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Producing the Whitestream :
Micropolitics and the Persistence of Colonialism in Canada

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Producing the Whitestream: Micropolitics and the Persistence of Colonialism in Canada

by

Andreas Krebs

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ABSTRACT

This thesis examines how colonialism shapes the contemporary political landscape in Canada, particularly the daily life of mainstream citizens. I hold that colonialism lies at the root of contemporary issues of identity, diversity, pluralism, multiculturalism, citizenship and belonging in Canada. Canadian scholarly work has examined the problem of colonialism in relation to history, theory, and in terms of justice and the law. However, most of these perspectives disregard the importance of colonialism as a lived experience, and have difficulty explaining its persistence after having been abandoned as official state ideology, following the advent of modern treaties and land claims, the entrenchment of Aboriginal Rights in the Constitution, and the official policy of multiculturalism. Contrary to the dominant trend in this scholarship, colonialism persists in Canadian political life and manifests itself in a variety of ways. To this end, this thesis explores both the reproduction and transformation of colonialism in Canada, arguing that micropolitical processes of subject formation embed colonialism within the Canadian social and political fabric, reproducing the mainstream as a *whitestream*. I examine these processes through three sites: talk radio, humour, and sport, focusing particularly on how these sites maintain the dominance of the white, male, anglophone subject position. First, I analyze how two nationally broadcast programs with opposing political perspectives—*Sounds Like Canada* and *Adler Online*—mobilize sympathy and outrage, and how the production of these affective states reinforces a colonial perspective. Next I examine both popular and academic

literature and media relating to hockey in Canada. Discourse on hockey in Canada embodies the nation as white and male, positioning history in terms of nostalgia, and space in terms of recreation. Finally, I analyze a series of in-depth interviews with white, male anglophones focusing on how they practice and experience "disparagement humour" in their daily lives. I examine the form that disparagement humour takes in an era marked by official multiculturalism, and how such humour may both reinforce and undermine the persistence of colonialism. I conclude with a discussion linking James Tully's democratic constitutionalism to the Deleuzian concept of the encounter, arguing that micropolitical techniques of the self enable an unsettling of the violence of colonialism.

For Irma and Ralph

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INTRODUCTION

Multiculturalism; the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms;* a new relationship with Aboriginal peoples: these mark contemporary Canadian identity. Their hold on us is salient, and they distinguish Canada as a special place, free from the ethnic and religious violence that mars so much of the world. This new, progressive self-conception has been confirmed by opinion research: for instance, in Parkin and Mendelsohn's (2003) report, *A New Canada: An Identity Shaped by Diversity*, Canada is "a country in transformation . . . where many values and attitudes prevalent 40 years ago have been replaced with a fresh outlook" (1). Although in the early 1960s most Canadians were opposed to opening immigration to non-Europeans, today most Canadians, and particularly young Canadians, celebrate diversity. Mendelsohn's report details cohort-specific responses to questions relating to mixed-race marriage within the family; to whether being surrounded by different ethnicities undermines one's cultural base; and to general comfort levels in the presence of nonofficial languages. All in all, Canadians, and particularly younger Canadians, embrace the country's diversity, and have come to construct part of their identity based on an idea of Canada as ethnically diverse.

Taking a more historical perspective, Lecours and Nootens (2007) agree with *A New Canada*'s findings, arguing that while mainstream Canadian identity has grown out of a dominant ethnicity (White, Protestant), it has come to identify with both multiculturalism and bilingualism. From 1977 through to the early 1990s, opinion polls showed that over 60 percent of Canadians believed immigration levels

to be too high; this proportion plummeted to 33 percent by the mid-1990s (Ferguson et al. 2009, 86). Karim's (2008) longitudinal study comparing newspaper articles and opinion pieces on multiculturalism from the 1980s with those from 2006 shows similar shifts towards "progressive" values: the media in the 1980s were far more likely to criticize multiculturalism (both in policy and more generally as "public philosophy"), whereas the frequency of such critique in newspaper coverage in 2006 had decreased. Furthermore, the substance of such critique was generally attenuated by recognition of benefits brought to Canadian society by minority ethnicities. Relatedly, Canadian attitudes across all age cohorts towards homosexuality have become far more accepting over the period 1981–2000;[1] the younger cohorts lead in this acceptance (Andersen and Fetner 2008).

Similar attitudes can be found in relation to the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*.[2] As of 1999, over 80 percent of Canadians supported the *Charter* (Howe and Fletcher 2003). And while Nanos concludes that "Canadians generally support the Charter, but don't see it as essential to their Canadian values or identity" (2007, 55), his data also show that younger cohorts (under the age of 40) were more likely than any others to agree that the "Charter of Rights and Freedoms in Canada is moving our society in the right direction" (51).[3]

---

[1] Thus bucking previous research suggesting that social values are cemented early in life.

[2] Although there is less research on Canadian attitudes towards the Charter compared with attitudes towards multiculturalism.

[3] 64.3% for 18–29 year-olds, 68% for 30–39 year-olds, and in the low- and mid-50 percentage range for the other age cohorts.

J. R. Ponting's (2000) longitudinal analysis of Canadian public opinion regarding Aboriginal people is fascinating and revealing. First, as he summarizes elsewhere, across all age cohorts "non-Native public opinion on aboriginal issues tends to be rather inchoate" (Ponting 2006, 15). Importantly, however, despite the astounding ignorance displayed by respondents about Aboriginal issues in the three samples (1976, 1986, and 1998), there has been increasing approval for Aboriginal political demands, particularly when these demands were voiced by Aboriginal leaders. And while opinions of the "Baby Bust" generation (those born between 1967 and 1979) were slightly more negative towards Aboriginal political positions, 81 percent supported the use of lawsuits and the courts, more than other generational cohorts. There was a minimum difference of just 1 per cent between the "Baby Bust" and Generation X (people born between 1959 and 1966), gradually increasing to a maximum difference of 21 percent with the World War I era cohort. Taken together, this research produces a picture of Canadians (particularly younger Canadians) as revelling in diversity; being in agreement with what Charter detractors term "judicial activism" (e.g. Morton 1987, 1995); and increasingly being accepting of Aboriginal political demands.

There are two important things to note about the appearance of this fresh outlook: first, it is reflexive—that is, Canadians self-identify with these changes; second, given this self-identification, Canadians also see their country as moving forward on social issues, becoming more just over time. In order to maintain this self-identification, Canadians must distinguish their own positions from those held

by preceding generations, since, for many Canadians, "the past is a foreign country"—past actions taken by Canada's institutions are alien. What this has produced is a Canadian ideology of exceptionalism. It holds that the official policy of multiculturalism, the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, and contemporary judicial approaches to Aboriginal political issues are evidence of a specifically Canadian model of justice and social cohesion, one that sets Canada apart from the failed pluralism of Europe and the overt racism of the United States. It also distances contemporary Canada from what are perceived as the injustices committed against ethnic minorities—francophones and Aboriginal peoples, in previous times. Thus, many Canadians (and, I would argue, especially those who have grown up with the Charter) omit the possibility of continuity with the past, or similarity with other, unjust countries from their collective imaginary of what Canada is.

However, many scholars have undertaken research that troubles this haughty perspective. Even while multiculturalism has been integrated into Canadian national identity, lower socioeconomic standing continues to correlate with nonwhite ethnicity and newcomer status (Nakhaie 2006), indicating that a hierarchy of race and immigrant status persists. Thobani notes that "Canadians routinely describe their citizenship, immigration, and refugee policies as the most humanitarian and compassionate in the world. These claims shape their sense of collective pride and national identity" (2007, 69), but in shedding an unflattering light on these policies, and demonstrating their continuity through the greater part of the twentieth century, Thobani demonstrates that this pride is little more than

self-deception. For instance, even since 1967,[4] when citizenship and immigration laws started to be liberalized, the Canadian state retains the right to deport foreign born citizens, "family-class" immigrants are denied equal access to social programs (Thobani, 2007: 96-99), and what amounts to indentured servitude in exchange for permanent residency exists in the Foreign Domestic Movement program (Cohen 2000). Combined with the persistence of abject poverty, high suicide rates, high rates of incarceration, poor and overcrowded housing conditions, and the rest of a litany of statistics relating to the often horrific circumstances faced by Aboriginal people on a daily basis, this research puts into question the self-congratulatory position of mainstream Canada (see Statistics Canada 2006b; Statistics Canada 2006a; Allard et al. 2004; Statistics Canada 2010).

The incongruity between Canadians' self-perceptions and the reality faced by Aboriginal people and racialized immigrants points to a continuity with Canada's colonial past. That Canada has a colonial past is evident; however, it was only until after the War of 1812-1814 that the British, then Canadian, governments altered their approach to relations with Canada's Aboriginal peoples from one of partnership to one of cultural genocide. As McNab et al. argue, once First Nations were no longer a required military ally in North America due to Napoleon's defeat in Europe, they became a hindrance to the expansion of European settlement in British North America (McNab et al. 2003). Later in the 19th century, French-speakers became the target of assimilatory policies mandated by Lord Durham's famous report

[4] In 1967, what was effectively a "whites only" immigration policy was repealed.

(Coupland 1945), and were relegated to an underclass in their own communities until well into the twentieth century. The *Indian Act* has, at various times, prohibited First Nations people from voting, from travelling between reserves, from practicing certain key cultural activities (such as the Potlatch and Sundance), and from hiring lawyers (Perry 1996; Lutz 2008). The Head Tax levied against Chinese immigrants from 1885 to 1923, when their immigration was halted completely (James 2005), the race riots against Asians in Vancouver in 1907 (Pablo 2007), the sending back of the Komagata Maru in 1924, the internment of ethnic Japanese-Canadians during World War II, and the maintenance of a "whites only" immigration policy until 1967 (Thobani 2007) all underscore a white racial supremacy anchored in Canada's past.

That colonialism persists in Canada is not an argument that I will be making in this thesis.[5] Rather, this persistence is the grounding for my general question: given this continuity, and in the face of a mainstream consciousness that defines itself by a break with the past, how does colonialism reproduce itself? Frantz Fanon (2008) answered this question in the specific context of French colonialism in the midtwentieth century, and I take much of my approach from him. His response to the basic question of how colonialism reproduces itself centred on the production of his own subject position, *Black Man*, in relation to the French colonial subject position, *Man*. Racial qualifiers are unnecessary, as *Man* is already European (and White). As will be discussed in depth in chapter 2, I have applied this answer to contemporary Canada. I troubled it through postcolonial and poststructural theory,

[5] I define colonialism as a process of racial and gendered distinction and hierarchy, coupled with a process of continual (but always partial) absorption of the distinguished (see chapter 2).

focusing on the fine line between continuity and change in colonial practices. This enabled me to particularize the following, central question of the thesis: through what means do the affective, moral, and libidinal economies of contemporary Canada reproduce colonialism?

In formulating this question, I am consciously moving away from a macropolitical (i.e., state-based) theory of colonialism towards a more micropolitical approach. In many ways, this thesis works analogously to Fanon's revision, in *Black Skin, White Masks*, of Jung's collective unconscious: here, I position colonialism within the daily affective and discursive techniques through which the Canadian mainstream (or whitestream)[6] reproduces itself. Many scholars, in Canada and around the world, have taken analytical aim at the way that states, or particular states, produce and maintain colonialism (see for example Thobani 2007; Goldberg 2002; Taussig 1997 and most literature on Aboriginal politics in Canada, such as (Coates 2000; Murphy 2001; Green 2001 etc.) Political science has not focused particularly on the role that *micropolitics* plays in colonialism's continuity. Micropolitics include the daily thoughts, feelings, and actions of mainstream Canadians, and are observable in our interactions with mass institutions, such as the media and the state, and in our more intimate relationships and interactions. Micropolitical processes that constitute much of state-level politics are quotidian and banal. For example, decision-makers use opinion polls to construct aggregate pictures of micropolitical processes; and the decision-makers themselves are caught

[6] The concept of the *whitestream*, developed by Denis (1997), will be elaborated in chapter 2.

up in the same micropolitical processes as their fellow citizens. Like Fanon, my window into these processes is through the production of subjectivity, specifically through a Deleuzian reworking of how we understand subjectivity itself. In following Fanon's focus on the production of subjectivity, I also take my subject position—as a white, male anglophone—as an object of analysis.

I begin by constructing colonialism as an object of study within Canadian political science. I argue that some of the main preoccupations of the discipline—accommodation of cultural difference, Aboriginal rights, Québec sovereignty—stem directly from Canada's colonial past. The centrality of these issues to the discipline also underscores the persistence of colonialism in Canada. In chapter 1, I tease out a number of trends within the literature of Canadian political science that examine colonialism. First, there is a startling correlation between the identity of scholars and the political positions emergent from their scholarship: francophone scholarship tends towards justification of sovereignty for Quebec, Aboriginal scholarship often advocates a radical reformulation of the status quo, and anglophone scholarship frequently articulates and legitimizes this status quo. Second, there is a preoccupation with difference and determining whose difference should be accommodated in the literature. And third, difference is conceived of as a recent problem within Canadian politics. I go on to critically examine these trends, particularly in terms of their capacity to reproduce white, anglophone dominance within Canadian politics—that is, the work they do to reinforce colonial flows within the discipline.

In problematizing central assumptions of the literature on colonialism in Canadian political science, I locate the scholarship as part of the Canadian whitestream, working against the assumptions of objectivity and critical distance so central to the standard epistemological justification of social-scientific knowledge production. Political science scholars are themselves imbricated with the micropolitical processes that I argue produce and reproduce colonialism in contemporary Canada.

In chapter 2, I elaborate the conceptual and methodological framework through which I will examine the micropolitical reproduction of colonialism in Canada. Specifically, I outline a Deleuzian theory of subject production, informed by postcolonial theory and the work of First Nations theorists. This conceptual approach views subjectivity as constituted by a diversity of material, social, political, libidinal, and normative flows. These flows constitute colonialism: they produce subjectivities that are racialized, gendered, and placed on a unidirectional time-scale of development. I attempt to tease these flows out of the micropolitical processes through which whitestream subjectivity is produced. This teasing-out process involves an analysis of discursive and affective techniques that saturate lived experience in Canada in three sites of interrogation: talk radio, hockey, and humour. These sites are examined through an autoethnographic immersion in them, discursive and affective analyses of specific media programming, and in-depth interviews.

In chapter 3 I examine talk radio—two nationally broadcast shows from opposite sides of the political spectrum: the CBC's *Sounds Like Canada* and Corus Radio Network's *Adler Online.* I seek to understand the affective work that radio performs in producing the subject, and how the production of affect amplifies discursive meaning. Specifically, I consider how *Sounds Like Canada*'s mobilization of sympathy and *Adler Online*'s use of outrage interact with the discursive production of colonialism in each show. Even while the programs have very different political views, each ultimately reinforces the dominance of the whitestream, and places nonwhites (and, in the case of *Sounds Like Canada,* Aboriginal people) in a position of inferiority presented sometimes as essential, and sometimes as rectifiable through access to modern civilizing processes. Each views the colonial past as having been overcome. In the case of *Sounds Like Canada,* this means that our current approach to mitigating the suffering of subordinate subjects (Aboriginal peoples, immigrants, inhabitants of developing countries) is the right one, and some day all will have been absorbed into the capitalist fold. In the case of *Adler Online,* the victims of the past are the oppressors of the present—whatever negative effects colonialism may have had on the nonwhite male anglophone, they are no longer relevant, and now it is the white male who must suffer.

In chapter 4, I examine hockey through a variety of its popular expressions including books, television, and the experience of playing and watching the game. As one of the central institutions in Canadian life, and one that hooks into numerous others, the sport of hockey has a great deal of significance for the production of

subjectivity in Canada. I begin the chapter with a brief look at the history of sports in colonial settings, where they have been used to create productive, rule-following subjects. While this disciplinary technique continues to be important in Canada, I examine the more casual processes through which hockey amplifies hypermasculinity, racialization, and whitestream entitlement to public space and national memory. These occur in a variety of contexts, including watching hockey in bars, reading books by the heroes of the NHL, and even the narratives in Tim Hortons commercials. Ultimately, hockey produces a privileged access to "Canada" for white, masculine subjects through its connections to all other mass institutions in Canada, and its distinct capacity to define what it is to be Canadian.

In chapter 5, the final substantive chapter, I examine the use of what is termed *disparagement humour* in the psychological literature by white, anglophone males in their daily life through ten in-depth interviews. I examine white male anglophones' perception of how they use disparagement humour, specifically asking whether it is evidence of persisting racism, misogyny, and homophobia, or if it demonstrates a potential for overcoming the very categories that disparagement humour requires for its production of amusement. Respondents nearly all admitted to using disparagement humour in their daily lives, but saying they only used it in private and among their own friends and acquaintances; they did not view their use of disparagement humour as racist or sexist, making distinctions between acquaintances who used disparagement humour in a purely sarcastic way, and those who were, for instance, "really racist." Even while there are means of utilizing

disparagement humour that contribute to what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) term a "line of flight" from colonialism, I argue that the daily use of disparagement humour by white, male anglophones (such as myself) amplifies the dominance of white maleness.

Finally, I conclude the thesis with a discussion linking Deleuze's concept of *encounter* (Deleuze 1994) to Tully's (1995) argument for *democratic constitutionalism* (as opposed to constitutional democracy). Encounter is a means of unsettling the politics of representation—where a single event or individual is taken as an instance of the general—and disrupting the habitual reproduction of colonial categories in Canadian politics. I take Tully's work in *Strange Multiplicity* (1995) as an exemplar of micropolitical work against the dominant stream within Canadian political science, which opens up space for Deleuzian encounters to take place. Tully makes no demands for subordinate groups to articulate their political projects in the whitestream's terms. Rather, he argues for an open dialogue that takes individual and group diversity as primary, as constitutive of the polity. This final discussion is meant to demonstrate the multiple means through which micropolitics can work towards a postcolonial politics, undermining the reactive reproduction of colonialism in Canada through the reflexive remaking of habitual flows constitutive of the whitestream.

