arrivals in their land (14). One elder describes the unnamed officer who killed his dog, saying "Unfortunately I do not remember the name of the policeman [but] he had moustache, he was a big man and he came from Kuujjuaq" (13). It is a demonization of the Other: tall when most Inuit were short of stature; mustachioed when most Inuit lacked facial hair; and hailing from Kuujjuaq, an early HBC trading post and, later, military settlement—a quintessential colonial community. Like Joanasie Makiapik and his desire to destroy the officer's rifle, many elders speak of feeling powerless to resist the actions of such strange and intimidating figures, and later, regret at not having done so. The white men had "supreme authority" and an Inuk would not disobey even the most disturbing commands (15). They simply had to do what they were told. It was not only the RCMP who are remembered in this manner; elders recount seeing dogs die at the hands of various white outsiders: teachers, missionaries, HBC employees, even a government engineer.

Another key theme which emerges from the collected oral history of the dog slaughter is the utter inability of the Inuit to conceive of a life without their dogs. Dogs had always been a part of their past; surely dogs would always be a part of their future. Jamesie Mike, in the prelude to his story in the documentary Qimmit, recounts to his granddaughter how he had given away his dog team to another family in need, but that he kept one female to start another team for himself and his own family. It was the corpse of this female that he followed to the sea ice dumpsite; her nipple that he squeezed in a last ditch attempt to convince the shooter to somehow spare her life (even though it was obviously too late). A pregnant female, with milk still flowing from her body, was a sure sign of the rebirth

to come: Jamesie Mike had to believe he would inevitably reassemble a dog team. Joanasie Maniapik removed the harnesses from his dead animals, a gesture which seems to connote a certainty, even in the face of such destruction, that he too would one day have another team; one day he would use the handcrafted equipment again. An Inuk could imagine no other possibility, could not conceive of an end of things in such a violent and definitive manner. It is a way of imagining that seems to cohere with the indigenous concept of time and history. Time was not linear, with temporal milestones along the way, leading to an inevitable conclusion or telos (progress, the colonizers might call it). Indigenous history is circular, and as sure as the seasons, life that was extinguished will somehow be reanimated again. This is how they lived. Seasonal rounds dictated their movements and encampments, carrying them inexorably from, for example, the moons when "caribou fetuses form" to the "season of caribou miscarriages" to "when caribou begin migrating north" to the moons when the caribou return (Bennett and Rowley, 342-359). This immobilization of an ancient and unquestioned momentum based on the birth-life-death cycle left the Inuit absolutely bewildered. The shock and subsequent paralysis was described by Cuniliusie Emudluk in the 2005 Makivik brief:

> It seemed that my life went through a very sudden change when my hunting practices completely came to a halt and consequently I lived idly when I lost my dogs due to the killings. We seemed to have nothing to do anymore and began to just sit around. Our motivation to go hunting even diminished considerably. Our camping patterns were certainly changed, as we didn't have the means to travel. It seemed that we were stuck in the community. Camping out in the land became rare and we mostly went out when the spring season finally came around. Other than that we were mostly then living in the community with nothing much to do but sit around. (19)

The transition from a nomadic way of life to a sedentary one was a massive paradigm shift for the Inuit, and it was, literally, a sudden one, transpiring in the span of a few years. Its psychological impact was profound, and continues to haunt successive generations who have known nothing but community living and "sitting around". No dogs meant no camping, no hunting and no motivation.

The Death of the Joamie Dogs

Of all the stories I have read and heard about the Nunavut-Nunavik dog slaughter, there is one that I keep returning to in my work, as I find it distills so much of this varied memory work in one powerful and poi-

gnant narrative. The narrator is an elder named Alicee Joamie, and, like Joanasie Maniapik, she made the trip to Ottawa in March 1995, to give her testimony to the House Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development. Ms. Joamie was born in 1936 in Puvirnituq, in Northern Quebec and moved to Pangnirtung with her family in 1942 in order to avail of more plentiful game in that area. In 1959, they were forced to relocate to Apex, where they experienced a lack of promised housing and services, health issues, and the slaughter of their dogs in June 1961 outside the community store (QTC Background 37). What follows is a substantial excerpt from her testimony, which I include here in order to demonstrate the complexity of her narrative. She began:

> I am very proud to be here. Although this is a very difficult task, I have been waiting for this moment for a long time, and I am very happy to be here today.
>
> Because this was a very difficult experience, when I tell about the experience that we went through I start to get emotional. My husband and I went through a very difficult time.
>
> My husband at the time had to go down to Toronto for a TB treatment, and he didn't come back, so his grave is there. We went through a very difficult time when our dogs were slaughtered.
>
> Around 1958-59 we lived in Pangnirtung, and we had to move because the government was relocating people. We had to move to Iqaluit. There were many sick people with TB who had to be relocated. Because my in-laws had to move, and because my husband wanted to stay with our in-laws, we also had to relocate to Iqaluit by boat.
>
> My in-laws needed help and we needed to provide them food. We were travelling in the fall, when the water was just freezing up. We had three children. We had no way of travelling by plane, so in order to help our in-laws we travelled by boat in the fall.
>
> We moved to Iqaluit in the fall. In the springtime, we usually go camping outside of the community. We had been out camping with other Iqaluit residents and had gone back to pick up supplies and bullets. We travelled in the nighttime because in the springtime, when we are travelling, we usually travel in the night. That was June 22, and I will not forget that day.
>
> We had already bought our supplies and we were preparing to leave. One of our children, who was eight years old at the time, came running to us to tell us that our dogs were ready to go, and

> without anyone consulting with us, they were being shot and there were only three left.
>
> When that happened, my husband and I went down. There were only a few left. There were an Inuk and a kablunap [white man] who had shot them. Our son was hitting his father's back, crying and telling him to stop them. When all the dogs were shot; everyone outside was crying.
>
> I was pregnant at the time when all the dogs were shot. We had to clean up the carcasses and cover them up with sand, and I was in much pain and my stomach was hurting that night. I couldn't stop crying because they were our only source of transportation to go hunting. That night I started paying out blood, maybe because I was going through so much hardship. (Canada)

Ms. Joamie's narrative is remarkable for several reasons: the vividness of the details; the complexity of the plot; plus her obvious competence as an eloquent and emotive communicator. She was able, inside the span of the 20 minutes or so allotted to her during the committee hearing, to weave a thematically rich tale brimming with pathos, and to bring together in one storytelling event the many complex issues surrounding the matter of the alleged dog slaughter shown in other excerpts above. This story is a sophisticated individual showcase for the extensive collective memory work being carried out by hundreds of Inuit elders as they re-member their (dog-tracked) past to make sense of the trauma of their (dogless) present. Joamie herself alludes to the fact that this is no simple telling. This moment for her is a "task" —memory work is, after all, work—and furthermore, it is an arduous, emotional and important task, a fact which she strives to communicate in the syntactic repetition that prefaces her story: a very difficult task; a very difficult experience, a very difficult time. Dismembering and remembering both can be excruciating experiences. As she pieces together the shards of a past that were ripped apart in the violence and confusion of the colonial era, Alicee Joamie achieves a remarkably adept suturing of seemingly disparate episodes from her family history. The effect is visceral – a narrative coursing with tears, blood and physical pain, birth and death – as she works her way through the remains of a life shattered. Her task is to make whole again – to use this narrative event to reunite her young, healthy family; to restart her nomadic way of life, and set back into motion the traditional seasonal round; to return to her original place; to revive the slaughtered qimmiq.

Consider, firstly, how Alicee Joamie's dog story is also a story of what Bennett and Rowley call tuqslurausiit – family (15). Everywhere, concepts of kin and kinship are used to frame the core narrative event of the death

of the dogs. At the very start of her testimony, Alicee Joamie provides her audience with a brief abstract which summarizes the main point of the story—the slaughter—and which immediately connects the death of her dogs to the death of her husband. She recalls, "My husband at the time had to go down to Toronto for a TB treatment, and he didn't come back, so his grave is there. We went through a very difficult time when our dogs were slaughtered" (Canada). This integration of the death of the dogs with the death of her husband is highly significant, as if the twin traumas were somehow fused together in the memory, and certainly now in the narration. Moreover, this fusion lacks a linearity, a cause and effect sequence. Did the dogs die because her husband died? Vice versa? Did they die before? After? It's not clear yet, and it doesn't need to be. Linear history, as touched on above, is not normally a part of indigenous oral tradition. For indigenous people, time and history are circular, not linear. The temporal collapse of the human and animal deaths is not a product of confusion, or mis-remembering; it is an expression of something quite meaningful, a tacit statement on the social status of dogs in Inuit society. In their 2002 article "Canicide and Healing" Frederic Laugrand and Jarich Oosten claim that "the killing of the dogs was experienced as an attack on kinsmen, the Inuit population itself" (89). They cite the memory of the elder Josie P. Tullaugauk, who recounted, "All the men lost their dogs. I remember women beginning to cry as if they were losing their own kin" (80). In Joamie's memory, the losses of her husband and her dogs are equated… and equally painful.

The contemporary reader might sense something familiar in the conception of canine-as-kin, as many consider their own animals as adopted family members. However, it should be noted that, as members of the Inuit kinship network, sled dogs were not viewed paternalistically as furry babies in the manner of contemporary pet ownership. There, the animal-human divide is strictly maintained, and the human occupies the dominant position over the animal. Laugrand and Oosten note that, in traditional Inuit society, dogs were by contrast considered the animal members of society, on an equal footing with the human members. In her study of the role of sled dogs in the Northwest Territories, anthropologist Kerrie Ann Shannon concluded that they were viewed as "non-human persons who have entered into and continue a long-standing culturally based relationship with humans" (109). They were respected for their "sentience, intelligence, and will" (101). Qimmiq were partners, not pets. As such, their loss affected much more than the individual families of which they were a part; it tore at the very fabric of Inuit society.