CHAPTER 1:

CANADIAN POLITICAL SCIENCE AND COLONIALISM

> *The lecture theatre was relatively full, the fullest I had seen for a panel so far. I had listened to two of the presentations with only mild interest. The third, while not provoking interest as such, certainly took more of my attention. The presenter, Frances Widdowson (someone whose research I was unfamiliar with) was explaining that utilizing methodologies derived from indigenous worldviews in political science – a process that she referred to as "decolonizing the discipline" – was an affront not only to political science, but also posed a grave threat to the legitimacy of knowledge production in general. She made her presentation in a stilted voice that practically dripped with disdain, seemingly for her own audience. Perhaps she bore herself in this way in anticipation of what was to happen during the question period, when one of her well-respected colleagues (Joyce Green) stood up and asked: "Why do you hate Aboriginal people so much?" During the resulting commotion, in which the presenter demanded that the moderator do something about the affront, I put my head down on the desk and tried to stifle a groan. I wanted to shrink into nothing, such was the level of my own embarrassment.*

****

> *While I am writing this chapter, a debate is stirring in Québec over the right of an immigrant woman to wear the* niqab *in her* francisation *courses, and of course I have been following the debate with interest given my field of study. After reading an editorial in* Le Devoir (2010), *I find myself thinking about the intolerant attitude of Québécois towards immigrants. I have heard recently on the CBC that a woman who had experienced discrimination in Montréal (not the same woman from the niqab incident) was told by her relatives in Toronto to move there; they claimed that no one in that great cosmopolis paid their traditional dress any attention. Reading and listening about this issue, in English and in French, I could feel myself beginning to believe that Québécois simply were not as enlightened regarding difference as those from the rest of Canada (or, at least, residents of Toronto and Vancouver). This feeling, of course, is nothing unique to me, and does not end at the door to the academy.*

I open with these two short anecdotes, the first of which became the object of much scandal within the Canadian Political Science Association (CPSA), because they relate directly to some of the main concerns of this thesis. My initial discomfort with Green's response to Widdowson was the result of my viewing Green's outburst

as inappropriate in the circumstances. My reasoning was that even if we as academics disagree with another's position, even if that position is morally repugnant, we do not have the right to label that person. In my mind, Joyce Green was turning academic debate into a streetfight, using her own moral superiority, underscored by her Aboriginal identity, to automatically defeat Widdowson's arguments.[1]

Of course this kind of reasoning was upheld after the incident by Widdowson and her supporters, and is the kind of reasoning to be expected from one weaned on academic politesse and the ultimate importance of the syllogism. But what this approach ignores is the violence that Widdowson's discourse commits against Aboriginal people, especially those Aboriginal people in the audience. Those tired colonial tropes of unidirectional development and the supremacy of "science" are not so tired in the public imaginary, and Widdowson's enunciating them automatically affords them legitimacy given that she holds a position at a university. Joyce Green was a member of a group being denigrated, whose ways of knowing were being dismissed outright, and she reacted as such. Widdowson's presentation was inappropriate, regardless of venue. Furthermore, and to use a less rigid reading of Green's remarks, it demonstrates the banality of the violence against Aboriginal people reproduced daily by Canadians. "Why do you hate Aboriginal people so much?" could have been aimed by Green at Canadians in general.

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[1] In fact I held this view up until Professor Sherene Razack pushed me a little further on my interpretation.

The kinds of concerns that I felt over the niqab scandal—regarding the extent of Québec's liberalism, and the nature of its nationalism—are present in much of the literature coming from anglophone scholars and media commentators. And *Québécois*, inside and outside the academy, are eager to claim that the Rest of Canada (ROC doesn't have monopoly on tolerance (see Linda Cardinal's comments in Buzzetti, 2010). The problem is this: an individualized conception of knowledge production, as evidenced in both Green's response to Widdowson and my own response to the niqab scandal, ignores a great many components that go into this production. It effects a rhetorical break with a past of colonial violence and injustice, pointing to a postcolonial future (or, sometimes, present) where the rights of Aboriginal people, representatives of ethnic minorities, and francophones are respected in Canada, but neglects to examine how its own position may in fact reproduce colonialism. This literature review, and the thesis itself, will address these and other issues linked to the study of colonialism in Canadian political science.

1.1 Colonialism As an Object of Study for Canadian Political Science

Colonialism is not generally viewed as an object of study for Canadian political science. However, I believe colonialism is a central theme in Canadian politics, if not *the* central theme. It is fundamental to the history of Canada, and it lies at the root of the great political problems that shape the study of Canadian political science: Québec-Canada relations; questions about diversity, pluralism, and multiculturalism; and Aboriginal politics. These three broad themes are not often

brought together in the same rubric, except as components within the study of the Canadian constitution. In bringing the three themes together in a study of colonialism, we can escape the idea implicit in constitutional discourse that the Canadian state is somehow prior to the problems of Aboriginal politics, multiculturalism, and Québec-Canada relations. Constitutional scholarship often views the 1982 patriation of the constitution as somehow creating many of the political issues that it codifies, such as multiculturalism or Aboriginal rights (Abu-Laban and Nieguth 2000). In viewing colonialism as central to enduring Canadian political problems, we may thus forgo a version of politics and history that automatically privileges the dominant, state-centric narrative of constitutionalism (or federalism, for that matter).

Even while literatures on colonial themes within Canadian political science do not always use the same language, their concerns—and often conceptual frameworks—often run parallel to each other. Theoretical work on multiculturalism in Canada, for example, has contributed to international debates about diversity, immigration, and citizenship. It tends to draw on three main Canadian experiences: (a) the dynamics between English and French Canada, or perhaps Québec and what Taylor (1993) calls "Canada outside Québec";[2] (b) increasing diversity in the ethnic makeup of mainstream Canada; and (c) Aboriginal politics. Each of these three

[2] There are many ways of slicing this division up, none of which capture the divisions within the divisions, and the ambiguity of the relationship; "English Canada" denies regional divisions, and "French Canada" lumps all French-speakers together even while each provincial community has its own identity (consider for instance that Canada has three seats at the Francophonie, one for the federal government, one for Québec, and one for the Acadians).

issues is linked to the history of colonialism in Canada. Nonwhite Canadians[3] have been excluded from full citizenship, officially through racist immigration and citizenship policies and unofficially through more banal, everyday racism and occasional outbursts of violence. These policies and practices are directly linked to an ideology of racial hierarchy that has accompanied and justified the spread of European empires across the globe. This ideology has also managed to incorporate French-speaking Canadians into its hierarchy, racializing French through demands to "Speak White." And of course, political developments demarcated and studied as *Aboriginal politics* relate to the continually separated and marginalized descendants of the first inhabitants of the continent. Scholarship that deals specifically with Aboriginal politics often refers to theorizing on multiculturalism, either as a means of justifying a conclusion, or as a foil for its argument.

There are other benefits to assembling these three ostensibly separate literatures under a single umbrella. First, it should benefit communication within the discipline. Furthermore, although it is beyond the scope of this chapter to explore literature on colonialism in Canada outside of political science, much is being said in other disciplines, and engaging with this literature should be a priority for political scientists studying Canada. I will delve into some theoretical work on colonialism stemming from other disciplines in the next chapter; for now, my focus will be political science.

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[3] And of course various immigrant groups, such as the Irish, Ukrainian, Portuguese and Italian, which are now considered to be "white," had to be made so; see *How the Irish Became White* (Ignatiev 1996).

This literature review assembles work done within political science on the topics of Québec-Canada relations, multiculturalism/diversity/pluralism, and Aboriginal politics under the rubric of the study of colonialism. I have sifted through articles published over the past twenty years in the two main journals of political science in Canada – the *Canadian Journal of Political Science* (*CJPS*) and *Politique et Sociétés* (*P&S*) – as well as other important articles and books on these topics from the same time period. Section one of this chapter discusses five prominent themes from what is admittedly a disparate set of authors:

1. *Identity and politics* – the way that opinions and arguments within the literature coalesce around the language and identities of authors;
2. *Difference and recognition* – the importance of difference and its recognition in this literature;
3. *Authenticity and pluralism* – the nature of the political subject that stems from this recognition of difference;
4. *Deontological differentiation of rights* – the ways in which the literature proposes difference should be accommodated;
5. *Narrative of novelty* – how the literature positions the problem of difference in time/history.

As will become clear later, the literature on colonialism within Canadian political science generally revolves around a set of arguments and positions that can be termed *dominant* and which I argue are associated most closely with the Canadian state. Certain key authors define the terms of the debate, articulating positions very

close to federal policies, while others attempt to push away from these positions, arguing against these same key authors.

I critically examine these five main trends in terms of the main concern of this thesis: the persistence of colonialism in Canada. First, I problematize the obsession displayed by much of the literature with determining how difference can be accommodated, and which groups have access to this accommodation. Secondly, I show how much of the literature on colonialism in Canada is symptomatic of what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) term *state philosophy*. Thirdly, I argue that the literature's conception of time and history is inherently colonial. What emerges from the literature is a political subject whose entitlement to the terms of political discourse force other subjects to produce themselves according to its terms. The dominance of the anglophone scholar's "epistemology of ignorance" (see the essays collected in Sullivan and Tuana 2007) means that the political goals of nonwhite, nonanglophone scholars studying the colonial problem in Canada must phrase their political concerns in terms of those constructed by the academic whitestream (Denis, 1997; see chapter 2 for a detailed explanation of this important concept). This process follows trends that are constitutive of colonialism (see chapter 2). One of the central points that emerges from this discussion, and from the thesis in general, is that in studying colonialism, we as academics are not immune to the force of its current. It pulls us along, and often we find ourselves swimming with the strongest forces, rather than fighting for a place closer to the shore from which we may get a better

view of how the currents flow, where the eddies form, and where there is an undertow.

1.2 Main Themes in the Literature

Identity and Politics

Perhaps the most striking trend in the literature—though something that is perhaps taken for granted by scholars within Canadian politics—is that the identity of scholars and their political positions have a high degree of correlation. For example, the majority of anglophone scholars in this review make arguments in favour of federalism and civic patriotism; *Québécois* are highly likely to be studying and advocating Québec sovereignty; and Aboriginal scholars almost unanimously believe that the Canadian political arena needs to be dramatically reconfigured. Of course we have such prominent anglophone scholars of Canadian politics as Alan Cairns (1992, 2000), Samuel LaSelva (1993, 1996), and Peter Russell (1991) who advocate federalism. But some of the most prominent scholars of difference also fit into this group, including Will Kymlicka (1995) and Joseph Carens (Carens 1995b). In fact, many arguments for differential rights—or, in Kymlicka's terms, *multicultural citizenship*—can be seen as rhetorical means of cutting the legs out from under political movements that call for more dramatic political reconfiguration (such as separation or independence), reducing them to just another group within Canada's diverse ethnic and cultural makeup. This is a charge levelled by many prominent Québec political scientists.

Just as many of the most influential anglophone political scientists put their intellectual weight behind federalism and maintaining the integrity of the Canadian state, the bastions of francophone political science such as Rocher (2007; Rocher and Verrelli 2003), Gagnon (2003; Gagnon and Iacovino 2007), and Laforest (1995) focus their efforts on the vindication of Québec as a nation. And the vast majority of francophone scholars publishing in *CJPS* and *P&S* are overtly in favour of sovereignty, or are at least Québec nationalists. Here I offer some examples of the numerous articles (with otherwise very diverse perspectives) written by francophone authors in favour of sovereignty:

- André Blais et al. (1995) link political positions relating to sovereignty of university students to the perceived economic benefits that would accrue were Québec to separate from Canada.
- Gilles Labelle (1996) explores the ramifications of a Nietzschean conception of sovereignty for Québec's independence movement.
- Diane Lamoureux (1995) argues that Québec can only realize itself as a multicultural society once it has sloughed off the confines of the Canadian state.
- Louis Bélanger (1997) describes how Québec participates in the multilateral institutions of the *francophonie*, and in particular on the special techniques (both international and within Canada) that Québec is forced to use as a nonsovereign participant in international French-speaking fora.

- Dufour and Traisnel (2009) argue that social movements are not always separate from official politics. They use the examples of the Bloc Québécois and Parti Québécois (PQ) to show how two sovereigntist parties play an important role in the grassroots social movement of sovereigntism. They also contemplate how the PQ in particular can continue to be a broad-church party for sovereigntists from across the political spectrum.

This by no means exhaustive list makes it clear that no matter what heuristic is behind the scholarship—whether writing from political theory, international politics, or rational choice perspectives—francophone authors publishing in *CJPS* and *P&S* are overwhelmingly sovereigntist.

Aboriginal scholars working on political themes are highly likely to be in favour of a major reconfiguration of the Canadian state. Treaty Federalism, or, as Alan Cairns (2000) terms it, *parallelism*, is an argument common to many Aboriginal scholars and commentators. It proposes the idea that the Canadian constitutional order rests on treaties between representatives of the British Empire/Canadian state and the peoples indigenous to Turtle Island/North America. James Sakéj Youngblood Henderson (1994) and Kiera Ladner (2003) are prominent promoters of Treaty Federalism. In his well-received book, *Recovering Canada: the Resurgence of Indigenous Law* (2002), John Borrows argues that settler and indigenous legal and constitutional traditions overlap within Canada, and that this mutual nourishment must be given more credence by the more powerful partner in the dialogue, the

Canadian state. Taiaiake Alfred (1999) argues that alienation from traditional values is a main cause of the continued suffering of Aboriginal peoples in Canada, and that the actions of the Canadian state, particularly the imposition of foreign forms of rule, are responsible for this alienation. Therefore, he sees a way forward in revalorizing traditional Aboriginal forms of governance. Dale Turner (2006) takes for granted the goal of reforming the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian state and society. He demonstrates that certain liberal documents (the federal government's White Paper of 1969, Kymlicka's *Multicultural Citizenship*, and Cairns's *Citizens Plus*) work against Aboriginal political aims; the position of these documents is also the position of the Canadian state and the mainstream Canadian public. He concludes that a cadre of Aboriginal *word warriors* must be developed in order to confront Canada's colonial ideology on its own terms.

Only a very few anglophone scholars are overtly in favour of a major reconfiguration of the Canadian state. The work of James Tully, for instance, has consistently been in favour of major reconfiguration and reconceptualization of the Canadian political situation, one that would start from a recognition of the plurality of political positions—and means of voicing them—that constitute Canada. Tully has come out specifically in favour of Treaty Federalism (Tully 2008a). But even while many anglophone scholars may seem to be in favour of dramatic political change, they often in fact remain firmly planted in the status quo of federalism. For instance, Charles Taylor is not completely happy with the contemporary Canadian political situation, but his position remains one that is attempting to ensure that

Québec does not separate. Further, his work is often concerned with how difference can be delineated and judged (Taylor 1994), and then how the state can be reconfigured to correspond to the requirements of the several competing cultures within the state whose main tenets have been deemed worthy of recognition by Taylor's test (Taylor 1993).

Difference and Recognition

Difference is a central concept within the literature on colonialism. All of the authors discussed in this review are concerned to some extent with difference—be it cultural, ethnic, national, or even a differentiation within the self. The work of Charles Taylor and Will Kymlicka in particular has been very influential in debates about differential rights for the extent to which (in Kymlicka's terms) *national minorities* and the identity-based political demands of *ethnic minorities* can be accommodated. Much of the literature examining the problem of colonialism in Canadian political science—whether on multiculturalism, Aboriginal politics or Québec-Canada relations—either utilizes concepts from Kymlicka and Taylor, or explicitly critiques one or both of their approaches.

Both Taylor and Kymlicka hold that differential rights are needed in order to allow for individuals to feel that their culture is held in esteem in the eyes of the putative majority. The thrust of Taylor's influential essay, "The Politics of Recognition" (1994), is that members of groups who find themselves denigrated by the putative majority (in Canada, depending on the context, white male francophones or white male anglophones) do not have equal access to dignity,

which has become a universal good in modern societies. Cultural phenomena such as Afrocentric schools, specialized educational programs for Aboriginal students, and films such as *Reel Injuns* now exist in Canada, and diversity is represented in advertising and in television programming such as *Little Mosque on the Prairie.* Thus, it seems evident that Canadians have accepted that in order for people to have a healthy view of themselves, their cultures must be recognized—held in public esteem.

Authenticity is at the core of Taylor's theory. His central point is that an individual's self-worth is incumbent on being recognized, and being recognized in terms that are authentic to the self and the community. We come to realize our full capacity within our native cultures. Each of us has a unique way of being human, and this is connected to a culture (or community) through its unique practices. However, individuals who belong to colonized cultures have suffered centuries of denigration at the hands of representatives of hegemonic cultures. For Taylor, the recognition of individuals by their "significant others" (ibid.) must accord with some kernel—which also accords with the individuals' culture—residing deep within the individuals themselves. In authentically recognizing individuals, we do justice to both their true being qua individuals, and the truth of their culture.

Kymlicka (1995) also places great importance on individuals' capacity to freely practice their culture. Kymlicka is less concerned about recognition than Taylor, however, and puts his main emphasis on the relationship between individual autonomy and culture:

> Our capacity to form and revise a conception of the good is intimately tied to our membership in a societal culture, since the context of individual choice is the range of options passed down to us by our culture. Deciding how to lead our lives is, in the first instance, a matter of exploring the possibilities made available by our culture. (Kymlicka, 1995: 126)

The point here is that without access to a societal culture, we do not have what Kymlicka calls a "context of choice." We require a viable societal culture in order to have full access to autonomy, and therefore minority cultures within a multicultural state should be protected with a variety of measures ranging from self-government for peoples who have been colonized, to measures meant to improve the integration of religious and other minorities into public life, such as allowing Sikh members of the RCMP to wear turbans as part of their uniform. So Kymlicka's view of the relationship of individuals to their culture, and to the broader society, is similar in many ways to Taylor's; both see the public denigration of a minority culture as leading to a schism within the individual. For Taylor, this is an incapacity to achieve the dignity so important in modern, horizontally configured societies; for Kymlicka, the individuals' access to full autonomy is short-circuited if they cannot draw on societal culture to inform their choices.

Both Michael Murphy (2001) and Mark Redhead (2003) apply Taylor's and Kymlicka's views to Canadian politics. Murphy uses Kymlicka's terminology, and some of Taylor's prescriptions, to criticize the Supreme Court's move from grounding Aboriginal rights in their having been self-governing societies to grounding these rights in the persistence of precontact cultural activities. Effectively, rights become cultural rather than political in nature, and Murphy sees this move as

undermining Aboriginal political claims. Redhead revisits Taylor's concept of "deep diversity," claiming that its "devolution of power to a regional level would promote a multiplicity of manners in which to be Canadian" (63) and proposes a "rooted cosmopolitanism" – a dialectic between humankind and particular cultures similar to Taylor's fusion of horizons – in order to go beyond certain problems with Taylor's approach.

A number of scholars go beyond mere application of Kymlicka and Taylor, engaging in a critical dialogue in order to further the spirit of their political theories. Andrew Robinson (2003) reconfigures Kymlicka's theory to take into consideration both the possibility that a cultural minority could persecute its own members, and the mutability of culture and personal identity. Jocelyn Maclure (2003), following James Tully, attempts to reframe Taylor's politics of recognition as "a mode of political subjectivation and as an agonic activity of disclosure" (3-4). Dimitrios Karmis (1993) argues that Taylor's communitarian-liberal approach is a better means of allowing cultural coexistence between mainstream Canada and Aboriginal peoples than a strictly liberal approach such as Kymlicka's. Michel Seymour (2003) wants to rethink Kymlicka's approach to differentiated citizenship by privileging tolerance rather than autonomy, and by pushing recognition of both multiple cultures and multiple nations.

The discourse of recognition even makes its way into the work of scholars whose work is highly critical of dominant approaches to political science. Keira Ladner's (2000) approach is to show how a concept of *nation* – different from its

Western instantiation—was present in Blackfoot traditional practices and thinking. She argues that "the continued use [of terms such as "tribe" or "ethnic group"] reflects a determination to reserve the term "nation" for the modern/western/civilized nations that emerged following the Enlightenment" (39). Here we see the importance of recognition for Ladner: her argument is, essentially, that Blackfoot political traditions must be viewed as having the same worth as Western political traditions, at least in part because the Blackfoot traditions are analogous to those that are already valued by those in the Western tradition.

Taylor and Kymlicka's importance within the literature is also evident in the energy allocated to their critique. For Katherine Fierlbeck (1996), Taylor's and Kymlicka's arguments[4] of differential rights "depend upon questionable assumptions concerning the relationship between culture, identity and political power" (4). Rather, she sees identity as an individually determined characteristic, and argues that a reliance on authenticity "harms people by denying them what they value most: their particularity" (6), thus arguing for a return to a liberalism based on the individual. André Lecours (2000) takes issue with Kymlicka and Taylor because their approaches ignore two important questions: how identities are created and how they become politically relevant. He proposes a historical, institutionalist approach that provides answers to these questions and problematizes the conception of hermetic, homogeneous cultures. François Houle (2001) critiques

[4] As well as those of Iris Marion Young.

Taylor through an application of the republican approach of Quentin Skinner, and argues for a "postnational belonging" (122) that feeds into republican patriotism.

A number of scholars take slightly more radical positions in their critiques of Taylor and Kymlicka. Joyce Green (2001) claims that the various theories of "differentiated citizenship" (e.g., in Taylor, Tully, Kymlicka, Eisenberg, and Young) cannot "answer the challenge of the rights of indigenous peoples in relation to settler states" (720) because they treat Aboriginal rights in the same vein as minority rights, and ignore the fact that "Aboriginality is its own justification: prior occupation to the settler society and political nondominance both define Aboriginality and underwrite its claim for justice against the imposed sociopolitical order" (ibid.). Caroline Dick (2009) argues against Murphy's (2001) position, mentioned earlier, claiming that we cannot resort to the theories of Taylor and Kymlicka in order to criticize the position of the Supreme Court of Canada on the relationship between rights and culture—in fact, the Supreme Court's position is remarkably similar to that of Kymlicka and Taylor (see "State Philosophy and Nationalism," below). In his examination of the theories of Taylor, Kymlicka, and Michael Walzer, Jean-Luc Gignac (1997) claims that

> Toute politique de reconnaissance doit toujours imposer des limites à la reconnaissance parce que celle-ci vise à intégrer les différences au sein d'un espace normatif commun, que ce soit la communauté politique ou le régime des droits. (64)

That is, regardless of whether a theory is liberal or communitarian, it always works to absorb difference into itself. Glen Coulthard (2007) reads Taylor against Fanon, arguing that the politics of recognition maintains colonialism through granting

recognition to the subordinate, ignoring the economic aspects of colonialism, and misapplying the rubric of recognition to a relationship of domination.

While many of these articles are overtly critical of Taylor and Kymlicka, this fact itself attests to the importance of their respective conceptual frameworks. Furthermore, while there is a dearth of empirical work on multiculturalism published in *CJPS* and *P&S*, much of the work mentioned above approaches multiculturalism through theory, and draws from (or criticizes) the work of Taylor and Kymlicka, but very rarely views differential citizenship as problematic in itself. Of the articles reviewed, only Fierlbeck (1994) was totally against differentiated rights. Those few articles that approach multiculturalism or minority politics empirically—such as (McAndrew et al. 2005) or (Harles 1997)—are always in favour of the official policy of multiculturalism, and are working to defend it against detractors in the media and the academy.

Authenticity and Pluralism

Within the broad consensus that difference is important in Canadian politics is a divergence on how to think about culture, identity, and the individual. Taylor and Kymlicka, as mentioned, have a relatively monolithic view of groups: if individuals are prevented from corresponding to their attendant group, either through public restraint in the form of policies, or public denigration of their group, then they cannot live an authentic or autonomous life. Many scholars criticize Taylor and Kymlicka for this homogenizing view of the group. This makes for two main currents within the literature, each pulling in a different direction: (a) the narrative

of authenticity and self-sameness, a central plank in the work of both Taylor and Kymlicka, which is important for many who view culture as important to an individual's capacity to engage in the public sphere; and (b), the view that any unit is ultimately divisible, as well as connected/connectible to other units—the pluralist view of both the self and social structures such as culture. In this section I detail the positions of each of these two camps, using the most prominent exponents of each.

Although the authenticist view is less well represented in the literature, there are some important adherents beyond Taylor and Kymlicka. In her work on cultural rights in diverse societies, Avigail Eisenberg (1994, 2006) argues for a "difference perspective" in determining rights, which is meant to escape the deadlock between proponents of individual rights and group rights by protecting identity-related differences, either in terms of the identity of the individual against the group, or the group against the larger society. The ultimate aim is to "enhance individual well-being, . . . while recognizing that individual well-being is often dependent on the well-being of groups" (1994: 12). Here we see how Eisenberg's work is influenced by Taylor's conception of culture.

An interesting case is Taiaiake Alfred, who takes authenticity very seriously but does not relativize the role of authenticity to all other cultures. The main aim of Alfred's recent work (1999, 2005) has been to revalorize Aboriginal cultures. He holds that many of the social ills being faced by Aboriginal people are a result of the destruction of their traditional cultures by colonialism. If Aboriginal people—or *Onkwehonwe*, original people—are to overcome continued suffering through

poverty, disease, and violence, they must reinstate their traditions, and in particular their traditional forms of governance. The difference between Alfred on the one hand and Taylor, Kymlicka, and Eisenberg on the other is that Alfred's view of the merits of authentic culture does not necessarily extend to all cultures; specifically, he is wary of the culture—what he terms a "liberal dogma" (2005: 109)—accompanying capitalism:

> The basic substance of the problem of colonialism is the belief in the superiority and universality of Euro-American culture, especially the concepts of individual rights as the highest expression of human freedom, representative democracy as being the best guarantor of peace and order, and capitalism as the only means to achieve the satisfaction of human material needs. . . . At base, the liberal, conservative, and racist reactions across the political spectrum are the same and distinguish themselves from each other only in their varying intensities and styles. (ibid.)

I should say here that I am rather partial to many of Alfred's positions, which are far more radical than those held by most who study colonial themes in Canada. For Alfred, authenticity is not something that is of universal appeal. We could perhaps extrapolate and say that were one to lead an authentic Euro-American existence, and, following Taylor, develop oneself through a dialectic between self-discovery and accordance with those cultural norms, we would likely be reproducing the colonial structures that Alfred points to.

While not diametrically opposed to Alfred's main aim of cultural reconstruction, certain other Aboriginal scholars take positions that run against his focus on authenticity. John Borrows (2002), for example, wants to see First Nations legal traditions incorporated into Canadian political and legal institutions; while Aboriginal law is *sui generis*, this does not mean that it is separate from common

law. Aboriginal law must be recognized as (partially) constitutive of the Canadian common law and further integrated into the practice of law in Canada. This position is one that maintains a distinction between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people within Canada, but allows for an overlapping and cross-pollination of their social, legal, and governmental institutions.

The late Gail Guthrie Valaskakis (2005) has a fascinating take on the relationship between authenticity and social construction. In the title essay of her 2005 collection *Indian Country*, she claims that a relationship with the land is integral to Aboriginal identity. Of course land rights are the primary political demand made by indigenous people the world over—but their relationship to the land, while central to their indigenous identity, differs between cultures; it is always changing, and has a multitude of meanings.

Most other scholars tend to hang their hats on a pluralist conception of both the individual and the group. Those who view authenticity as important are taken to be representatives of a dangerous view that is intrinsically in conflict with the norms of pluralism, as well as a misrepresentation of the universe as driving towards wholeness, rather than being governed by mutability. For James Tully,

> Cultural diversity is a tangled labyrinth of intertwining cultural differences *and* similarities, not a panopticon of fixed, independent and incommensurable worldviews in which we are either prisoners or cosmopolitan spectators in the central tower. (Tully, 1995: 11)

Interestingly enough, Alan Cairns, whose views on the limits of Aboriginal governance are much less expansive than those of Tully, makes similar claims about the construction of subjectivity/identity:

> We all carry multiple identities, and . . . they are constantly being reshaped. We can be Métis and Manitoban, Cree and Albertan, Inuit and Canadian. The coexistence in our lives of membership in more than one community, and the accompanying reality of multiple identities reflect that we live in many worlds at once, each of which calls forth a modified version of who we are. (Cairns, 2000: 107)

Cairns uses this concept of a mutable, multiple self to argue *against* a third order of government for Aboriginal people. The authenticity/mutability divide within the literature does not correspond to a particular political position: Cairns uses mutability to argue against parallelism, while Alfred uses authenticity to argue for it.

Deontological Differentiation of Rights: The Boundaries of Accommodation

The vast majority of scholars studying colonial themes agree on the importance of differential rights. At the least, they say, the political implications of cultural difference must be taken into consideration. However, they differ on how such a project should be realized. For example, in Taylor's very well-known essay, "The Politics of Recognition" (1994), an elaborate test is set out, borrowing the concept of the *fusion of horizons* from Gadamer in order to allow for a less parochial means of determining what is of value within each culture. The important thing to remember here is that Taylor is interested in drawing a line beyond which liberalism will not accommodate difference. In order to do so, the value of other cultures must be measured. But in order to make such a judgment, we must begin by intensively studying another culture not from our own standards of value, but from some other place, since "for a sufficiently different culture, the very understanding of what it is to be of worth will be strange and unfamiliar to us" (67). Through an openness to

forms of expression found in other cultures, we expand our conceptions of what it is to be valuable. The result is the fusion of horizons of our own position and that expressed by the culture we are studying.

Kymlicka takes a different approach, basing his instead in a liberalism grounded in autonomy, dividing "different" groups (i.e., nonanglophone/white, in the Canadian context) into ethnic and national minorities. Ethnic minorities do not have access to the same spectrum of differentiated rights as national minorities; national minorities gain access to more important rights—such as self-government—as a function of their being engulfed or colonized by the state. They occupied the territory prior to the state's claim of sovereignty, whereas ethnic minorities made a decision to immigrate, and therefore cannot reasonably believe that they should have their own governments, for instance. Avigail Eisenberg (1994, 2006) is in favour of a similar test, whereby the accommodation of the practices of a given group is by determined by whether such practices are in accord with certain cultural milestones (for instance, precontact practices, in the case of Aboriginal peoples). She also attempts to incorporate the importance of individual identity into such a test (what she terms the "difference perspective"). In a similar vein, in the essays collected by Joseph Carens (Carens 1995a) a number of prominent anglophone political scientists aim to determine whether the separation of Québec can be conceived of as just or not just, through reference to a broadly conceived liberal politico-philosophical position.

Alan Cairns (1992, 2000) and Samuel LaSelva (1993, 1996) focus less on deontological means of distinguishing groups and determining rights, and more on what kinds of rights or moral foundations are required to maintain the integrity of the Canadian state. While these authors are not involved in formulating tests that linguistic, ethnic, and national minorities must pass in order for their political claims to be recognized, they work explicitly against many of these political claims in favour of a single overarching locus of loyalty. Cairns (2000) views what he labels parallelism in Aboriginal political goals, and in the Final Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples, as a dangerous political position that "contributes to a binary view of Canada as two societies and conceals the heterogeneity of the Canadian majority population" (152). Parallelism only serves to alienate the majority from the Aboriginal goal of self-government (which itself is dependent on the taxes paid by this majority for its existence), and undermines the capacity for multiple, "divided civic identities that are natural to a standard federal system" (153) among Aboriginal citizens. LaSelva wants to steer a middle course between the particularism of Québec and Aboriginal nationalisms, and the universalism of *Charter*-based patriotism. The result would be a fraternity in which both local and national identities are lived and recognized, so that the country is held together through common bonds.

Ostensibly opposed to Taylor, Kymlicka, and Eisenberg are those who do not hold cultural determinants to be a sound test for the application of rights, or for the recognition in the public sphere. However, they maintain the importance of a set of

criteria for determining what a group is capable of doing, particularly when it comes to its own members. Joyce Green claims that Eisenberg's position

> . . . dehistoricizes [Aboriginality], and strips it of rights potency. It places all cultural identities on the same legal footing, without regard for anteriority or constitutional location. It removes responsibility from the dominant society and the state for the subordination of indigenous peoples. (2000, 138)

Caroline Dick (2006) makes a similar claim against those who would attempt to derive the legitimacy of differential rights from a cultural test (such as Taylor's and Kymlicka's, or the one laid out by the Supreme Court in *R. v. Van der Peet*). As mentioned above, she would rather see rights determined by a complex consideration of who benefits from normative prescriptions, thus recognizing "that who is oppressor and who is oppressed is inconstant" (108). Such an approach would enable decisions regarding rights to be made without reducing a group to a single unit. In these considerations, we see the authenticity/pluralism debate, discussed in the previous section, come to light.

We could also include Thomas Flanagan (2000) and Frances Widdowson and Albert Howard (2008) in this group. They argue that demands made by Aboriginal people specifically are, often, politically and morally wrong, and are overtly or covertly in favour of a return to an approach characteristic of the period prior to the renaissance in Aboriginal politics that followed the introduction of the White Paper in 1969.[5] Katherine Fierlbeck (2000), a staunch liberal individualist, also fits here—

[5] These two works are the most overtly ideological scholarship reviewed here. Their arguments are more polemic than academic, relying on various discredited stereotypes in the case of Flanagan, and an ill-conceived and poorly researched application of Marxist historiography heralding residential schools as preparing Aboriginal peoples for integration into modernity (a necessary step towards a socialist revolution) in the case of Widdowson and Howard.

she claims that "[w]hen identities are formed and maintained by emphasizing the differences between groups (as opposed to the differences between individuals), prejudice and intolerance no longer have to be defended" (20). Thus any focus on differential rights leads us right back into the prejudice and discrimination that such rights were originally meant to mitigate.

There are, of course, a number of authors, predominantly francophone or Aboriginal, who put themselves on the other side of this broad trend towards testing and determining the limits of accommodation. The scholarship of prominent francophone intellectuals such as Michel Seymour (2003), Alain-G. Gagnon (2003; Gagnon and Iacovino 2007), and François Rocher (2007; Rocher and Verrelli 2003) works towards the recognition of Québec as a nation *as the basis for any further negotiations*:

> The problem, in a sense, lies with the use of the imperative of national unity as a structuring principle for the debate in the first place. Even the term "diversity," in many contexts, adds to the confusion in the Canadian debate, since diversity itself does little to address the multinational condition. . . . The existence of Québec as a self-determining nation is simply not open to negotiation. Once this is recognized then the Canadian debate can move forward. (Gagnon and Iacovino 2007, 4)

Here, Gagnon and Iacovino put the issue in no uncertain terms: whether Québec's nationalism is just, or how we are to determine Québec's national minority status, are simply not questions open to negotiation.

Many Aboriginal scholars, and a small number of non-Aboriginal commentators, also rail against the view that whitestream (Denis 1997) institutions have the right to determine which traditions are integral to the cultures of

Aboriginal peoples. Keira Ladner (2005) argues that the Canadian constitutional order does not trump the Mi'kmaq constitutional order, since rights and responsibilities (in this case, over the salmon fishery) held by the Mi'kmaq were never ceded to the crown. John Borrows (2002) derides the Supreme Court's treatment of First Nations Elders, who are made to answer to a higher authority and submitted to cross-examination, signalling a grave disrespect for their knowledge: "To directly challenge or question Elders about what they know about the world, and how they know it 'strains the legal and constitutional structure' of many Aboriginal communities" (91). Claude Denis (1997) uses the case of a member of the Salish First Nation who successfully sued fellow band members for forcing him to take part in a traditional ceremony, and how it was dealt with by the BC Supreme Court and the local and national media, to show how the Canadian perspective and legal system are incapable of doing justice to First Nations people and their beliefs.[6] Dalie Giroux (2008) provides an in-depth analysis of the trends within contemporary Aboriginal political theory in an attempt to understand the relationship between word, thought, and action in Aboriginal political ontologies—without, notably, the goal of determining their cultural value, or redefining Aboriginal political demands in terms of liberal institutions.

[6] It should be noted that both Will Kymlicka (1995) and Avigail Eisenberg (1994) mention this same case. Kymlicka shows none of the care and forbearance exhibited in Denis' writing, claiming that while most illiberal actions taken by national minorities do not warrant action by the state, such a gross breach of individual rights demands the state's intervention. Eisenberg uses the case to introduce her "difference perspective," which depends on neither group nor individual rights discourse.

> In Eastern Europe and the Third World, attempts to create liberal democratic institutions are being undermined by violent nationalist conflicts. In the West, volatile disputes over the rights of immigrants, indigenous peoples, and other cultural minorities are throwing into question many of the assumptions which have governed political life for decades. Since the end of the Cold War, ethnocultural conflicts have become the most common source of political violence in the world, and they show no sign of abating. (Kymlicka, 1995: 1)

> The struggles of the Aboriginal peoples of the world, and especially those of the Americas, for cultural survival and recognition are a special example of the phenomenon of the politics of cultural recognition. By my lights, they are exemplary of the "strange multiplicity" of cultural voices that have come forward in the uncertain dawn of the twenty-first century to demand a hearing and a place, in their own cultural forms and ways, in the constitution of modern political associations. (Tully, 1995: 3)

> A number of strands in contemporary politics turn on the need, sometimes the demand, for *recognition*. The need, it can be argued, is one of the driving forces behind nationalist movements in politics. And the demand comes to the fore in a number of ways in today's politics, on behalf of minority or "subaltern" groups, in some forms of feminism and in what is today called the politics of "multiculturalism." (Taylor, 1994: 25)

> For better or worse, Aboriginal rights are now part of Canadian life. This has not always been the case; in fact, they have only "existed" as constitutional rights since the repatriation of the *Canadian Constitution* in 1982. (Turner, 2006: 3)

Yasmeen Abu-Laban and Tim Nieguth (2000) discuss an approach to the Canadian constitution common to many political scientists, which they term the *watershed approach*. Alan Cairns, Guy Laforest, F. L. Morton, and Rainer Knopff (among others) share in this approach. They view the patriation of the constitution, and particularly its inclusion of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*, as ushering in a new era in politics. Since 1982, they say, interest groups representing women, Aboriginal peoples, and what the Reform Party might call "nontraditional" ethnicities have taken a predominant place in constitutional negotiations and

considerations. The term *Charter Canadians*, coined by Cairns (1988) and used by F. L. Morton (1995) and Morton and Knopff (1996), refers to groups who (they claim) were newly empowered by the *Charter*. For these commentators, a number of state-funded interest groups have used the *Charter*'s protection of group rights to pursue "strategic litigation to elicit favourable policy rulings from the courts" (Morton, 1995: 174). The issue with this watershed approach, argue Abu-Laban and Nieguth, is that it overemphasizes the impact that the *Charter* has had on the political actions taken by the Charter Canadians, specifically the political activity of ethnic groups. According to this perspective, these groups were not politically active prior to the *Charter*, which is empirically false.