Traditional Inuit social organization was comprised of a complex network of relations, the most important of which was tuqslurausiit, an elaborate,

extended family and naming system. "First and foremost [to the Inuit] were ties of kinship," claim Bennett and Rowley. "These bound families together through blood and were reinforced through naming practices. Kinship carried obligations to share food and tools—in short, to sustain the family in any way necessary" (127). Alicee Joamie's narrative comes from within this network, which serves to explain why many different ties of kinship are used to weave this narrative together. The abstract summarizing "the very difficult time when our dogs were slaughtered" contains the key information regarding the death of her husband. The build-up to the killing concerns the matter of the in-laws, and the decision to stay with them and support them (which the Bennett and Rowley quote helps contextualize: the Inuit economy, underpinned by the reciprocity of extended family relations, was based on mutual support, not money). The orientation to the various plot points of the story is delivered in terms of the age and number of children they had at the time: this happened when we had three children; this happened when our son was 8. In the coda, or epilogue (which can be seen in the full testimony available online), the narrator goes on to explain how this trauma has affected the lives of the next generation of her family, particularly the son who tried to stop the killings. As a grown man, he is described as "bitter"; she says "his life has not always been stable. You can tell that this was really epic in his life because he remembers that experience" (Canada). Also in the coda, the narrator tags on another story of another dog shot, this one belonging to her "blind father" who was living with the family at the time (Ibid.).

In sum, the story of the death of Alicee Joamie's dogs, in so many ways and as exemplified by this narrative framework, is also a story of kinship. In it, she narratively reassembles the members of her extended family—husband, children, in laws, father, dogs—from whom she has been disconnected by death or by distance, and other repercussions of colonial era trauma. As Bennett and Rowley discovered through the collection of their oral history volume, kinship was the central organizing principle of Inuit society. It "bound families together" (127). In the remembering of the slaughter of her dogs, Alicee Joamie is working to put back into place the kinship ties that bind.

Joamie's dog story is also a story about ties to place; it is about the land. The rhythms of Inuit life, which were so intimately bound to the land, and to the seasons, are used to frame the core narrative event of the death of the dogs. Indeed, these rhythms are inherent in the telling itself. Physically, Ms. Joamie is in Ottawa during the narrative event. In her telling, she rewinds through places equally foreign and far-flung to places familiar and whole; in her story, she returns home. Narratively, she begins her memory

task in Toronto—a place which, to an Inuk in 1950s Nunavut, may have seemed as distant as outer space—and equates the slaughter of the dogs with her husband having to go "down to Toronto" (Canada). The Qikiqtani Truth Commission, whose mandate included an investigation into many matters other than the dog slaughter, reports that many dogs were indeed killed when their owners were away for treatment of tuberculosis. Simultaneous with the death of their dogs, the Inuit also began to suffer ill health; they suffered forced removals from their lands; and they endured perhaps the ultimate affront: their kin were buried away from home: "his grave is there [in Toronto]" (Canada). York University professor and Metis historian David T. McNab, in his own autobiographical memory work, defined the powerful connection of indigenous people to the land, saying "Aboriginal people always return to their places" (302). The trauma of Ms. Joamie's "very difficult time" is the trauma of leaving place, of her husband having to go "down to Toronto" and never coming back. The image of his gravesite frozen in time, and in foreign soil, is a definitive one: static, unchangeable, final. One of the most traumatic aspects of this story is that the husband never could return to his place. One of the most powerful and satisfying aspects of her memory task, is that the surviving spouse can: she can continue her rewind to the time before Toronto, to another stopping point along the painful journey of their severing from their original land. She goes back to Iqaluit, the community to which her family was relocated in 1959.

As Joamie takes her listeners through this series of spatial memory moves, we begin to see how the event of the dogs being shot is caught up in the telling of the broader colonial project of relocation: the forced removal of indigenous people from their lands: "We had to move because the government was relocating people" (Canada). The Qikiqtani Truth Commission has identified five different types of "relocation events" that affected the Inuit from the 1950s to the 1980s. In some cases, "individuals [were] required to move south for extended periods for education or healthcare," such as was the case with Joamie's husband. In other cases, families reported "[being] coerced, largely by threats of losing access to healthcare or family allowances, to leave camps and live in settlements or to send their children to school in settlements" (QTC Background 43). This may have been the case with the Joamie family, and again, we can see the tacit theme of "iligasutuq" emerge: the narrator implies that they so respected or were so intimidated by government officials that they felt they could not oppose the decision to move them into settlements. Here, the repetition of the phrase that denotes being forced, of having no choice, is significant: "he had to go down to Toronto/we had to move to Iqaluit/we had to be relocated" (Canada, emphasis mine). We had to do what they told us to

do: iliagasutuq is about powerlessness, a loss of control, of agency. The QTC summarizes the psychological impact of relocation:

> [Inuit] felt deep cultural and personal losses resulting from severing family ties and ties to the land. They expressed anger that a substantial amount of Inuit culture and land-based knowledge was lost in exchange for unfulfilled promises. There were feelings of both regret and guilt that Inuit did not do more to either stop the moves or change the conditions under which they moved. (QTC Background 43)

Many of the Inuit who have spoken out about the dog slaughter believe it was carried out as part of this broader colonial project to settle the nomadic people in government-planned communities. Note how the QTC reports the trauma of relocation as a "severing"—the cutting off of a part from a whole, of disconnecting smaller family units from the wider network of extended relations, and of discontinuing the movement of the people on their land. What is lost, among other things, is the "land-based knowledge" that defines Inuit life. Again, considering the context in which Alicee Joamie delivers her story, it is important to realize that as a participant in this committee, she has been specifically tasked with testifying about the death of her sled dogs. Yet somehow, this is a story of relocation. Again, in her memory task, the timeline is conflated. How might the government relocation program event be plotted on a more linear version of history? Is it a prelude to, or a product of, the dog slaughter? It seems insignificant to the teller. What is significant is how inextricably connected the loss of dogs is to the severing of ties, and to the loss of the land.

Qimmiq as Movers and Mediators

In his version of the dog slaughter, recorded in the documentary Qimmit: A Clash of Two Truths, Peter Audaluk highlights a key point in understanding this aspect of Inuit knowledge systems: "It was the dogs that taught us about the land. They knew the land so well that they would find the precise spot where we had stopped for tea the year before" (Qimmit). Dogs connected Inuit to land. They were the movers, of course, the main mode of transportation. But they were also the mediators, creating, as Audaluk suggests, a vital, knowledge-based link between the Inuit and their environment. Laugrand and Oosten conclude in their 2002 article that "there are no wild dogs in the Arctic. [Therefore] Inuit were the human members of society, dogs were the animal members of society" (91). As members of standing in Inuit society, dogs benefited from the reciprocity of the complex web of internal family and external relations. Even in times of famine, for example, many Inuit report that dogs were fed first.

In return, dogs were provided a life-sustaining link between people and land, between culture and nature. They interceded on behalf of the Inuit with nature, guiding people, delivering them safely home, facilitating the hunt. Dogs enabled Inuit to travel on the land; to access the resources of the land; as they moved people and goods across the land, it is their tracks which inscribed its frozen surface. They traced the story of the Inuit into the land. Recall that Bennett and Rowley's 2004 compilation of the oral history of Nunavut was structured like a dog sled: two sections of the book represented the two runners of the sled; its five themes represented the lashings that held the runners together. It was the dogs who enabled, who made possible, the movement of the Inuit on the land. Movement was life.

Consider, again, the recollection of Cuniliusie Emudluk: how his life "came to a halt"; how he became "stuck in the community"; and how he and his family suddenly had "nothing much to do but sit around" (19). This sense of paralysis, of a dynamic life rendered static and petrified, is palpable in Alicee Joamie's story as well. In the episodes where she recounts the seasonal, nomadic way of life of her family, there is a sense of movement within the text; there is a momentum within the very telling. As she recounts the events prior to the death of the dogs, Joamie repeats the words travelling… moving… travelling… camping… travelling: "We travelled in the nighttime because in the springtime when we are travelling we usually travel in the night" (Canada). They moved according to the seasons: travelling in the fall; camping in the springtime; then moving once more. Always on the move: you can feel it in the syntax of the text. That is until the dogs are shot. Then this sense of syntactic movement is suddenly arrested. The travelling ceases, the camping ceases, the moving ceases. Even the life lived according to the seasons changes. From fall to spring, we now arrive at a very specific month and day: "That was June 22, and I will not forget that day" (Ibid.). The rhythms of their life changed. The rhythm of the text changes, too.

The memory task Alicee Joamie undertook on this particular day in March 2005 was an emotional and ambitious undertaking: how to communicate in less than one half of an hour the entirety of the trauma inflicted for decades upon thousands of Inuit in myriad different ways? How to compress the fragmented past into a unified whole in the present? How best to make sense of a complicated and confusing history? One of the strategies Inuit elders employ as they do this is to present these expansive histories of colonization, assimilation, dispossession and cultural genocide as "dog stories" such as the ones presented above. That is not to say that this choice is an arbitrary one; nor is it to suggest that to approach the memory work in this way represents as oversimplification of complex is-

sues. The loss of their sled dogs was a legitimate trauma in and of its own right. Further, and as I hope I have demonstrated in the case of the Joamie testimony, these recollections are far from one-track narratives that reduce decades of cultural, economic and political change to a single gunshot from a Mountie's rifle. Quite the opposite, Joamie's story in particular serves to demonstrate how inextricably the singular event of the dogs' death is tangled up with a multiplicity of events, such as the arrival of white men in the North; the tuberculosis epidemic; the death of the husband and his burial in Toronto; the hardships experienced by the in-laws; the forced relocation to Iqaluit; the effects on successive generations. Read in this way, we see that the storyteller does not—cannot—separate the dog slaughter from the multiple events that defined both the history of the extended Joamie family, and the broader colonial project that was threatening to destroy everything that was familiar to them.