As the quotations at the beginning of this section make clear, scholars studying colonial themes in Canada commonly take the political actions of subordinate groups as novel, a position that goes beyond the watershed approach to the *Charter*. For instance, Cairns (2000) links the novelty of the explosion of cultural politics to the dismantling of European empires during decolonization. According to him, the renaissance in Aboriginal politics that occurred in response to the White Paper of 1969 must be viewed as part of a global movement. In this view, many other events important for the Canadian political context, such as the Quiet Revolution and the opening of immigration to non-Europeans in 1967 could also be linked to this massive, global political change.

1.3 Critical Examination of the Themes

Differentiation and "Epistemologies of Ignorance"

It would not be an exaggeration to say that most anglophone scholars studying colonialism in Canadian political science are obsessed with how to accommodate cultural difference. The problem with this is that scholars holding a dominant subject position (white, anglophone) are not only continuing the tradition of the dominant dictating the terms of the subordinate's political participation—as Suzanne Gallant argues, taking difference as a problem to be solved (2010). The greater issue is that such deontological tests are being conceived without actually dialoguing with those whom the tests would affect. The result, in many cases, is an unreflexive reproduction of a morally self-righteous nationalism. Coming from a position of power, work of such authors almost invariably works to reproduce their dominance, and rearticulates the political demands of the subordinate into a language with which the dominant is comfortable. Alan Cairns broaches this topic early in his well-known book *Citizens Plus*:

> The issue of who can speak for whom, and who can write about whom, is a major contemporary issue in the social sciences and humanities. There is . . . "a crisis of representation in the human sciences." One version of that crisis has surfaced around the issue of who does and should speak for and about Aboriginal peoples. (Cairns, 2000: 14)

However, as becomes evident in his positions on Aboriginal political demands for further autonomy in decision-making, he mentions the issue of representation only to dismiss it.

Further complicating the tendency of so many anglophone scholars to determine what kinds of political positions Québécois and Aboriginal people should

hold, is that, in general, their scholarship does not take into consideration the work done by those outside of the dominant group. As François Rocher (2007) has shown, scholarly work by anglophones in the field of Canadian politics virtually ignores work done by francophone scholars. Anglophone scholars thus disregard their own subject position, as well as that taken by those inhabiting different subject positions. The result of this ignorance is a paternalistic myopia, and a reproduction of the entitlement that accompanies colonialism:

> The fact of ignoring, or worse, excluding, a significant proportion of scholarly works in the analysis and understanding of the Canadian reality is problematic in many regards; it produces a biased representation of social reality, and leads to tendencies to universalize the research questions of the dominant group, thereby marginalizing a group of scholars systemically discriminated against, while contributing to a disproportional increase of the influence of scholars who already serve as the social actors through which public authorities define both problems and solutions before them, even if their influence might be indirect or diffuse. In short, this phenomenon illustrates the manner in which representations of social and political reality are constructed in Canada, as the point of view of francophone scholars is only rarely taken into consideration. When it is taken into account, it is often only by a handful of intellectuals. The production of knowledge about Canada is both limited and biased. The dominant discursive universe reinforces itself, for reasons that need to be elaborated upon. It shows itself to be minimally open, sensitive, or conscious of the presence of a significant body of literature. (849-850)

Rocher's point extends beyond the "two solitudes"; mainstream Canadian political science literature on colonial themes for the most part also excludes scholarly work by Aboriginal contributors. Although I do not have the resources here to apply Rocher's methods to Aboriginal politics (taking a large sample of books—30 percent—written on the topic over the course of ten years, and analyzing their bibliographies), I believe that the paucity of Aboriginal representation within

the main anglophone journal of Canadian political science[7] should make my point clear. Between 1990 and 2009, *CJPS* published 42 articles in English and French relating in some way to Aboriginal politics, some of which dealt principally with constitutional reform, while others included lengthy discussions of Aboriginal rights. Of these 42 articles, only five were penned by scholars who self-identified as Aboriginal (Green 2001, 2000, 2006; Ladner 2005and (O'Toole 2006).[8] And while there could be many reasons for this—perhaps some Aboriginal scholars are critical of the journal, or they prefer to publish in book form, or there just aren't very many Aboriginal scholars in Canadian political science—the net result is that the vast majority of scholarly work communicated through the journal about Aboriginal issues is created by non-Aboriginal scholars. I am not attempting to claim that in order for knowledge about a given social group to be legitimate, it must be produced by members of that group. Rather, I am proposing a hypothesis: the paucity of scholarship on Aboriginal politics by Aboriginal scholars in *CJPS* likely

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[7] While *CJPS* is officially bilingual, the majority of articles published are in English, and anglophone political scientists do not have a unilingual analog to *P&S*.

[8] Identity is a very difficult concept to mobilize, and any attempt to do so must be attended by numerous caveats. First, the identity categories that I use here are very broad and loose, and may not be true to an individual's self-identification; for instance, I would classify Charles Taylor as an anglophone, while he may in fact self-identify as bilingual, or even francophone. Determining whether an author holds Aboriginal identity is even more difficult, and fraught with potential for serious misunderstandings, as well as reification of the racist typologizing undertaken by the Canadian state, and by society as a whole. However, self-identification as a member of some Aboriginal nation or group is important for many scholars; I make the determination of who is Aboriginal based on self-identification of authors in their texts and, where available, online faculty profiles. Aboriginal identity is very difficult to establish, especially considering that many people choose not to disclose such an identity; therefore, it is possible that some of the researchers publishing on the topic of Aboriginal politics in *CJPS* or *P&S* over the last 20 years may hold Aboriginal identity while not disclosing it.

points to the paucity of Aboriginal perspectives on the issue that are taken into consideration by the non-Aboriginal scholars communicating through the journal. As mentioned, I do not have the means to undertake a bibliometric study of the journal in question, but this underrepresentation is very likely to be significant, and point to a conclusion analogous to that reached by Rocher.

Furthermore, in a point that has direct relevance to this thesis, Rocher claims that

> . . . "majority nationalism" is generally absent from the analysis. Analysis of the modes of identity construction and expression of this nationalism remains to be done. . . . For the most part, the culture, identity and political tradition of the majority group are of lesser interest and rarely looked at as manifestations of nationalism. (838-9)

Rocher's point about the lack of work on majority nationalism is an insightful one. In general, work by anglophone scholars takes the Other as its object. As David Scott (2003) points out, anthropologists encounter difference on their home turf, and so do political theorists—and this difference has come to them in the form of increasing immigration from what the Reform Party referred to as "nontraditional" sources and the political demands of national minorities. But little of the reflexivity required of a contemporary anthropologist studying another culture is displayed by most Canadian political scientists, who are ostensibly studying the political relationship between cultures—dominant and subordinate—within Canada. While the nature of Québec and Aboriginal political positions are open to study—and more often than not, refutation—by anglophone political scientists, they rarely make a serious attempt at understanding these different political positions.

In her excellent article examining *dérapages racistes* against Québec in the English-Canadian media in the years immediately following the 1995 referendum, Maryse Potvin (1999) explains how the dominant English-Canadian nation constructs itself based on superior moral standing, respect of diversity, and a history without violence:

> C'est sur cet amalgame d'éléments idéologiques que s'est construite (et renforcée depuis 1982) une représentation de la nation canadienne composée de multiples minorités culturelles, de deux langues officielles, de dix provinces égales et d'un État central qui « veille au grain ». Les institutions fédérales seraient dotées d'une « supériorité morale » en ce qu'elles constitueraient les symboles de l'unité canadienne et garantiraient non seulement le respect de l'égalité entre provinces et entre citoyens mais aussi la protection des minorités au Canada. Cette présomption d'une supériorité morale s'appuie sur la représentation d'un Canada « qui n'a pas de passé esclavagiste », « qui n'a pas exterminé les Indiens », « qui a permis aux francophones de conserver leurs institutions et leur langue », « qui est plus égalitariste que les Etats-Unis » par son souci de préserver les acquis sociaux, etc. (113)

Potvin argues that these positions are used as a basis by the English-Canadian media to defame Québec. And while her article is not overtly sovereigntist, or even nationalist, her arguments regarding the ways in which the "Rest of Canada" characterizes itself as superior to Québec echo through the unreflexive work of many anglophone scholars:

Few anglophone scholars break the trend of objectifying the other groups that make up the Canadian polity, denigrating their political positions, and ignoring the importance of the hegemony of their own subject position. One exception is James Tully (1995, 2008a, 2008b), whose work displays a great deal of reflexivity, care and forbearance in analyzing the political problems associated with a heterogeneous

polity. In *Strange Multiplicity* (1995), he designs no tests for determining when differential rights can be granted to a culture, or what aspects of a culture are worthy of recognition. Rather, he commits to a painstaking genealogical breakdown of modern constitutionalism, demonstrating its imperial nature, and putting forward a "democratic constitutionalism" (as opposed to constitutional democracy) that stresses the importance of a multiplicity of voices and perspectives. For Tully, determining differential rights, or cultural recognition, based on a normative framework puts the cart before the horse—these are political questions that must be dealt with politically, i.e., through laborious, assiduous dialogue.

Joyce Green provides a refreshing respite from the trend of unreflexive anglophone scholarship in her 2006 article, making a point similar to Potvin's:

> Racism is supported by myths embedded in our political culture, such as variations on the theme that "we" trace our origins to brave tenacious ancestors who came from elsewhere to create this good society. These myths ignore the reality of colonial occupation of Aboriginal lands, and the displacement and subordination of Aboriginal peoples, all through official policies. (518-19)

However, as mentioned above, even after making some very radical arguments (at least for the *CJPS*), Green concludes that the state must use coercive force to break the structural racism that marks Canadian society.

State Philosophy and Nationalism

Perhaps unsurprisingly, Canadian political science as a whole is marked by a high degree of statism, reproducing what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) term *state philosophy*. According to this philosophy, the state is the only "rational and reasonable organization of community" (375), and political scientists reproduce this

received wisdom without a second thought. For instance, if we were to view Aboriginal politics through the *CJPS* lens, we could be forgiven for believing that the only arena where such politics is being played out is the Supreme Court of Canada. While Caroline Dick, Joyce Green, and Michael Murphy are often critical of the Supreme Court in its decisions regarding Aboriginal rights, the ultimate thrust of their scholarship is that there need only be adjustments in the *content* of the decisions, and not in the means through which the Canadian state forces Aboriginal people to make their political demands on the colonizer's terms. Similar claims can be made about work on multiculturalism, both theoretical and empirical—nearly all of it is more or less in favour of the broad approach taken by the Canadian state since the early 1970s. In fact, one could very easily argue that a position such as Kymlicka's is merely a philosophical reformulation of the Canadian state's position.

And finally, the statism in much of this work on colonialism often bleeds into an unabashed nationalism. As Kymlicka points out, "multination states cannot survive unless the various national groups have an allegiance to the larger political community they cohabit" (Kymlicka, 1995: 13). Some version or other of such "civic patriotism" runs through the work of Taylor, Cairns, and LaSelva. It is also an important element in the work of many francophone scholars—Karmis (2004), Gagnon (Gagnon 2003; Gagnon and Iacovino 2007), and Rocher (Rocher and Verrelli 2003), for instance—who attempt to distance Québec nationalism from an ethnic basis. So even while everyone seems to deride the dangers of ethnic nationalism, civic patriotism (based upon our adherence to some universal principles) is of

ultimate importance in maintaining the integrity of the Canadian state, or, alternatively, justifying Québec's nationalism as a basis for separation. State philosophy, which in fact depoliticizes the state in forcing politics to conform to reason, thus saturates much of the discourse, dismissing political positions that threaten the maxim: "Always obey. The more you obey, the more you will be master, for you will be obeying pure reason, in other words yourself" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988: 376).

Conveniently, Trudeau furnished Canadians with a document around which we can rally: the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms*. The problem is that in demanding that we all swear fealty to Canada, anglophone scholars ignore the importance that subordinate groups play in the makeup of the Canadian state and society. And, as argued above, they make these demands without entering into dialogue with those who they are targeting. "Speak white" becomes "use the Supreme Court"—that is, reduce your cultures to a handful of rights that have been determined for you by outsiders (through their use of liberal reason, of course). And even though those swimming against the dominant current, aren't directly muzzled, reason's monopoly on common sense allows for an all-too-easy dismissal of fundamental critique. The problem is that in repeating the maxims of state philosophy, even as variations on a theme, we fail to instill a reflexive, critical spirit in our scholarship, and in our students. I recently taught a fourth-year class in Canadian political thought. The students—overwhelmingly white, middle-class Ontarians—latched on to the concept of civic patriotism put forward by Charles Taylor (1993, 1999) and

Michael Ignatieff (1994, 2000); they used it freely to condemn the sociological or ethnic nationalism that they viewed as behind such policies as *Loi 101* in Québec. For their first assignment, over 50 percent of the class chose to write on the readings from our week on nationalism; of those students, all but one argued against Québec's nationalism, and denigrated them for not understanding the ultimate reasonableness of the *Charter* (the one who did not was a francophone).

Thus the distance afforded by the academy's ivory tower has not broken what seems a natural tendency of white anglophones to denigrate Québec (what Pierre Bourdieu, 1991, would term a *homology* between academic discourse and the Canadian national habitus). A major issue for many of Québec's political scientists—thinkers such as Laforest (1995), Seymour (2003), Lamoureux (1995), and Potvin (1999)—is what they perceive as the dissolution of Québec's special, national status into just another element within Canada's diverse society. A small number of anglophone scholars join them, such as Kenneth McRoberts (1997), who argues that Trudeau's national unity strategy, through pushing individual freedom and equality, resulted in a rejection of special treatment for any province by Canadians outside Québec. The main claim of this prominent group is that Trudeau's brand of liberalism eroded Québec's status as a founding nation in a multinational state; in fact, the positions of some prominent anglophone scholars confirm this.

In the introduction to his book *Charter versus Federalism* (1992), Alan Cairns makes it clear that the view that Québec has a special place within the federation is dated:

> . . . to live in Vancouver—where one can look across the Pacific toward Asia, where one in seven of the population is a visible minority, and where in many schools more than 50 per cent of the student population has English as a second language—is to catch a glimpse of the Canadian future in which duality, founding peoples, the Plains of Abraham, British constitutional traditions, and the cleavages of federalism have diminished credibility as constitutional sign-posts. (9)

Some anglophone authors, however, take this position a step further. They use their analytical skills to determine whether Québec has a right to view itself as a nation, or to separate, rather than dismissing such questions as antiquated, or more importantly, beyond their purview. Joseph Carens edited an entire volume whose question, and title, was *Is Québec Nationalism Just?* He makes it clear that the contributors are all anglophone, and all would prefer that Québec remained a part of Canada, but also that the contributors "aspire . . . to a kind of analysis that goes deeper than a defence of particular political positions" (Carens, 1995: 5). The problem here is that Carens et al. thought it right to give themselves the task of determining the justice of Québec nationalism. Carens and his collaborators, to the last, view Québec nationalism and the sovereigntist goal of separation as just; that is, they deem Québec, as a national culture, capable of upholding liberal values even outside of the protection of the Canadian federal state. But, regardless of their conclusion, the audacity of the decision of these political philosophers to nominate themselves arbiters of the justice of what should be the result of a *democratic process* remains.

In contrast to Carens, however, Jeremy Webber (1999) is not convinced that Québec nationalists are as liberal as they would appear. Although he claims that his

"objective is not to demonstrate that all Québec nationalists are disguised ethnonationalists" (Webber, 1999: 87), he claims that Québec intellectuals such as Rocher and Gagnon,[9] who stress the importance to Québec of pluralism and civic nationalism, are in fact overstating the extent to which civic nationalism has permeated Québec society. He claims that "If Québec nationalism were purely civic—if it truly were neutral with regard to culture—then Canada would be just as appropriate a country as Québec" (Webber, 1999: 91). Thus Webber is positing the existence of a single, universal rationality to which Trudeau and his codrafters of the *Constitution Act, 1982* must also have had access. He thereby argues that Canada is a country whose concept of civic nationhood has been determined through access to this rationality; here, culture is private and not an aspect of the common bond. But the problem is that Québec maintains a primordial attachment to language and culture, which inappropriately invade the public sphere, and that betray it as premodern, ethnic, and violent; Webber's position thus mirrors Trudeau's remarks on Québec nationalism, quoted in LaSelva (1996): "All nationalists, Pierre Trudeau insisted, are reactionaries; they want 'the whole tribe [to] return to the wigwams,' so that they can be its tribal kings and sorcerers" (104). To repeat Deleuze and Guattari: "Always obey. The more you obey, the more you will be master, for you will be obeying pure reason, in other words yourself."[10]

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[9] We could add Karmis ((2004)) to this group.

[10] Except in this case, Québécois must obey a document drafted by the man who signed the *War Measures Act*. One must ask, given this information, who exactly is the reactionary.

Moral righteousness has historically been an integral part of any colonizing effort (whether it was to spread universal republican values, or to Christianize, or to govern inferior peoples with magnanimous benevolence). It maintains itself in the civic patriotism so entrenched in those who grew up believing that justice rains down like manna from heaven in the form of Supreme Court judgments, and those of an older generation who criticize Québec nationalism and Aboriginal parallelism as eroding Canadian federalism. And since so little work written in English has the same spirit of forbearance and openness displayed by scholars such as Tully, and so much maintains reason's transcendence over political dialogue and decision-making, it is little wonder that our students maintain the same disdainful, arrogant opinions regarding political positions that threaten the hegemony of white anglophones within the Canadian polity.

Colonial Time

Important theorists of difference, including Taylor, Kymlicka, and Tully, have opened their most famous manuscripts by discussing the rise of demands for rights, recognition, and inclusion. What we are meant to understand is that the political demands being made by a plethora of groups, defined culturally (Aboriginal peoples, minority nations), racially, by gender, or by certain other traits (disability, sexuality) are new. Such demands can be viewed within the Canadian context, as evidenced by those who espouse the watershed approach, or as part of a larger global phenomenon, as argued by Cairns (2000) and Ignatieff (2000). What this narrative of novelty forecloses is a connection between what may be a new way of

parsing political action—in terms of rights, for instance—and political actions taken by marginal groups prior to their official recognition by the state. It reifies the political position of the state as representing historical fact. For example, we assume that the state's many political prohibitions applying to status Indians (hiring lawyers, congregating for cultural and political purposes, voting in federal and political elections) have been effective in curtailing their political activities. Or, perhaps, we assume that Aboriginal peoples simply weren't sophisticated enough prior to the 1960s to actually confront the state on their own terms. The example that immediately comes to my mind when I am confronted with this very common version of the narrative of novelty as it relates to Aboriginal people—their so-called political renaissance in opposition to the White Paper—is the tireless political effort by the Nisga'a, who, for instance, sent a junket of three chiefs to Ottawa in 1885, another envoy to Victoria in 1887, and a petition to the Privy Council in London in 1913 (Kermode.net 2003).