The figure of the sled dog is a crucial and legitimate guiding principle in the narrative memory work of Inuit elders. The presence of the animal in these stories can be read as symbolic: the use of the sled dog trope allows the storyteller to represent multiple profoundly traumatic events in an accessible and emotional way. But the absence of the qimmiq, its demise whether forced or otherwise, was also a real-world, embodied catalyst for the collapse of an ancient way of life. Alicee Joamie's story exemplifies both the figurative and the literal modes of this animal representation. Indeed, her craft is so competent, it can be difficult to tell where the symbolic ends and the read begins. Perhaps, in Inuit oral tradition, this distinction need not be made. It is a blurring of rhetorical categories that is best exemplified in one of the most startling mergers of past events in Alicee Joamie's story, namely the climactic image connecting the death of the dogs with the pregnancy of the narrator: "I was pregnant at the time when all the dogs were shot… That night I started paying out blood, maybe because I was going through so much hardship" (Canada).

Again, we see Joamie plot her core narrative according to specific family milestones: the death of her dogs occurred when she was pregnant. Again, and similar to the narrative of Jamesie Mike, we see a storyteller embed the core narrative in themes of maternity and the maternal body. For Mike, his memories are triggered by the image of the lone pregnant sled dog, and his gesture of squeezing her nipple to express her milk for the Mountie to see. The intimacy of that gesture, the embodied empathy between Inuk and qimmiq, lend that particular story its raw, emotional power. Alicee Joamie extends this embodied empathy, again within a maternal context, still further. This moves the story out of the realm of the merely symbolic into a startling real-world merger of animal and human bodies: the dogs are shot; the owner bleeds.

Laugrand and Oosten, in their work on the Nunavut dog slaughter, call the relationship between dogs and Inuit a symbiosis, and while this term often loses some of its significance due to overuse, I am reminded that it actually refers to a mutually beneficial embodied relationship between species. Inuk and qimmiq were connected in a corporeal sense, conjoined in movement and in survival, and in a way far different from the connection between contemporary pet owners and their animals. The body boundary between the human and the animal did not exist for many indigenous peoples. In so many of their creation stories, animals and humans marry and reproduce. In their cosmology, shape-shifters vacillate between human and animal forms. In much of their oral tradition, storytellers hearken back to a time when dogs and men could talk. Indigenous knowledge systems are based on an "all my relations" philosophy, which extends "the web of [human] kinship […] to the animals, to the birds, to the fish, to the plants, to all the animate and inanimate forms that can be seen or imagined" (King ix). In a very real sense, humans and animals co-exist, not in a hierarchical relationship of dominance and submission, but rather as partners in a more complex web of reciprocal cross-species connections. This concept is crucial to understanding the dismemberment of this man-dog duality that arose from the slaughter of the qimmiq. What is being re-membered, then, is something far more vital than the life of a beloved animal. What is re-membered is the dog-human unit, the qimuksiit, or collective action of dogs and humans when they are pulling the sled together. Laugrand and Oosten, in their conclusion, claim, "The dog and his owner constitute[d] a physical whole" (101), an entity so real, integral and permanent in the Inuit imagination that when he dogs are shot, it is the owner that bleeds.

In contemporary Western cultures, many people consider pet dogs as family members, and they often work through the trauma of a dog's death with personal narratives. Harvard English and Cultural Studies scholar, Marjorie Garber, in her book Dog Love devotes an entire chapter to the cultural representation of "dog loss", asserting that "[s]ince the beginnings of Western Literature, with the death of Odysseus's beloved Argus, the death of a dog has been marked as a moment of pathos and identification" (242). Indeed, she emphasizes that "in [all] the stories we tell ourselves and each other, the stories with the most human interest are stories about dogs" (Ibid.) The mapping of human interests on to the trope of dog death will be familiar territory to any reader who has ever endured the death of a companion animal. Narrating the loss of a dog allows the individual to work through many past (and potential) individual losses and attendant psychological issues. "It is not that the death of the dog does not, in itself, constitute a profound loss for a human being," Garber cautions. "But somehow, what is lost with the dog is a space for feeling,

a space which draws into itself emotional energies from other, sometimes unacknowledged sources" (249). When Garber asks her central question about dog loss—"For whom do we mourn?"—she is not being disingenuous. The commemorations she explores—poems, statues, novels, prayers, last wills and testaments, grave markers and more—are "mirrors" reflecting the complicated psychical lives of their individual owners. They are examples of memory work exhibiting considerably more depth than appears at their narrative surface.