The narrative of novelty cuts the present off from the past, allowing us to view our own positions as enlightened in relation to some previous time when minority groups were unjustly denied their rights. Whether the view is negative (as taken by those who espouse the term *Charter Canadians*), or positive (as evidenced in the work of our most well-known scholars of difference), we must focus our attention on the novelty of the circumstances. This theme is nothing unique to scholarship on colonialism in Canada; rather, it characterizes the dominant perspective held by Canadian society as a whole. Conservative commentators will

view novelty with suspicion, harking back to a better time; liberal commentators (far more prevalent in the academy, at least according to the conservatives themselves) will view novelty as evidence of the march of progress. But many Aboriginal scholars such as Kiera Ladner and Taiaiake Alfred work against the narrative of novelty in valorizing their political traditions, which are products of cultures that have inhabited Turtle Island since time immemorial.

As argued by David Scott (2003), the view of history as progress, which is a hallmark of colonial thinking (and which I discuss in detail in chapter 2), shows up even in the most progressive of scholarship. Scott takes as his object Tully's *Strange Multiplicity* (1995), a book that he views as

> . . . one of the more significant attempts on the part of Western political philosophy to think [about] the place of culture in political theory . . . because Tully seeks to take the cultural claims on the domain of the political—as well as the cultural dimension of the political itself—seriously, at least more seriously than many of his disciplinary colleagues do. (Scott, 2003: 95)

Indeed, Scott claims that while Tully's fellow political theorists (Taylor, Kymlicka, and Carens, for example) incorporate some concept of culture or other into their work, they are "less interested in culture per se than in identifying a culture-concept that best suits their political theory of liberal democracy" (96). Scott's decision to use Tully's work as an example comes from a place of respect and admiration.

The problem is that even while Tully effects a masterful genealogical analysis of how imperial constitutionalism maintains its dominance in the political imagination of the West, he uncritically accepts the position that our current view of

culture as social construction[11] is superior to previous perspectives that viewed difference as inferiority. Culture as socially constructed provides a panacea to the view "of humans situated in independent, closed and homogeneous cultures and societies" (Tully, 1995: 14), which is a prominent aspect of modern (imperial) constitutionalism that is still held by many in political theory, including Taylor and Kymlicka, as mentioned above. Even though Tully takes great care to relativize dominant Western conceptions of the state and constitution vis-à-vis both the West's own minor traditions and other cultural traditions, in endorsing the currently popular conception of culture as socially constructed he slips back into what he himself calls the *stages* view of history.

Scott wants us to submit our own assumptions about how culture works to the same kind of rigorous, genealogical analysis that Tully applies to modern constitutionalism. If we do not, we may be blinding ourselves to the work that our new concept of *difference* performs in the service of neoliberal ideology:

> The new culture-as-constructed-meaning that . . . became the normal vocabulary of cultural difference (indeed, of difference as such) in the last decades of the twentieth century, answered more than a transdisciplinary demand to displace or overcome the reductiveness and positivism of 1950s social science. This it did, to be sure. But in a post-cold war world now assumed to be safe for differences it answered also an ideological demand for a post-ideological conception of democratic pluralism, a cosmopolitan idiom in which the otherness of the West's Others, once a source of defensive anxiety and the object of truth-determining investigations, could now be understood conversationally, antiessentially, ironically, as mere difference. (Scott 2003, 111)

[11] Scott calls this the *Geertzian* view of culture, after influential anthropologist Clifford Geertz.

This thesis, while sympathetic to a view of culture (and subjectivity) as constructed of interrelated and competing flows, will attempt to incorporate Scott's perceptive critique reflexively. My own view is that, despite the way so many in Canadian political science have heralded a new era in the recognition of differential rights for Aboriginal peoples and ethnic and linguistic minorities, the structural hegemony of white anglophones that marks colonialism persists. This view accords with that taken by a number of Aboriginal authors, and some non-Aboriginal scholars (including Denis, and Tully himself).

1.4 Conclusion

I am, by nature, rather contrary. I don't like to be told what to do, and I have a general mistrust of things that seem to motivate others. Despite this sometimes overly critical attitude, I recall that Kymlicka's *Multicultural Citizenship* seemed to make perfect sense as I was reading it. The way he accorded differential rights and divided up certain groups, allowing them a degree of internal sovereignty (even if they were to undertake illiberal practices)—all had a feeling of being "just right."[12] Similarly, I felt that the way the Québec and then the Belgian government were dealing with the issue of a handful of *niqabis* requesting accommodation for their religious beliefs was "just wrong." If I were to have stopped there, and accepted my own intuitions about the structure of Canadian politics, this would be a far different thesis. But my critical reflexes are obstinate. I began to wonder what made me

[12] I am reminded of the character Johanna in James A. Michener's historical novel about South Africa *The Covenant* (1987): in it, she is making "jelly" (gelatin) desserts, and decides to experiment in layering different colours. The result is beautiful, and is declared to be analogous to the way each of the races of man is separate and doesn't "muddy" the others (924).

believe that Kymlicka's prescriptions were "just right"—how had his work made such an incursion into my own common sense? In looking beyond Kymlicka, the pattern of common sense was not always repeated, but as I have shown in this review, other patterns certainly presented themselves: anglophone scholars overwhelmingly produce work that generally supports the Canadian state, adheres to a nationalism hiding behind a thin veneer of universal reason, makes an explicit break with the past, thus reifying a liberal conception of time as progress, recognizes (i.e., defines the limits of) difference and determines the political options available to it, and generally ignores the opinions of those whose lives would ostensibly be affected by the potential ramifications of its scholarship.

Of course the relationship between academic literature and what are conceived of as "my" opinions is a difficult one to trace: I approach these books with my own life experiences, but as I continue through my academic apprenticeship these experiences themselves are increasingly shaped by the academy. However, it is safe to assume that such academic work will have had less of an impact on students at the bachelor's level, and the opinions of these students, in my experience, are remarkably consonant with Kymlicka's theorizing. Thus it seems that some of the most widely read scholarly work more or less confirms our prior convictions and prejudices, effectively sedimenting these preconceptions rather than challenging them.

What I have tried to show in this review is that, in Bourdieu's (1991) terminology, there exists a direct homology between the brute, colonial facts of

Canadian politics, and the opinions and positions expressed by an academic scholarship that is supposedly produced in conditions of analytical distance between analyst and object of analysis. Instead, it seems the academy is providing us with learned voices whose constantly repeated refrain counters the threats posed by Québec nationalism or Treaty Federalism (for instance). This leads to a critical indolence and a lack of reflexivity that is particularly repugnant given general assumptions about the objectivity of social scientific knowledge production. The result is a reinforcing of the privileged position that white anglophones have held since the founding of British North America; Canadian political sciences studying colonialism holds a white-anglophone subjectivity, either implicitly or explicitly. This subject position defines the terms of political discourse in Canada: it determines what differences are recognized and how they are to be accommodated.

As François Rocher (1997) points out, the literature on Canadian politics barely approaches the problem of majority nationalism. There is plenty written, by all involved, on Québec nationalism, its relationship to the Canadian state and federalism, Aboriginal rights, and theories of multiculturalism. But scholarly voices that examine what constitutes Canadian nationalism, rather than those that simply argue for its necessity or moral superiority, are few. Canadian nationalism is a silent and invisible force against which competing political forces must struggle. Furthermore, voices that do examine what Rocher calls majority nationalism from the inside—i.e., work on the topic produced by white anglophones—are even less represented within the literature.

This thesis will take these overlapping lacunae as a starting point: the lack of scholarship on majority nationalism, the uncritical acceptance of common sense positions that reinforce white anglophone hegemony, the overwhelming statism expressed within the scholarship, and the break with the past effected by work that focuses on the novelty of rights-based political activity. As will be discussed in the next chapter, I will be combining these initial trajectories with an interest in the quotidian experiences of those inhabiting the dominant subject position, and how these experiences work to reinforce the trends that I have identified here, which go well beyond the academy's walls.

CHAPTER 2:

CONCEPTUAL AND METHODOLOGICAL FRAMEWORK

In this chapter I deal with two broad and related tasks: creating a conceptual vocabulary, and outlining the methods through which I have mobilized these concepts in the thesis. In the first section, "Colonialism," I detail the conceptual framework I have employed, through delineating a set of concepts: colonialism, subjectivity, and persistence. In constructing the concept of colonialism, I have read postcolonial theory through a Deleuzian lens. My research proceeded through following intuitions,[1] which informed my choice of reading, which in turn informed my choice of problems, sites of interrogation, concepts, and methods. I did not want to overdetermine the findings by simply playing a matching game with a pregiven definition of colonialism—such an approach would have betrayed the poststructural empiricism that I was attempting to mobilize, and would have reproduce a structural—even Platonist—view of concepts and categories. Thus, I constructed the articulation of the theoretical lexicon of the thesis through a dialectical approach, working between literature and experiential research.

In this first section, I define the important concept of *whitestream* (Denis, 1997), and outline a number of important aspects of colonialism including racial hierarchies, gender production, and two competing and contradictory conceptions of time. From these properties of colonialism emerge two processes through which colonialism reproduces itself: distinction and absorption. Each of these processes is articulated in

[1] See Deleuze's discussion of intuition as method in *Bergsonism* (Deleuze 1988). Note that this is not intuition in the Kantian sense.

postcolonial theorizing, both critically and prescriptively. And while they in fact appear contradictory, I hold that an interrogation of colonialism that leaves one or the other out misses an integral force immanent to colonialism.

The second main section of this chapter, "Methodology," delineates my methodological approach, which is intrinsic to the formulation of my main question: How do the affective, moral, and libidinal economies of contemporary Canada reproduce colonialism? Many commentators inside and outside the academy have already dealt with this question in relation to the colonized, a uniquely important example of which is the autoethnographic work of Frantz Fanon (2008). In many ways, my question attempts to turn the work of Frantz Fanon on its head: if colonialism does not simply exploit the colonized for the betterment of the colonizer, that is, is not simply unidirectional but is a relationship that bears on the colonizer as well,[2] then colonialism's structuring effect on the psychic life of the colonizer should be a fruitful research pursuit.[3] Given the circumstances of contemporary Canada, and my particular theoretical bent, I have slightly modified Fanon's approach through focusing on the mainstream as opposed to the colonized.

Methodologically, I have also taken a page from Fanon's *Black Skin, White Masks* (2008) in including autoethnographic methods for data collection. I have taken

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[2] This is a point of consensus in the literature: Nandy (2009), Fanon (2004, 2008), and Bhabha (2004), among others.

[3] Something which Fanon himself deals with in *The Wretched of the Earth* (2008), particularly in the chapter "Colonial War and Mental Disorders," where he reproduces and comments on case notes from his work as a psychiatrist in Algeria, treating members of the French military, many of whom were suffering from depression, anxiety, and sleeplessness related to their having tortured Algerians, and, as well, the Algerian victims of this torture.

my own experiences, thoughts, and feelings as sources of data, keeping an ethnographic journal throughout the research and writing of this thesis. Through the intersection of autoethnography and intertextual discourse analysis, the thesis aims to tease out some of the techniques through which whitestream subjectivity is produced, thus providing an answer to my central question.

The chapter concludes with a justification of the three sites—talk radio, hockey and humour—through which I interrogate the reproduction of colonialism in chapters 4, 5, and 6.

2.1 Colonialism

Colonialism is the central concept to be utilized in this thesis.[4] But colonialism is more than a concept: it is a disparate set of practices that includes ways of thinking and ways of interacting both socially with humans and with the nonhuman world—it is an assemblage. (To say colonialism structures these relations would be to allow colonialism agency, and turn these relations into some formless matter through which colonialism expresses itself. This is precisely the kind of thinking that I am working to avoid in this thesis.) Colonialism is merely a name indicating the trajectory of an assemblage of flows that are global in scope; in this thesis, I have limited my discussion to the way these flows mark the rather arbitrarily delimited "Canadian social and political landscape." In this section I map out what I hold to be most central to processes of colonialism in contemporary Canada.

[4] For those adhering to distinctions marked out in *What is Philosophy?* (Deleuze and Guattari 1994), colonialism is a function, not a concept.

The determination of which processes can be termed *colonial* is difficult; one of the main propositions that this thesis defends is that Canadian politics and society are defined *as* colonial—therefore that which constitutes the predominant flows, forces, and contours of Canada themselves also constitute colonialism. However, claiming that everything is colonial is akin to claiming that everything is pizza: it is nonsense. And as Freud is reputed to have said, sometimes a cigar is just a cigar (not a proxy for the American imperial phallus, for example). Interpretive work such as this thesis cannot lead us to any ultimately "true" grounding of our experience. It only rephrases the narrative of our experience. To say "X is colonial" is to link X to certain other actions or processes that have already been judged as colonial (rather than linking them to the policy of multiculturalism as justice, for instance).

Furthermore, colonialism is not a single thing, but a term that we tack on to diverse and disparate processes. Thus the question of whether "there can be a general theoretical matrix that is able to provide an all-encompassing framework for analysis of each singular colonial instance" must be answered in the negative (Young 1995, 164-165). For Paul Patton, "Colonization is clearly a pure event. . . . Successive iterations of the concept reveal important differences between the object, methods, rationalizations, and aims of colonization in different parts of the world" (Patton 2010, 103). However, historical instances of colonialism (or colonization) are irreducible to a single (universal or formal) determination. My answer to this problem is to concentrate my analysis on a specific time (the early twenty-first century), place (Canada), and experience (my own as a white, male anglophone).

However, I should also say that colonialism since the nineteenth century has a certain trajectory that can be defined; but it is outside the ambit of this thesis to do so.

In defining this trajectory, I have put my own research (i.e., data collection) into conversation with the research of others, especially the work of Frantz Fanon (2004, 2008), postcolonial discourse analysis (Bhabha 2004; Nandy 2009; Said 2003; Spivak 1988; Todorov 1985), and North American Aboriginal scholarly work (Alfred 1999, 2005; Valaskakis 2005; Vizenor 1999). I have read this already dense and varied collection of work on colonialism through an approach to social processes inspired by the work of Gilles Deleuze (Deleuze 1991, 1994, 2006) and his collaborations with Félix Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 1988, 1994), and the political theory of William Connolly (2002, 2005). Deleuze, Guattari, and Connolly supplement postcolonial theory's emphasis on the discursive production of the subject with a language and approach that take seriously the affective, embodied, and material aspects of lived experience and that simultaneously denature our conceptions of subjectivity: "The subject is produced as a mere residuum alongside the desiring-machines" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983: 17).

Colonialism as I will define it here consists of two general processes: (a) a *distinguishing* process that functions as the limit of (b) an *absorptive* process.[5] These

[5] The functioning of distinction/absorption is analogous to Deleuze and Guattari's conception of the working of capitalism, with its paranoid/schizophrenic polarity. The constant (schizophrenic) decoding of (paranoid) social codes moves towards a universal recoding (axiomatization) of all flows into perfect commensurability through reference to price (Deleuze and Guattari 1983see also (Holland 1999). The point here is that, as with capitalism, each of colonialism's poles alternates between decoding and recoding.

processes are extremely complex, and often appear to be working against one another. Indeed, many commentators focus their attention on the first, distinguishing process, effectively amplifying the absorptive process through their work. For instance, an author may focus on the distinguishing characteristic of race that limit the capacity of black Americans to fully engage with their political institutions, thereby implicitly allying his analysis with an absorption into these same institutions.

In breaking up the myriad actions, interactions, perceptions, thoughts, and feelings that constitute colonial flows into two primary processes, my aim is to move away from characterizations of colonialism as processes of choice-making, determinations of individual actions as colonial or not (or levels of cooptation of Aboriginal leadership), or conceptual frameworks that reify the concept of a concrete subject (self-Other). Colonial processes of absorption and distinction are visible as grand historical trends as well as microprocesses visible in our daily lives (see "Absorption and Distinction," below). They are also reflective of neither structure or agency: I align my analysis with the poststructural conception of action as inseparable from context (production of power for Foucault, or desire for Deleuze and Guattari, for example).

However, as will become apparent, there must be means of shifting the production of desire, of gradually altering the course of flows constitutive of colonialism, of sitting on flows and acting as a valve. I examine these questions more fully in my discussion of methodology.

The Colonizer and the Colonized

It may be argued that colonialism is a primarily economic process. However, such an assertion ignores the fundamental inseparability of material, social, affective, and libidinal processes (all of which are properly material themselves). One of the issues that confronts an attempt to study colonialism in an advanced settler-colony such as Canada is that the process of appropriation—or, in Marxist terms, *primitive accumulation*—seems to have already been effected by generations past, leaving nothing but an already colonized, and perhaps therefore postcolonial situation. Examining the processes of expropriation proper to colonization is beyond the scope of this thesis. Nonetheless, it is worthwhile to consider Coulthard's (2009) persuasive argument against a conception of primitive accumulation as a single step in the colonization process; in the colonial environment of Canada, primitive accumulation (e.g., violent expropriation of land) persists through to the present. In Deleuzian terms, processes of capture and overcoding of systems of relation specific to Aboriginal cultures continues to have relevance for Canadian politics, and cannot be merely relegated to Canadian history.

As Nandy (1983) argues, however, the so-called economic factor of colonialism, while important, cannot be distinguished from a psychological dimension and the changes wrought in the psychology of both colonizer and colonized:

> As folk wisdom would have it, the only sufferers of colonialism are the subject communities. Colonialism, according to this view, is the name of a political economy which ensures a one-way flow of benefits, the subjects being the perpetual losers in a zero-sum game and the rulers the beneficiaries.

> This is a view of human mind and history promoted by colonialism itself. This view has a vested interest in denying that the colonizers are at least as much affected by the ideology of colonialism, that their degradation, too, can sometimes be terrifying. (Nandy 2009, 30)

This argument, sustained by Fanon, Bhabha, Said, Spivak, and many other theorists of colonialism, explicitly distances itself from positions such as that held by Octave Mannoni (1990), who claims that colonies have attracted the detritus of society, and therefore that the atrocities committed against colonized peoples (the Malagasy, in particular) cannot be attributed to the metropolitan society. Nandy's two points—first, that colonialism cannot be reduced to economics, but is an economy of affective and material flows; and second, that colonialism does not simply have a unidirectional effect on the colonized, but effects both nominal positions—are central to the arguments I will be making in the substantive chapters to come.

Absorption and Distinction

The discursive and affective techniques that produce and reproduce colonial flows in contemporary Canada function through the often-competing processes of absorption and distinction. Of course these processes are not unique to the Canadian experience: Cortes distinguishes, with the slice and thrust of his sabre; and Las Casas absorbs, with the reinscription of indigenous bodies into his biblical narrative (see Todorov 1985). Nineteenth-century Dutch scientific discourse distinguishes South Asian bodies through nipple colour, and absorbs them through sexual objectification (see Stoler 1995, 183-190). Orientalist knowledge production first prepares the Middle East for absorption into modern empires by distinguishing the Oriental from the European (Said 2003), then for a continued absorption through

international development frameworks (Escobar 1995). Frantz Fanon is absorbed into complicity with French imperialism through his qualifications and his French citizenship, but is distinguished from it first by his skin, and then by his politics (see Fanon 2008).

In Canada, the *Indian Act* distinguishes through circumscribing citizenship based on race and strictly limiting indigenous space (and what can be done with it), while Las Casas reappears in residential schools, absorbing through violent distinctions of language, culture, and hygiene. Trudeau and Chrétien attempt to absorb through the White Paper; Harold Cardinal articulates his distinction in *The Unjust Society* (Cardinal 1969). Distinction and absorption are the two processes constitutive of colonialism; but, as this last example should make clear, these processes also contain anticolonial forces, driving towards the actualization of something beyond colonialism.

These two forces are immanent to many enumerations of colonialism; here, I explain them with reference to the well-known postcolonial theorizing Homi Bhabha expressed in *The Location of Culture* (2004). In this collection of essays, Bhabha combines theoretical insights from Fanon, Said, Lacan, and Derrida while presenting an analysis of colonial discourse that engages with its unconscious and ambivalent elements. This ambivalence is an important theoretical addendum to Said's (2003) contentions regarding the instrumentality of Orientalist knowledge production, for Bhabha argues that "colonial discourse of whatever kind operated not only as an instrumental construction of knowledge but also according to the

ambivalent protocols of fantasy and desire" (Young 1995, 161). Much of this theory concentrates on the discursive construction of the colonial subject—the colonizer's Other—through recognition and overdetermination. Bhabha's process of othering fixes the Other with a set of shifting attributes that function to *distinguish* the Other from the white/European/colonizer. This distinction, as constructed in colonial discourse, however, is always accompanied by an attraction, a desire in fact for the colonizer to *become* the colonized, to position *themselves* as indigenous to the land (see Fanon, 2004)[6]—as well as, I would add, to make the colonized become white, to *absorb* the colonized.

The ambivalence towards the Other in colonial discourse is characterized by Bhabha as a fetishism:

> The fetish or stereotype gives access to an "identity" which is predicated as much on mastery and pleasure as it is on anxiety and defense, for it is a form of multiple and contradictory belief in its recognition of difference and disavowal of it. (107)

This fetishism means that the Other becomes a sign for lack, and the Self a source of wholeness.[7] And, even while the colonizer is constantly defending himself against pollution by the Other, colonialism is always a process of hybridity, of absorption despite distinction. Bhabha is thus denying the colonizer a monopoly on agency,

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[6] The Afrikaaner *volkspele* (folk-dancing tradition) invented in 1912 served precisely this purpose; see van der Walt, 2000.

[7] The focus on lack is common to many contemporary critical theorists; Butler's (1997) melancholia, for instance, is also defined by the lack (foreclosure) of a potential object of desire. Both derive their focus on lack from Lacan's theory of subject formation, in which a constitutive lack—a constant desire for *l'objet petit a*, that which promises to fill the lack, but can never be obtained—is foundational of the subject (Lacan 2002).

and troubling the often-rigid boundaries that the distinguishing function erects and maintains.

In defining colonialism as the interaction between absorption and distinction, I am effecting a conceptual tearing out of two processes inherent in Bhabha's ambiguous and ambivalent conception of the process of colonial subject formation. This tearing out makes several theoretically important moves: It makes the two processes immanent to Bhabha's ambivalence explicit, thus steering away from the problematic mobilization of the Other common to many recent approaches to colonialism. It desubjectifies the process, withdrawing agency, even while maintaining the capacity to work at the level of the individual. In desubjectifying, it allows for a Deleuzo-Guattarian conception of productive desire to inhere in colonialism. And finally, it moves away from the focus on ambiguity and undecidability common to many Lacanian/Derridean scholars, including Bhabha. Furthermore, I follow Young's contention that Deleuzo-Guattarian concepts require some reworking in order to account for the "palimpsestual" workings of colonialism:

> Decoding and recoding implies too simplistic a grafting of one culture on to another. We need to modify the model to a form of palimpsestual inscription and reinscription, an historical paradigm that will acknowledge the extent to which cultures were not simply destroyed but rather layered on top of each other, giving rise to struggles that themselves only increased the imbrication of each with the other and their translation into increasingly uncertain patchwork identities. (Young 1995, 174-175)

The concept of the Other is not native to postcolonial theorizing. It was enunciated by a variety of French philosophers of the mid-twentieth century

(including Levinas), for instance. However, its use in postcolonial theory is for the most part derived from Lacan's theories of subject formation—themselves indebted to structuralist linguistics and Alexandre Kojève's interpretation of Hegel[8]–where the self becomes defined in relation to an other. The perceived wholeness of the other (*semblable*) in the mirror-stage allows for the implantation of a notion of the wholeness of the self, for instance (Lacan 2002, 3-9), and desire is defined through a complex process of aggression towards the other for supposedly possessing that which the subject lacks (Lacan 2002, 10-30, 281-312).[9] Bhabha's construction of the Other in colonial discourse is embedded within this Lacanian theory of ambivalent desire and subject formation. However, in utilizing the concept of the Other, many postcolonial critics and commentators[10] evacuate any ambivalence; rather, the Other becomes shorthand for the colonized (as distinguished from the colonizer), who are oppressed through various techniques associated with colonialism.[11] These commentators' use of the term *Other* thus becomes a rallying cry for the breakdown of distinction, and an embracing of absorption—many scholars who approach their subject with less care than Bhabha amplify what is often a liberal flow of absorption as integration. In Bhabha's use, the Other maintains an ambiguity between a

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[8] According to one (likely apocryphal) tale, upon Kojève's death, Lacan spirited away his copies of Hegel's oeuvre, which were replete with the master's notes.

[9] I do not pretend to do justice to the incredible complexity of Lacan's theory in this simplified explanation.

[10] I will refrain from naming names here, since, first, the tendency is so widespread that it has gone beyond individual instances, and second, I do not wish to be seen as denigrating authors with whom I share many critical points of reference.

[11] Echoing Said's (2003) view of colonial knowledge production as totalizing and instrumental that Bhabha is explicitly criticizing.

Lacanian structure of subjectivity and a critique of colonial discourse; in its mobilization in postcolonial theory at large, it loses this ambiguity. Furthermore, the Other as pure critique of colonialism is complicit in reification of the two putative subject positions—dominant/dominated, colonizer/colonized—that is, the very position that Bhabha's concept of hybridity undermines. In clearly delineating two functions constitutive of colonialism, these problems, inherent in careless use of the concept of the Other, are avoided.

However, I must clarify that even in dividing the ambivalent and ambiguous processes in Bhabha's work into two functions, I am not calcifying a binary out of the intermingling of multiple forces. Bhabha contends that the production of meaning, and of the subject, occurs in the liminal space between the binary poles of colonial discourse (white/black, for example; see "Introduction: Locations of Culture," in Bhabha, 2004).[12] This is precisely the point of tearing out these processes: as Deleuze and Guattari explain, "there must be at least two multiplici*ties* . . . because the multiplicity is precisely what happens between the

[12] This characterization of the production of subjectivity is analogous to Deleuze and Guattari's (1988see also (Deleuze and Parnet 2007) concept of segmentarity, whereby the subject is produced through its relationship to a multitude of binary machines "of social classes; of sexes, man-woman; of ages, child-adult; of races, black-white; of sectors, public-private; of subjectivations, ours-not ours" (Deleuze and Parnet, 2007: 128). However, Deleuze and Guattari also conceive of segmentarity in geometries other than the line, such as concentric circles (the positioning of the subject in a house, in a neighbourhood, in a region, etc.), and characterize segmentarities as both rigid (as in the quote above) and supple (micropolitical, interpersonal, and even within the individual). Between the limits of each segment is an infinity (think of the infinite divisibility of a line segment) where swerves, cracks, and lines of flight open and are closed through a process of "if you are not *a* or *b*, then you are *c*" (ibid.). Even while this conceptual terminology may have relevance for this thesis, I have decided not to use it given that (a) this is not a thesis *on* Deleuze, nor am I simply applying Deleuzian concepts; rather, I am attempting to produce a study that is consonant with Deleuze's transcendental empiricist methodology (if not in letter then in spirit). And (b) I feel that it would contribute to conceptual "crowding" and detract from what little theoretical parsimony that the thesis has.

two" (1994, 152). Rather than producing a critique of binary thinking, I am attempting to make it clear that the two processes of absorption and distinction are in constant interaction; moreover, instances of distinction and absorption do not necessarily further colonialism, but instead (like all social processes) shift colonialism's trajectory. And, as should already be clear, these two multiplicitous processes do not work towards any kind of dialectical conjunction or sublation. For purposes of this thesis, they are two competing forces characteristic of contemporary colonialism in Canada (and, perhaps, British colonialism in general).

Furthermore, the twin processes of absorption/distinction also move away from situating agency either with the colonizer, or with some impersonal process of colonialism itself , as if colonialism were a thing that instantiated itself in the world, rather than a term used to analytically link disparate processes. Bhabha's concept of hybridity also works against locating agency strictly with the colonizer.[13] But as Young (1995) argues, hybridity has a problematic history; to utilize this concept is to reify the idea(l) of the two constituent parts that form the hybrid, and, possibly, to fall back into the same patterns of colonial thought—obsessed with classification of various hybrids produced by the intermingling of a certain fixed set of originary types—circulating in Victorian England. Furthermore, one of the most important aspects of hybridity—that colonialism is a relationship between cultures, and is not simply unidirectional—can be driven towards a negligent denial of the

[13] This insight has been mobilized by many: Borrows' work on Aboriginality within Canadian law (Borrows 2002), and Valaskakis's essays in *Indian Country* (2005), both discussed in chapter 1, travel a similar path.

overwhelming force that Europeans brought to bear on indigenous peoples the world over during colonization, where colonial techniques of distinction were often disturbingly efficient at disavowing anything but the most utilitarian of absorptions. As Cole Harris notes regarding the question of hybridity, while it is true that "colonialism spoke with many voices and was often deeply troubled about its own contradictions, [it tended] to override them with its own sheer power and momentum" (Harris 2003, xvii). Thus, even while absorption must imply change in the constitution of the colonial socius,[14] we must remember that distinction maintains those marks that can always allow for further distinction of the absorbed: race, gender, accent, or family name.

Absorption/distinction are dual processes that function throughout colonial society; they are flows and forces that absorb and distinguish in producing colonial subjectivity, in marking out white and Aboriginal spaces, and in shaping institutional actions and responses. Absorptive flows and distinguishing forces are thus *productive* of colonialism. Here I make explicit reference to Deleuze and Guattari's (1983) concept of desire as productive. Rather than a compulsion to procure that which is lacking, as in Bhabha's Lacanian process of colonial subject formation, Deleuze and Guattari's desire is an *élan vital*, an autopoietic engine driving social processes. Flows of desire produce and reproduce subjects, institutions, and space, and they emanate from "desiring machines" – those series of valves and gears which reserve, transform, and unleash flows of desire. This

[14] "To code desire – and the fear, the anguish of decoded flows – is the business of the socius" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 139).

ontology of desire conceives of the subject as an after-effect of the recording of desire, the grinding of habitual grooves through which desire flows, a retrospective claim to the processes of desire constituting an "I."

Two implications of such a focus on productive desire are important for studying colonialism. First, it escapes from a conception of subject(ivity) as produced through the binary relations of self/other. The self/other dichotomy prioritizes the subject and subjectivity in theorizing, reifying and calcifying an after-effect, a "residuum" (Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 17), of a multiplicity of flows produced by desire: "The subject itself is not at the center, which is occupied by the machine, but on the periphery, with no fixed identity, forever decentred, *defined* by the states through which it passes" (ibid: 20).[15] Thus processes of subject production are explicitly connected to a wider variety of processes, decentring the subject. An absorptive flow, for instance, may both reproduce colonialism and short-circuit its reproduction. The institution of all-Native sporting leagues, for instance, is both a work of distinction and absorption, and both reproduces colonialism and changes how colonialism functions. It is a stage in the absorption of Aboriginal playing practices into modern sport; it is also a self-conscious distinction from mainstream

[15] The subject itself is not at the centre of Deleuzian epistemology, either. Deleuze (Deleuze 1990) criticizes what we could term the "dialogical" conception of the universe (what Bryant, 2008 terms the "Other-structure"), which uses a perspectival/experiential approach to epistemology (self-other) to define the possible in terms of past experience of the subject. The "Other-structure" is foundational to the Kantian Image of Thought (which is one of the main targets of *Difference and Repetition*), which functions by "canceling difference and creating the possibility of a smooth continuity among singularities through a distribution of ordinary points" (Bryant, 2008: 261) whereby the singularity becomes just another ordinal number in a series, where time and space are conceived of as just "more of the same" (ibid). The point here is that the dialogical "Other-structure" effectively produces the universe in terms of subject and object, and the future in terms of past experience, ignoring the eruption of the event.

Canadian sporting organizations, which are often explicitly racist (another distinction; see chapter 4, as well as Robidoux, 2002; Paraschak, 1997).

Second, focusing on productive desire allows for an analysis of much more than discourse. Bhabha's theorizing dwells on undecidability, on the ambiguity inherent in a conception of linguistic signs denied any concrete connection to the signifier. For Bhabha and other followers of Derrida and Lacan (Slavoj Zizek and Judith Butler, for example), the ontology of hybridity, which undermines binary logics, introduces multiple and mutable interpretive possibilities for any sign. But focusing on this undecidability becomes tantamount to grieving the loss of a structural link between signifier and signified; this obfuscates the fact that, even with potentially infinite possible interpretations, meaning often adheres to language based on the official sanction of a specific interpretation; that is, politics is inherent in language.[16] As Deleuze (2006, 4) notes, while "there is no event, no phenomenon, word or thought which does not have a multiple sense," and while "[a] thing has as many senses as there are forces capable of taking possession of it," a certain sense or bundle of related senses/meanings becomes dominant. That is, certain forces begin to amplify the resonation of a particular meaning and crowd out the potential for acceptance of various other, competing meanings (viz., Massumi's "force field"; Massumi, 1992: 45). Understanding which forces come to define a dominant sense/meaning (i.e., the aggregate trajectory of a flow) is "the delicate but rigorous art of . . . pluralist interpretation" (ibid: 5). Thus, through a "pluralist

[16] Cf. Deleuze and Guattari, 1988, chapter 3, "November 20, 1923: Postulates of Linguistics" for a discussion of the "order-word."

interpretation," the contours of contemporary colonialism in Canada, as it is reproduced through absorption and distinction, can be discerned. These two functions underscore the constantly changing nature of colonialism in Canada, but also relate to the fact that forces and flows—including colonialism—have discernable shapes and trajectories.

The remainder of this discussion of colonialism will first define the *whitestream*, a concept central to the thesis, then turn to three forces central to the production of colonial subjectivity in contemporary Canada, and their relation to absorption/distinction: racial hierarchies, gender production, and modern time. These three aspects of colonialism constitute what Deleuze and Guattari (1988) term an *assemblage*. As an assemblage, they resonate together, feeding off, strengthening, and flowing into each other. They are articulated through one another, and function both together and separately. I am not claiming to have made an exhaustive list of all subjectifying forces inherent in colonialism (others could include the Oedipal family and C. B. MacPherson's possessive individualism). However, these three aspects are central to the functioning of colonialism. All these aspects implicate themselves in both absorptive and distinguishing processes. I map out these functions in the specific means through which they will be mobilized, that is, as comprising daily experiences of the mainstream in Canada.

The Whitestream

Claude Denis' (Denis 1997) concept of the *whitestream* forms a focal object of analysis for this thesis. Its principal function is to move away from a view of race in

Canada as a static structure, and to allow for the working of absorption in the production of race. As Denis notes, "Canadian society, while principally structured around the basis of the European, 'white,' experience, is far from being simply 'white' in sociodemographic, economic, and cultural terms" (13). This argument accords with that made by Lecours and Nootens (2007), who claim that while Canadians currently self-identify through a celebration of diversity, this identity grew out of the dominant white, Protestant, anglophone identity. However, in contemporary Canada, this identity is not a requisite for inclusion in the whitestream: the whitestream has come to absorb numerous ethnicities—beginning, of course, with ethnicities such as Eastern and Southern European immigrants and their descendents, who first had to *become* white.[17] Furthermore, it is clear that certain racialized individuals enter into the whitestream despite their putative separation from the racial descriptor *white*.

The whitestream allows for racial ambiguity, as well as a trajectory and shape to the production of race in Canada, incorporating both distinction and absorption into its conceptual definition. However, it remains defined by a certain core assemblage of trajectories: whiteness, masculinity, English-speaking, and middle-class. The maintenance of these distinctions at the core of the whitestream is a primary means of maintaining colonialism. Thus, in focusing on the whitestream as an object of analysis, I am contending that colonialism perpetuates itself outside ostensibly colonial relationships: colonialism is not confined to an Aboriginal-state

[17] See *How the Irish Became White* (Ignatiev 1996).

relationship, nor is it confined to relations between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people. Given the racial apartheid of the reserve system, such relations are marginal to the whitestream. Thus my interest is in colonialism's reproduction through the whitestream as it relates to itself.

Racial Hierarchies

Production of race is central to the functioning of colonialism in the modern period. The principle function of racialization is to distinguish as inferior those people deemed nonwhite; thus, hierarchy is already built into the concept of race. Racialization is an integral piece of the process through which European colonial powers dispossessed indigenous peoples the world over of their lands and resources. The persistence of racial thinking and acting in Canada is a testament to the persistence of colonialism in this country. And, like other of colonialism's constitutive parts, race is active in both distinction and absorption.