It is my contention that the same can be true for the narratives born of the death of the Inuit sled dogs. They are dog stories. But they are also so much more. What distinguishes them from personal stories of pet loss such as the one in Garber's book, however, is the cultural import of the messages wrapped around the core event of dog deaths. These are not just examples of individual memory work; the dog slaughter stories are cultural memory work, and as such, should not be dismissed as mere misunderstanding, myth or melodramatization, as critics of the allegations often do. These are important sites of public memory.

In the statement of its terms of reference, the Qikiqtani Truth Commission cited the failure of the RCMP report (which concluded the dog slaughter did not happen) to recognize this distinction. The QTC report said

> The RCMP Sled Dogs Report failed to examine the telling of the "dog slaughter" experiences as an important exercise in public memory. Instead, it dismissed this memory as false and condemned Inuit leaders who brought the incidents to public notice. There have been exhaustive social scientific studies, mostly publicly funded, concerning what communities remember about the past, and why. The RCMP Sled Dogs Report does not explore these avenues but resorts to a simple conspiracy theory in which Inuit fell into line behind their political leaders in accepting a narrative of the dog slaughter. The lengthy silence of Inuit on this issue is interpreted by the RCMP Sled Dogs Report as evidence of dishonesty. (QTC Background 18)

What the Inuit of Nunavut and Nunavik remember is that their dogs were killed, and that their lives were forever altered. This is not a matter of "a simple conspiracy theory" in which white evil-doers executed the noble qimmiq. Stories such as the ones excerpted here, including the especially rich and poignant narrative of Alicee Joamie, transform the memory of individual elders into a collective and honest exercise in re-membering the past of a once whole and healthy community. Before the demise of the Inuit sled dog, before relocation and residential schools, tuberculosis and

global warming, the Inuit of Nunavut and Nunavik lived within an integrated ecology consisting of humans, dogs and the land. In my work on the stories told about the Nunavut dog slaughter, I hope to build on Laugrand and Oosten's contention that the Inuit and their qimmiq constitute a physical whole, by showing, as the Alicee Joamie story in particular shows, that there existed in these communities an indivisible whole consisting of three core elements: the Inuit (the people, the kinship network), their land (place) and their dogs (as the vital, symbiotic mediator which linked those two together). In the Inuit imagination, no one element of this structure could be conceived of as separate from the other. This integrated ecology was once at the very heart of Inuit society. When one of these elements was attacked, such the qimmiq, the entire whole was compromised, and the society—including the intimate connection to the land, including the very health of its people— was jeopardized. What is being pieced back together, then, in the stories of the Nunavut-Nunavik dog slaughter, are the individual components of this Inuit-Land-Qimmiq triad. Storytellers coming to terms with their traumatic present breathe new narrative life into the virtually extinct sled dog in order to re-connect people and place, and to return in the collective imagination to a time when Canada's Inuit were, as one elder recalled, "whole, with the snow and the dogs" (Echo).

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Charting a New Course: Collaborative Environmental Health Mapping by Isga and Cree First Nations

Katie Peterson and Stephane McLachlan

Abstract

Two First Nations communities in Alberta have partnered with researchers at the University of Manitoba to investigate declining environmental health in their traditional territories. By way of a participatory mapping study, community members are documenting spatio-temporal knowledge of declines in wildlife health, which is compiled with various land cover data to identify underlying causes of environmental concerns, and ultimately will serve as a record to advocate for improvements to land management policies.

Significance

The Isga (Stoney) and Cree Peoples of west-central Alberta have witnessed and adapted to profound change in their traditional territories for generations. Forestry, the oil and gas industry, coal mining, electricity generation plants, agriculture and urban development have all had major impacts on the landscape and First Nations communities. Despite this extensive development, many people have maintained traditional land use, including hunting, fishing and berry picking. However, the intensity of these developments is cause for concern among community members regarding the health of the wildlife they hunt as well as the implications for human health and wellbeing. Hunters have noted a substantial decline in the health of moose in the past twenty years, including thinner fur, off-colour organs, foul smells and increased numbers of parasites. These observations are alarming, especially as moose are used extensively as a

food source and for ceremonies by these communities and arguably represent a central, cultural keystone species. Furthermore, Elders and other community members have observed concomitant declines in the health of animals such as fish and birds, as well as other aspects of environmental health, including water quality, berries and medicinal plants.

The goal of this study has been to document these declines in environmental health and to better understand the causes that underlie these changes, in ways that build on and affirm the importance of the Traditional Knowledge and concerns that shape this work. This study is conducted in close collaboration with these communities, and will ideally generate outcomes that are of great use in future decision-making.