The genealogy of modern racism has multiple paths. Lutz (Lutz 2008) underlines the intersection of the modern obsession with classification, tracing a modern theory of race to Linnaeus, who split humanity into six varieties, "including monsters (i.e., dwarfs and giants), wild men, Africans, Americans (Indians), Asiatics, and Europeans" (33). Each of these types had a certain ingrained temperament, with the Africans classed as *indolent* and Americans *obstinate and carefree*. Bernasconi (Bernasconi 2001) places the development of the first so-called scientific conception of race slightly later, with Immanuel Kant; given that Kant was a German, Bernasconi argues that this development was not a result of specific economic

interests (of slaveholders, for instance) but, similar to Lutz's arguments regarding Linnaeus, derived from "an interest in classification and above all [from] the attempt to provide a theoretical defense of monogenesis" (21).[18] However, Kant's concern for monogenesis did not mean that the variety of races which, given varying climates and environments, had developed since Adam and Eve could be undone through interbreeding or changes in climate. For Kant, racial expressions, while being realized through the effects of climate on humans, were already latent in humanity. Kant's teleological view provides an early essentialist account, with a similar result to polygenism: human races are essentially incommensurate, and certain qualities shared by the nonwhite races were a result of climate-induced degeneration.

Foucault provides his own genealogy. It links state-based racial techniques to feudal conceptions of the purity of aristocratic blood and the necessity of distinction of nobility from the masses (Foucault 2003). This conception transforms through a "discursive *bricolage* whereby an older discourse of race is 'recovered,' modified, 'encased,' and 'encrusted' in new forms" (Stoler 1995, 61). Stoler's *Race and the Education of Desire* (ibid.) makes some crucial addenda to Foucault's argument, emphasizing the importance of both the non-European and gender distinctions in European constructions of race. But, as Stoler makes clear, the main argument of Foucault's approach to race is that there is no single point to which we can trace the

[18] This biblically inspired theory held that all humans descended from a single source. It was, particularly in the nineteenth century prior to the advent of evolutionary theory, viewed as antiquated and excessively religious in contrast to polygenism, the theory that humanity had multiple sources—even while this latter theory had deep roots in the Bible, and, in particular, that "Negroes" were descendents of Ham, and thus suffered his biblical curse. See Kenny (2007).

development of the concept or practice: racial thinking and acting have multiple entry points, and are inconsistent from one iteration to the next. Race can be utilized by both forces of the state and forces that compete against it. For Stoler and Foucault, "Racisms provide truth claims about how the social world once was, why social inequities do or should persist, and the social distinctions on which the future should rest" (Stoler, 1995: 91).

Foucault and Stoler thus make it clear: the historical origins of race matter little—it is the functioning of racialization that is central to an understanding of race. They make explicit what is implicit in the wide variety of histories and conceptions of race. That is, no matter the textual content of the various conceptions of race produced over the last few centuries, they all function to distinguish nonwhites as inferior, to overdetermine nonwhites, and to leave modernity's proud legacy of agency, humanity, and control over the future to the whites, or, to be specific to contemporary Canada, to the whitestream. Frantz Fanon elaborates on this overdetermination in *Black Skin, White Masks*, his chronicle of life in Paris as a black man, a citizen of the republic whose "epidermalization" prevented him from actualizing his citizenship through the burden of history that the white gaze foisted upon him:

> And then we were given the occasion to confront the white gaze. An unusual weight descended on us. . . . I was responsible not only for my body but also for my race and my ancestors. I cast an objective gaze over myself, discovered my blackness, my ethnic features; deafened by cannibalism, backwardness,

> fetishism, racial stigmas, slave traders, and above all, yes, above all, the grinning *y'a bon Banania.*[19] (Fanon 2008, 90, 92)

An analogous imagined history invades the imagination of white Canadians every time they climb into a taxi: "I wonder what kinds of horrors this person has been through in order to arrive here?" The CBC radio program "Promised Land"[20] reinforces this idea of immigrants as sufferers, and other countries (particularly countries where inhabitants are swarthy) as sites of injustices, of barbarisms, and thus Canada as a safe haven away from these atrocities. These people become overdetermined by the white conception of their history; their skin and accent become inscribed with foreign horrors. While thoughts of heat, violence, and escape occupy the whitestream imagination relating to the racialized immigrant, Aboriginal peoples in Canada become overdetermined not only by their precontact history, but the history of their colonial experience: putative indolence, inherent alcoholism, and constant sexual abuse. Of course race is by no means only a matter of phenotype or skin colour, although this is often one aspect of the production of race. As is clear in the case of French-speaking Canadians, racial boundaries can be drawn without epidermalization; the injunction to Speak White automatically confers upon French speakers an inferiority, distinguishing them from English speakers—but it is also a command to assimilate, to give up what marks French speakers as distinct.

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[19] Banania is a French breakfast cereal that since 1915 has used the smiling caricature of a World War I Senegalese *tirailleur* as its logo, participating in what Donadey (2000) calls "commodity racism."

[20] A program being broadcast as I write this chapter, in the summer of 2010, which details the stories of immigrants who escaped brutal regimes to make it to the "Promised Land" of Canada.

Homi Bhabha (2004: 94-120) discusses the functioning of this overdetermination in terms of its fixity. Colonial discourse fixes colonized peoples with a set of often-contradictory properties that distinguish them from the colonizer. Colonial discursive techniques are in fact less about specific categories and properties than about positioning a colonized people in relation to the white: inferiority is fixed, but that which makes the colonized inferior is not:

> The black is both savage (cannibal) and yet the most obedient and dignified of servants (the bearer of food); he is the embodiment of rampant sexuality and yet innocent as a child; he is mystical, primitive, simple-minded and yet the most worldly and accomplished liar, and manipulator of social forces. (Bhabha, 2004: 118)

I term this *shifting fixity*, examples of which are replete in contemporary Canada, and will be referred to throughout the thesis. Overdetermination of racialized peoples distinguishes them from the white norm, wherein whiteness confers a freedom from history, a capacity to shape the future that shifting fixity disallows the nonwhite.

However, it is clear that, especially in the contemporary whitestream's conception of race, a limited, personal agency inheres in racialized individuals. After all, did the taxi driver not work to escape his hellish homeland, and, through personal effort, make it to Canada where his family can have the chance at future prosperity? Was not the dashing and articulate Patrick Brazeau appointed as senator? Here manifests the absorptive function of colonialism, permitting racialized individuals the potential to escape from the burden of history and transform themselves into agents. The injunction to become white is constant, and is central to

the production of colonialism. Homi Bhabha discusses this drive, common to British colonialism. As early as 1792, an influential study of Indian society urged a "reform of manners . . . that would provide the colonial with 'a sense of personal identity as we know it'" (2004: 124). This installation produces a "mimic man" to work as a translator between the English and their subjects; a mimic man can never be English, however—he can only mimic the English; he is perpetually distinguished, even after the installation of such manners.

Vizenor's (1999) concept of "manifest manners" attests to the recurrence of absorption in a variety of colonial contexts. These "simulations of dominance" (5) are underscored by a quote from Luther Standing Bear:

> Now, after having my hair cut, a new thought came into my head. I felt that I was no more Indian, but would be an imitation of a white man. And we are still imitations of white men, and the white men are imitations of the Americans. (quoted in Vizenor 1999, 4)

Much of Taiaiake Alfred's recuperation of Aboriginal tradition hinges on uncovering the workings of absorption within colonialism. In his discussion of the importance of instilling indigenous political institutions with indigenous values, Alfred makes mention of the "brown bureaucrat": "indigenous youth in the 1970s were quick to recognize the distinction between true indigenous organizations and ones fronted by 'brown bureaucrats'" (Alfred 1999, 31). Brown bureaucrats, mimic men, imitations of a white man: the existence of these often self-reflexive subjects epitomizes the clash between distinction and absorption constitutive of colonialism. While absorption moves to decode the distinctions made by racialization, and overcode all races with the new potential to *become* white, distinctions maintain

themselves through the force of habitualized white supremacy, and the articulations of difference that attempt a break from colonial techniques, effecting incursions that always work with and against distinction/absorption. Deleuze and Guattari reflect on these moves:

> Racism operates by the determination of degrees of deviance in relation to the White-Man face [the face of Christ], which endeavours to integrate nonconforming traits into increasingly eccentric and backward waves [see the section "Colonial Time," below] . . . From the viewpoint of racism, there is no exterior, there are no people on the outside. There are only people who should be like us and whose crime is not to be. . . . Racism never detects the particles of the other; it propagates waves of sameness until those who resist identification have been wiped out (or those who only allow themselves to be identified at a given degree of divergence). (Deleuze and Guattari 1988, 178)

Racial distinctions also maintain themselves in the banal racism of *deracialized* sentiment expressed by the whitestream. Racism is popularly viewed as something that is held, practised, and enunciated by individuals, not by groups or by institutions (Bonilla-Silva 2006). Thus, since Canadians are not racist (even when they are being racist, hence the common qualifier "some of my best friends are . . . but . . . "), and their institutions are welcoming of difference, Canada's history of colonialism holds no bearing on contemporary politics. This view of racism as an individual trait also allows individuals to deracialize their statements, and thus deny their own racial thinking. I am reminded of an artist-cum-shoe salesman with whom I discussed the hazards of cycling in Toronto recently: "There are a lot of bad drivers out there. The issue is that people come here from other countries where they don't drive, and they get here and they aren't used to driving,

and they cause accidents."[21] And note Heron's claim: "differences between Northerners and Southerners are markedly racialized, although, in keeping with the claims of multiculturalism, explanations for 'difference' are usually proffered in cultural terms and race is denied" (Heron 2007, 4).

Gender Production

> *Yeah, the **maid** that we had in Hilo did a fantastic job. It was interesting, she had this **dark, dark skin**, but **blue eyes** . . . she reminded me of a **pinto** I had once when I was younger. . . . And you know, thinking of this place and how filthy it is, these Hawaiians are just like our **Aboriginals** back home, just **lazy** and **inefficient** workers. (January 6, 2009)*[22]

Ashis Nandy (2009) has argued that British colonialism in India worked to redefine both Indian and British sexuality, promoting a hypermasculine sexuality at the expense of ambiguity in sexual and gender identifications. This hypermasculinity, while evidently positioning itself as superior to femininity as a female trait, was most concerned with distancing itself from femininity residing in male subjects, or what Nandy calls androgyny. Thus alternate sexualities, in India as well as in Britain, were foreclosed through the workings of colonialism, and a "homology between sexual and political dominance" (4) pervaded the political and social sphere. Along similar lines, Stoler's 1995 study of sexual governmentality in European colonies of Southeast Asia convincingly argues that bourgeois sexual order found its first articulations in colonial contexts, and was subsequently introduced to Europe.

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[21] Interestingly enough, the very same argument was made by a respondent to the interviews undertaken for chapter 5.

[22] Comments marked in this way come from my field notes; see "Autoethnography and the Body without Organs," below.

The production of specific genders, positioned in a hierarchy, is central to colonialism. On the one hand, colonialism instigates the pervasion of masculine institutions throughout society (sports, military, clubs, even corporations); as Arnd Krüger puts it, "the [British] Empire . . . had to have a firm basis in the friendship of men who knew how others were thinking" (1999, 204). And on the other, maternal feminism functions to domesticate and absorb errant flows into the colonial order. As Cruikshank (1999) demonstrates, the idealized maternality of Britain's middle class transformed itself into a concern for the poor in the nineteenth century, out of which grew modern social work. Similar disciplinary processes and techniques associated with the poorhouse were implemented in Canada soon after their initial introduction in Britain in 1834,[23] and these techniques were soon applied to Aboriginal peoples, who were confined to the Indian reserve—effectively a "large scale workhouse" (Moscovitch and Webster 1995, 81302). Thus both metropolitan and colonial techniques for producing productive citizens followed a similar impetus:

> The closest link between the Indian relief policy and the Poor Law was neither statutory provision nor regulation, but the principle behind modernization theory: that "savages" live in misery as a consequence of their savagery, and that conditions of savagery could be mitigated only through an inexorable progression towards modern civilisation. (ibid: 81368)

This desire to absorb the colonized persists in the contemporary work of Canadian development workers, the majority of whom are women, who travel to the Third

[23] However, following Stoler's research on the making of sex, class, and race through colonialism, it is likely that these techniques were produced through the exchange between colony and metropole.

World to effectively domesticate the people in those places that are "in a state of unmanageable disarray" (Heron 2007, 5).

As the concept of *double colonization*(attributed to the work of Spivak; (Holst-Petersen and Rutherford 1986) makes clear, colonialism has a particular effect on racialized women. Colonialism attempts to supplant indigenous political structures with the patriarchal structures of the West; the effect is that colonized women are subjects of both racial hierarchies and the effects of the imposed patriarchy. These processes are evidenced in Canada through the continued denial of rights to First Nations women as detailed by Green (2001) and Dick (2006). Following the 1985 amendments to the *Indian Act*, many First Nations women reacquired Indian status but were not allowed Band membership. First Nations women have explicitly been excluded from their own communities through application of what is termed traditional practices by Band leadership. Spivak states:

> Both as object of colonialist historiography and as subject of insurgency, the ideological construction of gender keeps the male dominant. If, in the context of colonial production, the subaltern has no history and cannot speak, the subaltern as female is even more deeply in shadow. (Spivak 2006, 32)

This denial of history and voice is evidenced not only in the Third World contexts that Spivak is specifically addressing, but also here in Canada. The whitestream relates to colonized women purely as objects productive of both attraction and revulsion. In an example from Furniss' (1999) study of contemporary colonialism in a rural BC town, attraction and repulsion works to objectify a sexualized and racialized Aboriginal girl, simultaneously reaffirming the superiority of white masculinity:

> There were three Native people, two adults and a teenage girl. "And she didn't look that bad," David said, referring to her attractiveness. "They were standing on the curb, and she leaned over and spat out this long stream from a wad of smokeless tobacco. . . . Right there on the curb!" he laughed. (115)

We can trace the patriarchy of Western culture to the common experience of colonialism. Hypermasculinity attempts to violently crush alternative expressions of sexuality, only recognizing masculinist forays into public life, and continues to mark Canadian society. However, we must be careful to remember the palimpsestual (see Shapiro 2004on the palimpsest) character of colonialism, whereby the violent erasure of colonized peoples is never fully accomplished; while colonialism works to deny the voice of all colonized peoples, and colonized women through a double colonization, Aboriginal cultures survive.

Colonial Time

As I write this chapter, a debate that started in Vancouver has gained attention from the media across the country. A hereditary Chief of the Squamish Nation proposed renaming Vancouver's Stanley Park *Xway*, the name of a Squamish Village on the site that was destroyed in order to build the road ringing the park in the late nineteenth century (Shore 2007). Media and popular responses occupied a gamut of positions; while browsing some articles online, I came across an opinion piece from Peter McMartin of the *Vancouver Sun* (McMartin 2010) that exemplifies two important aspects of colonial conceptions of time: a unilinear progression of development with the colonial cultures at the leading edge, and colonized cultures placed at increments corresponding to the colonizer's past, and an attendant view that this progress cuts the present off from any resemblance to the past:

> While Canada ranked tenth in the United Nations Human Development Index, our first nations communities, using the same criteria, would rank seventy-sixth. It is a long road ahead toward parity. And yet what is the native community expending its energies on this week? The renaming of a park. Where is its gaze affixed? On the irretrievable past, 10,000 years gone.

This discourse of catching up, of attaining statistical parity with the Canadian mainstream, is common in Aboriginal policy making and commentary.[24] Here we see the process of absorption working—Aboriginal peoples in Canada suffer from a variety of social illnesses, and the single means of overcoming these problems is for them to integrate into the whitestream; economic development and access to fee simple land title, for instance, are perceived by many as a panacea for Aboriginal peoples (see for instance Flanagan et al. 2010)

James Tully (1995) refers to this unilinear concept of time as the "stages view of history"; David T. Goldberg (2002) labels it "racial historicism," and contrasts it with "naturalism" which fixes non-Europeans as incapable of escaping from the state of nature. Naturalism, attributed to Hobbes and Kant, posits that the inferiority of nonwhite races is inherent and unchanging, while the historicism of philosophers such as Locke, Hegel, and Marx holds that while nonwhite races are inferior to the European, the spread of European values through colonialism has the potential to elevate the colonized from their degraded position. These two positions continue to define much of the discourse on race in Canada, with the historicist position being most prevalent. Historicism is not often seen as a racist discourse, however. Given

[24] For instance, Anderson, 2005 holds that Aboriginal integration into the global economy is essential for such "catching up" to take place, though it can happen on "their own terms"; Mendelsohn, 2004 discusses strategies for incorporating Aboriginal people into the labour market in order for them to gain access to "self-respect and autonomy" (1)—and, obviously, to approach the mean Canadian income level.

its saturation of the attitude of governments and citizens towards Aboriginal people, which informs discussion of the means required to ameliorate social problems of Aboriginal communities, it is literally invisible—it has become common sense. This presents itself in Auguste Comte's view of colonialism: although he recognizes colonialism as destructive, he claims that "non-Western peoples, liberated from the colonial yolk, [would] 'spontaneously' recognize the superiority of Western" governmental technologies and socioeconomic models, and would emulate them (Goldberg, 2002: 52).

Returning to McMartin's opinion piece, the second important aspect of racial historicism as it is expressed in Canada is that there has been a concrete break with the past. I discussed this view of history, which is in fact foundational for the whitestream self-identity, in the introduction to the thesis. For McMartin, a village site moved just over 100 years ago may as well have existed 10,000 years ago; Canada has made a break from its colonial past, and now exists in a postcolonial time. Furthermore, this inflation of the antiquity of the village site, and of First Nations practices, serves an ideological purpose in a province whose moral and legal claim to its territory is tenuous at best; British Columbians must tell themselves that colonization was in the distant past, so that Aboriginal political demands have no bearing on the present. This view also links with Goldberg's naturalist conception of history: whether 100 years ago or 10,000 years ago, Aboriginal people were mired in a state of nature out of which they were incapable of clambering.

These views remain popular in Canada[25] even when wedded to the more so-called progressive racial historicism that absorbs racialized subjects into the whitestream—but always leaves an indelible mark on them, allowing for their potential distinction in the future. As these competing conceptions of time and history bleed into one another, it remains clear that the whitestream lacks an understanding of the long-term and ongoing effects of colonialism on the colonized—McMartin's piece reinforces and amplifies the injunction often iterated by members of the whitestream in Canada in terms of Aboriginal peoples: sober up and get a job—that is, become like me.