Methodology

Through the *In Land and Life* project, which represents a partnership between the Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation, Paul First Nation, and researchers at the Universities of Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Calgary as well as the Justice Institute of British Columbia, our collaborative wildlife health mapping study aims to characterize changes to wildlife and environmental health in the region. The First Nations have invited researchers to help them study wildlife health from both a western scientific and Traditional Knowledge (TK) perspective. The TK of Indigenous Peoples is of central importance for understanding and managing changes in environment and health and for addressing deficiencies in western science. Yet, these Indigenous knowledge systems, and even more importantly, the holders of this knowledge are rarely consulted much less meaningfully included in these activities (Brook and McLachlan 2008).

Collaborative research is a way to address the problematic history of academia as an elitist realm of professionals having little understanding of or regard for local people's knowledge and perspectives. Through Community-Based Research (CBR) projects such as *In Land and Life*, people can access resources to conduct research that addresses their needs and is relevant to their lives (Markey *et al*. 2009). Employing the principles of Participatory Action Research (PAR) (Green *et al*. 2003, Ballard and Belsky 2010), the First Nations community members provide the primary guidance for what questions will be asked and how the research will proceed. In keeping with these principles, we are working within the guidelines of OCAP: Ownership, Control, Access and Possession as specified by the National Aboriginal Health Organization. OCAP asserts that First Nations inherently have a collective ownership of all their cultural knowledge/data, and as such must have easy access to, and ultimately possession of, any data collected about themselves and their communities (First Nations Centre 2007).

Elders, hunters and other community members are sharing and documenting their knowledge of changes to wildlife and environmental health on their lands, as well as voicing their concerns about how these changes are impacting their lives and the practice of their traditional livelihoods. The spatial knowledge is compiled onto transparent map overlays, which are scanned and combined in a Geographic Information System (GIS) (ESRI 2009) along with other data on associated land use and cover. All participants then have the opportunity to respond to and analyze this data, to provide guidance as to how their TK can be best integrated with the other land cover data, and to identify underlying causes on the landscape for these observed environmental health declines.

Layers of Knowledge

So far, we have conducted 21 formal interviews, 15 of which have included spatial information on map overlays. Most of these overlays have now been scanned and superimposed onto digital map data into the GIS. The traditional territories of the Alexis and Paul First Nations extend approximately from the Edmonton area (east of the Alexis and Paul Reserve lands around Lac Ste. Anne and Lake Wabamun), to the Swan Hills in the north, the Rocky Mountain House area in the south and into Jasper National Park in the west. This diverse region comprises aspen parkland, boreal forest and Rocky Mountain ecosystems. The richness of such findings is exemplified by the map of traditional use areas used by hunter and fisherman Daniel Kootenay (Figure 1). The darkest outlines denote areas of hunting and fishing, and the rectangles at the bottom centre mark locations of trap lines used by Daniel and his extended family members. The lighter circled areas represent sites of concern, including locations where sick moose have been harvested, industrial activity and contamination, and drying wetlands (Figure 2).

During the course of the interviews, it has become apparent that much of the imparted TK often does not fit easily on the two dimensional surface of a map. Some of these difficulties are reflected in observations by Francis Alexis, where he references location, but also speaks to the general health of the land:

> The land … it's not healthy anymore. It's all scarred up and wounded. In time, it might heal itself, but… it's not going to be the same again. Because all of those places I knew as a little kid, the landscape is changing. And where we used to pick berries and gather medicines, when you go there, you'll find a refinery, or a farm, or a highway built right through it. And where there are sacred places, you'll find all kinds of development, like that *Canabda Paha* [House Mountain] fasting area, they've got towers

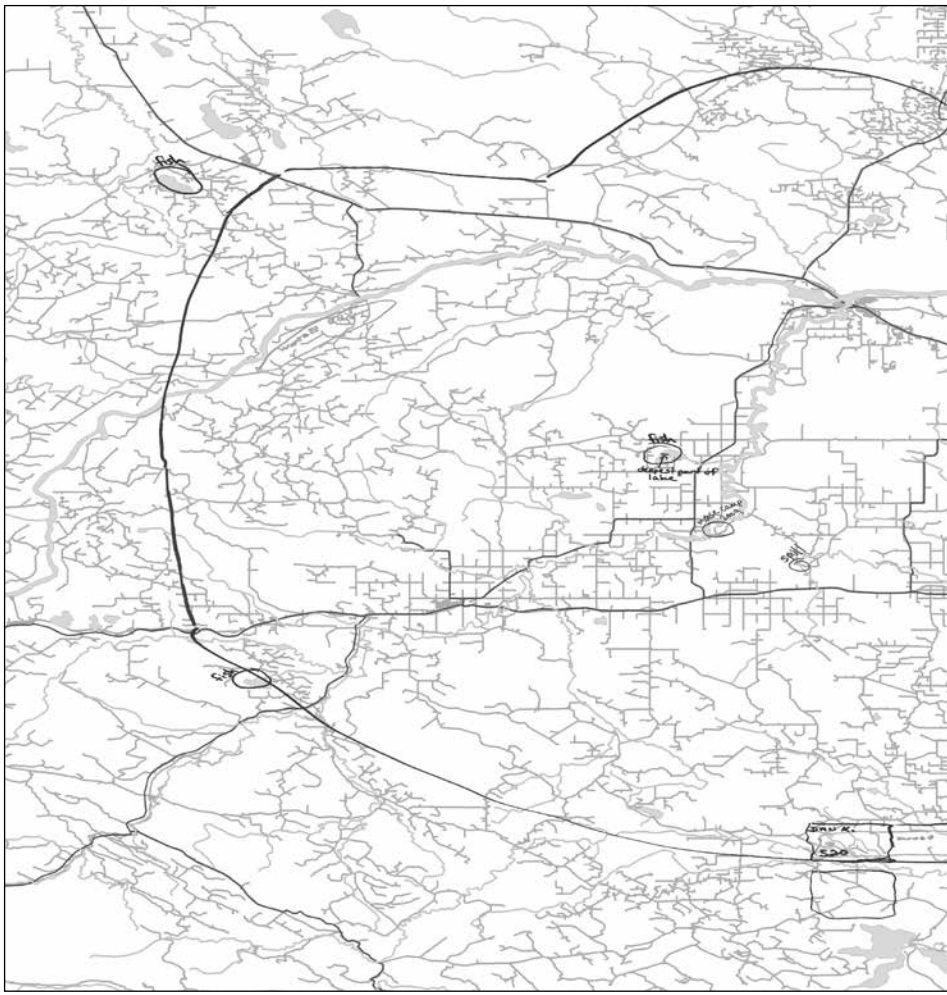

Figure 1. Daniel Kootenay's traditional use area.

Dan Kootenay Mar. 22, 2010 Legend

- areas of hunting, fishing and trapping
- sick moose killed (1970s - near Athabasca River; 1980s in trapline 520)
- Judy Creek chemical waste disposal facility (active in 1970s)
- oil spill in ditch from overturned truck (1980s)
- areas of water bodies that have dried up in recent years

> there. Radio towers, TV towers, or cell phone towers, or whatever it is, there are a whole bunch of towers there. So the energy that we used to get from the land… it's not there anymore. The positive energy you felt… when you go up there, you don't feel that much of the positive energy unless you're way over here (pointing at the map) where it's… because there's a connection to the land. And you feel it. And around the developed areas, mostly that feeling's not there, you no longer feel connected. It seems like you feel a little bit of sadness, that you lost something, and that nothing will ever be the same again, that's the same feeling. So… the reflection of the health of the land is also a reflection on the health of the people.
>
> *Francis Alexis, Alexis Nakota Sioux Nation; July, 2011*

The challenge is to do justice to all of the richness of the TK, incorporating them into research and mapping documents or digital representations that will effectively characterize environmental health concerns and be useful for the communities. One idea is to incorporate qualitative data into the map database through the use of Computer Assisted Qualitative GIS (CAQ-GIS) techniques such as geovisualization and hyperlinking. For example, in an interactive GIS map, clicking on a location such as *Canabda Paha* (House Mountain) could link to more detailed information, such as quotes, photographs, or video which could greatly enhance the spatial data on the map. Through this use of technology, we hope to create an effective tool to advocate for planning and resource use that respects and reflects the interests of Indigenous Peoples in Alberta and beyond.

Tracing the Journey

In addition to the research conducted, the work of *In Land and Life* has facilitated opportunities to build bridges between university researchers and First Nations communities. The relationships cultivated with community researchers, community members and their families have been very meaningful to us on both personal and professional levels. One of us (K.P.) was raised south of Barrhead, Alberta, well within the traditional territory of these First Nations. She lived less than 30 kilometers north of the Alexis Reserve, yet had never been there or known anyone who lived there, until joining *In Land and Life* in 2009. She knew very little of the history or contemporary realities of the Indigenous Peoples on whose land she was living, and had only experienced, from the side of privilege, the legacy of segregation resulting from decades of apartheid-like policies imposed on First Nations Peoples by the Canadian and provincial governments (Spielmann 2009).

Earning the trust of community members has not been easy. Negative experiences with the dominant society including government and Alberta Fish and Wildlife officials as well as previous university researchers has left a chasm of distrust that we encountered and initially feared would be too difficult to navigate. But after many months of working and spending time with Principle Community Coordinator Misty Potts and her family, of making mistakes and stumbling through ceremonies, of trying to push the research too quickly and then learning to let it unfold in its own time, of observing and learning cultural protocols and becoming aware of subtleties of communication, through all of this, we began to feel more accepted and trusted by Misty and her extended family, and also the wider community. Now, many years later, it is hard to imagine our lives without these rich relationships and friendships, and also the campouts, hunting trips, powwows, round dances, shared family dinners, cooking and sewing lessons, and so much more.

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