Subjectivity: Fuzzy Aggregates

> What is this human being? A ball of wild snakes that seldom have peace from each other—so they go forth for themselves and seek prey in the world. (Nietzsche 2006, 27)

> The affective subject is a collection of trajectories and circuits. You can recognize it through fragments of past moments glimpsed unsteadily in the light of the present like the flickering light of a candle. Or project it onto some kind of track to follow. Or inhabit it as a pattern you find yourself already caught up in (again) and there's nothing you can do about it now. (Stewart 2007, 59)

For Deleuze and Guattari, subjectivity is a process of management of flows, primarily flows of desire. Desire is a productive force; it engenders the connection between machines, allowing flows to traverse beyond the bounds of the machines that work to govern them. Interaction, including social interaction, is a play of desires being produced, absorbed, transformed, recorded, and reproduced. A classic

[25] I can recall a classmate in Grade 10 social studies railing against the views of our "liberal" instructor, claiming that "they" didn't even have the wheel, so why should "we" be expected to even consider their current claims for retribution (the BC Treaty Process in this case).

example is the nipple-mouth machine of the mother and infant. Here, the coupling is produced through innumerable other flows of desire, from hunger and instinct in the child to socially and instinctively produced maternal sentiment in the mother. The coupling itself is thus not only about the material flow of nutrients from one discrete organism to another, but numerous other flows that work through their energy to instantiate cycles of machinic couplings (including nipple-mouth, eye-eye, mutual affective attachment, flows of maternal social norms, and so on). Desire proceeds to effect innumerable and diverse couplings, responsible for all sorts of affects, emotions, and states. It is through this production of flows that desire produces subjectivity out of a surplus of these flows: the eruption and habituation of a "self-enjoyment" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994, 212).

Deleuze and Guattari refer to the flows productive of subjectivity as assemblages of "fuzzy aggregates" (1988: 507). The imagery here is important: subjectivity can be thought of as being constituted by a number of aggregates, each produced by flows of desire; all are difficult to define, through their capacity to shift shape and trajectory, and to flow into one another, creating new aggregates that erupt from moment to moment. Subjectivity should not be construed as *subjectivist*—that is, the subject should not be seen as divorced or separate from its environment, or capable of effecting the phenomenological fantasy of the *epoche*; as Deleuze and Guattari make clear, there is no "brain behind the brain" (1994, 210). Brian Massumi points to this deep immersion and desubjectification of subjectivity when he claims that it "is a transpersonal abstract machine, a set of strategies operating in nature

and spread throughout the social field" (Massumi, 1992: 26). Thus the constitution of the assemblages of fuzzy aggregates that make up subjectivity is a process that is both natural and social, occurring at all levels of society and of the individual, from prepersonal and "gut" responses through to "higher reasoning," from intimate interactions between lovers, family members, and friends through to impersonal interactions between state organs, in interpellations at work and by the media. The transpersonal abstract machine that is subjectivity directs assemblages of fuzzy aggregates along certain trajectories, with channels gradually wearing into the social fabric where these trajectories are pushed;[26] these channels become habitual, and form habits that ultimately work against an open interpretation of difference. Habit is a requirement for the production of a subject; however, in coming to understand the functioning of habit, habit begins to break down (see "Autoethnography and the Body without Organs," below). We can speak of these channels at the individual, subjective level and at the broader, interpersonal level; the flows follow the same channels, and reinforce each other in resonating together. In Canada, these flows are overwhelmingly colonial.

Persistence: Repetition and Habit

In referring to colonialism's persistence, I do not mean a continuation of the same. Exploring the libidinal, moral, and affective economies—the flows that

[26] Massumi's comments regarding marriage: "'I do' as a form of expression can be reiterated in another wedding, in which case it repeats the incorporeal transformation. . . . Demonic possession would be a more fitting model for this process than personal expressions. Ripe young bodies animated by secondhand words. People speaking without being fully conscious of the inhuman agency that speaks through them. . . . Glossolalia" (Massumi, 1992: 29).

produce subjectivity—through which colonialism persists is thus not a matter of comparing an instance of colonialism to an original; our daily productions of colonialism are not copies or simulacra; "there is no first term which is repeated" (Deleuze 1994, 17). Social processes reproduce themselves only through their change, their incorporation of disparate elements through their flowing. They merge with other processes, they are produced through new and different machines/organs. Think of the process of integration of the immigrant: it involves learning how one must carry oneself in Canada, what kinds of opinions are to be expressed, how to insert oneself in the social hierarchy, and often to speak a new language. But in coming to understand these processes, and reproduce them through action, the processes themselves change. The paradox, then, is that these processes do repeat—while each repetition invites the "crack" or "potential for a swerving . . . to the future" (Clough 2007, 13), habit attempts to bridle this swerve, channelling errant flows back into the comfort of well-worn channels.

2.2 Methodology

In this thesis I attempts to answer my central question—how do the affective, moral, and libidinal economies of contemporary Canada reproduce colonialism?—by analyzing and interpreting the production of whitestream subjectivity through micropolitical processes at work in contemporary Canada. My unit of analysis is not politics as traditionally limited to parliamentary democracy or the functioning of the state, but politics construed in broader terms as the daily (inter)actions, thoughts, feelings—affective, moral, and libidinal flows—of the Canadian whitestream.

William Connolly characterizes micropolitics "in the Deleuzian sense, as a cultural collectivization and politicization of arts of the self. Micropolitics . . . affects us on several intercoded registers of being" (Connolly 2002, 108-109). These "arts of the self" (see Foucault 1980, 1985, 1988) or micropolitical techniques of subjectivation comprise the principle unit of analysis of this thesis.

The macropolitical production of subjectivity through modern institutions has been investigated very thoroughly by Michel Foucault and the great numbers of social scientists who utilize his conceptual apparatus. A Deleuzian approach to contemporary social processes, however, concerns itself with micropolitics primarily because the arborescent or molar structures of the state, society, and capital have effectively become fused in the "society of control," which comes into being through the constant reform of previously disciplinary institutions, and has as its principal mark the capacity to control flows through technologies that are dispersed throughout (Deleuze 1992). This is not to say, however, that Foucauldian disciplinary techniques no longer function; state institutions continue to produce the subject, and disciplinary techniques persist in a variety of settings.[27] Subjectivity is produced through the interaction between molar and molecular, between rigid, arborescent logics and the supple production of intensities, between the interpellations of the state's institutions and the mundane negotiations in the workplace (Massumi 1992, 54- 55). Thus, even in focusing on the

[27] For instance, bells signaling breaks were recently installed at a metal-working shop where a friend of mine is employed.

micropolitical/molecular/supple, the molar/arborescent/disciplinary always makes itself seen.

An analysis and interpretation of micropolitical techniques necessitates the collection of data from daily life. Collecting this data requires immersion by the researcher in his object of analysis; in fact, my own subjectivity, and how it relates to colonial techniques of subject production, itself becomes an object of analysis. Analyzing and interpreting the micropolitical production of subjectivity requires techniques seldom employed within political science. This thesis proceeds through the intersection of two principal methods in order to gain insight into the daily processes through which colonialism is produced in the whitestream subjectivity: intertextual discourse analysis and autoethnography. While intertextual discourse analysis—that is, determining how sometimes disparate texts weave a more or less consonant net—is an important method, and is used throughout this thesis, concentrating solely on discourse is not adequate for delving into one's own affective resonance, or, as my supervisor calls them, "gurglings." Linda Hutcheon characterizes academic work on the political and social fields as "complicitous critique" (Hutcheon, 1989, quoted in Pronger 1998, 280). Given that researchers are inescapably intertwined with the very processes they are exploring, there is no high point from which to make judgments about these processes; there is no means of clambering up the whitestream's bank. However, through the fostering of a variety of personal techniques, the micropolitical processes through which "visceral sensibility that has grown up in you like tropical underbrush" (Connolly 2005,

127) – through which one's subjectivity is produced – can begin to be analytically torn away from their context and examined, like carefully tearing away the fascia in order to understand the complex workings of animal musculature during a dissection.

Autoethnography and the Body without Organs[28]

The process of this tearing away is not only methodological; it cannot be. Given that my own subjectivity is being produced through the processes that I wish to study, my own subjectivity becomes implicated in the analysis to be undertaken. This is a technology of the self that opens one up to the encounter, a process of becoming other,[29] of descent towards the Body without Organs (BwO), the process of deterritorializing the habitual flows productive of subjectivity (Deleuze and Guattari, 1983; 1988). This methodological process allows us to move beyond the intertextual links of an image, film, or any other text in order to study the effect of these texts on our own bodies, that is, how we come to embody these texts. The affectivity central to the "asignifying philosophy" (Massumi 1995, 88) of postmodern life becomes the object of concern in this desubjectifying method.

Frantz Fanon's exploration of the production of his own colonized subjectivity in *Black Skin, White Masks* (2008) was an important inspiration for using

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[28] For a more detailed account of the Body without Organs as a methodological tool, see Krebs, 2009 .

[29] I use this terminology here because it is important for Deleuze and Guattari's project. I do, however, refrain from using the term "other" for reasons mentioned above. In this context, "becoming other" does not necessarily refer to a crossing of the boundary between self and other; here, "other" refers simply to something else, whether it be the process of becoming a human-animal hybrid through masochism (see Deleuze and Guattari 1983, 155-156) or simply disrupting the habitual processes through which one becomes oneself day after day.

this method. However, while the incongruities between French republican propaganda and the brutality of their imperialism were clear to Fanon in his daily life, the colonial processes through which whitestream subjectivity is produced are far from evident to most Canadians; white, anglophone males constitute the invisible normative core of the whitestream. The privilege that colonialism affords us is deeply ingrained; moves to question its source are usually met with resentful, even violent reactions. Furthermore, white, male Canadians do not experience the daily iniquities that Aboriginal people, racialized immigrants, and even white women face. No child stops to point and proclaim "Look, a whitey! Mom, I'm scared!"[30] Pulling the processes of colonial subject production out of whitestream daily life requires inculcating a sensibility to the habitual reproduction of white supremacy, hypermasculinity, and colonial time, aspects of colonialism that form the whitestream's common sense.

Inculcating such a sensibility involves reflection on one's daily experiences and reactions; this mobilizes the BwO for social research. There is no end result in the BwO; there can be no absolute desubjectivation. However, through a variety of techniques, gradually the intensive experience of the disparate flows that produce subjectivity becomes sensible, and "self enjoyment" is transformed. This is a challenge of following our constitutive flows, slowly dissolving the "I," reorganizing our territories, voyaging outside the city to find stars in constellations that are

[30] See Fanon, 2008: p. 91. A similar experience did occur to me in Ghana; often, children would point at me and say "Obruni!" – i.e., white person – however, their reaction to me was delight rather than fear.

obscured by light pollution (see Massumi, 1992: p. 71). It is the inculcation of "sensory distortion":

> The point of sensory distortion is often to grasp intensity independently of extensity or prior to the qualities in which it is developed. A pedagogy of the senses . . . is directed towards this aim. Pharmacodynamic experiences or physical experiences such as vertigo approach the same result: they reveal to us that difference in itself, that depth in itself or that intensity in itself at the original moment at which it is neither qualified nor extended. (Deleuze 1994, 237)

Techniques associated with becoming a BwO are disparate. They could include meditation, a masochistic program of becoming animal (see note 29), drug use, martial arts, techniques utilized in the Alternatives to Violence program, or Jane Elliot's antiracist participatory workshops.[31] William Connolly details a variety of such techniques in his book *Neuropolitics*:

- You listen to Mozart while reading a philosophical text, in order to relax your mind and sharpen its acuity of reception . . .
- You take Prozac or Valium to relax your nerves and improve the mood in which your thinking occurs . . .
- You expose yourself to an image that, against your considered intention, has disturbed you in the past, while listening to the music of the Talking Heads as you soak in the bathtub and imagine how mellow it would be to dive into crystal-blue water off a Caribbean beach . . .
- You watch TV ads and films in a new way, analyzing the techniques through which they organize affect and mobilize virtual memory, doing so both to give you more leverage in responding to them and to teach you about how to apply similar techniques to yourself when an old habit or tired pattern of thought needs to be jolted . . .

[31] Here I should underline that this process, while in some instances enabling the capacity to encounter abject difference outside of habitual channels of interpretation, is not a technique of emancipation. It is a technique of comprehension, and this comprehension entails change, but change does not mean "freedom from injustice."

- You meditate at the same time every day, striving to loosen the hold the grasping mind has on the self and to open the self to side perceptions that slip away when the first temper prevails. (Connolly 2002, 101-102)

To this list I would add:

- You read Gail Guthrie Valaskakis, Gilles Deleuze, Philip K. Dick, Frantz Fanon, and Homi Bhabha while living in a settler colony, alternately working on a thesis and working for an Indian Band; living in the country's political capital, the country's economic and cultural capital, and a small resource-based town in the hinterland, exposing yourself to polite, progressive-seeming conversation and abject racism, making connections between the two and between your own (affective, libidinal, political, economic) positions.

A number of these techniques have been useful in my own approach to research, enabling access to what Connolly terms "side perceptions" — those split-second experiences and thoughts that are so often taken for granted, or simply ignored, but form an important part of how we perceive the world. Through inculcating a finer sensitivity to those forces that in fact constitute our perceptions and opinions of the world, we can begin to analyze and interpret them, and perhaps alienate the production of our own subjectivity from the whitestream, working outwards from its centre and denaturalizing the forces that perpetuate white, male, anglophone dominance and privilege.

The desubjectifying process of the BwO becomes method through its wedding to autoethnography. The term *autoethnography* has two immediate references: either to the ethnography of one's own group, or to autobiographical texts with ethnographic interest. Autoethnography in practice attempts to move beyond the distinction between these in recognizing that the boundary between self and society is fluid. Reed-Danahay (1997) outlines three main branches of the

practice: "native anthropology," where former objects of ethnographic study now study their own group; "ethnic autobiography," or memoirs of members of minorities; and "autobiographical ethnography," where the ethnographic study includes personal experience. My own approach fits somewhere between the first and third; although I am not a member of what would be considered a previously studied group, I am studying the processes that produce my subjectivity. In studying these processes, however, my analysis is not confined to my own experience. The habitual flows that produce my subjectivity are not entirely unique to my experience, even if they are not generalizable in the traditional sense. They resonate on similar frequencies, and they take the same trajectories as other subjectivities within the whitestream. In other words, the autoethnographer is not an objective outsider, but rather incorporates subjective experience in writing about others. Thus autoethnography is broadly a "form of self-narrative that places the self within a social context" (ibid: 9).

Although the use of autoethnography can be seen as more "authentic" than traditional ethnography (ibid.), I do not concern myself with authenticity. Authenticity generally presupposes some kernel of the self that corresponds to something greater, perhaps to a fixed group identity, or perhaps to something unique to "me." Neither of these conceptions of authenticity is compatible with a view of the self as a shifting, multiplicitous nonplace. However, there is most definitely a political, if not epistemic, rationale behind focusing on self and analogue, namely, the whitestream: the violence of representation is dramatically

diminished once the object of study is no longer the Other, as in traditional ethnography, but rather only the self and perhaps others markedly like the self. I am not attempting to argue that knowledge is only possible through particular standpoints; knowledge in the traditional sense (as justified, true belief or some other analytical formula) is not what interests me. Rather, in this study I am the constitution of the subjectivity of the whitestream through an interpretive method that attempts to reproduce the processes through which this subjectivity is produced. This limits the potential for generalization, but expands how one may *think* about subjectivity and colonialism.

Autoethnographic writing is very well suited to such epistemic attachments—in fact, it is a direct methodological response to the crisis of representation in the social sciences and the rejection of the unitary subject: "The researcher, in context, interacting with others becomes the subject of research, blurring distinctions of personal and social, self and other" (Spry 2001, 711). In taking poststructural epistemology seriously, an autoethnographic approach, analyzing introspectively and putting the researcher in relation to others in the group, is valid; within this methodology, one can take oneself as an assemblage, a nodule in the network, a place of intake and redistribution of flows. Here the concept of the *bricoleur*, first found in Lévi-Strauss (1966) and reappearing in Deleuze and Guattari (1983), is useful. The researcher/theorist as *bricoleur* can accept these pregiven flows, identify them, and manoeuvre them in an attempt at what could be called critical reproduction—or, in anti-Oedipal language, sitting on a flow.

There is an explicitly political aspect in autoethnographic texts, one that assumes that the performative aspect of the text can work towards social change. The performance is textual or oral, depending on the venue (paper or presentation), and this performative aspect is linked to the importance of narrative in people's lives, and the desire to make meaning through narrative. However, my approach diverges from Spry's elaboration of autoethnography slightly: I am skeptical about claims of its emancipatory potential, preferring to focus on the micropolitical as noted above. However, I do maintain the central importance of performativity: the (anti)epistemic and ontological commitments I make, and the methodological approaches I use, work as critiques themselves of certain currents in the theorizing of subjectivity, particularly Lacanian views of meaning production, which privilege the dialectic between analyst and patient, or self and Other. Whenever possible I attempt to perform a closure of the gap between subject and object through the process of writing. This may be effected through attempts to leave out the "I" when discussing affective responses. Of course the self/I cannot be purged when articulating either in text or in speech, since these acts are the constitutive elements of the self;[32] however, there may be ways in which to articulate subjective experience that work against a shoring up of the self that is so prevalent in performative social-scientific writing. A similar technique is employed by Deleuze and Guattari in their describing flows, cutting off of flows, and the Body without Organs entirely in the

[32] Spivak is unconvinced that these desubjectifying techniques enunciated in *Anti-Oedipus* are "anything but a last-ditch metaphysical longing. Since I remain bound by the conviction that subject-predication is methodologically necessary, I will not comment upon this anti-Oedipal gesture" (Spivak 1988, 154).

third person, thus underlining their posthumanist ontology. As they claim in the introduction to *A Thousand Plateaus*:

> The two of us wrote *Anti-Oedipus* together. Since each of us was several, there was already quite a crowd. . . . Why have we kept our own names? Out of habit, purely out of habit. To make ourselves unrecognizable in turn. Also because it's nice to talk like everybody else, to say the sun rises, when everybody knows it's only a manner of speaking. (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988: 3)

Specifically, my use of autoethnography critically investigates the internalization of colonialism in myself and others in the context of Canadian society. This field work was as much about uncovering the layered nature of my own colonial subjectivity as about observing the production and reproduction of colonialism in the daily practices of others. The relationship between distinction and absorption, and the maintenance of gendered and racial hierarchies, as well as unilinear time, are explored. My ethnographic work (for which I received ethics approval) took place during the researching and writing of my thesis, a period of just less than four years. I kept a journal of comments, introspections, and observations made in my daily life. This was a similar practice to that undertaken by anthropologists when in the field—thus my notes reflect the experiences, thoughts, feelings and side perceptions of my daily life. My own daily activities and interactions (listening to the radio, going shopping, playing sports, socializing) became data for analysis. I lived in three different Canadian cities over the course of my research (Ottawa, Ontario; Prince George, British Columbia; and Toronto, Ontario), as well as visiting many other Canadian cities and towns (Moncton, New Brunswick; Vancouver, British Columbia; Winnipeg, Manitoba). I implicated myself

in conversations relating to my object of study, and the specific sites I chose (humour, hockey, and talk radio—see "Sites," below) as much as possible. This allowed me to observe the whitestream in its daily functioning, and witness processes of colonial subject production internal and external to consciousness.

I incorporated this data both into my general analysis, and as short eruptions from the text, indicated by italicized text and large quotation marks. These eruptions are written to indicate personal experience, a conversation with someone, or an uninterrupted story. Sometimes the words belong to me, sometimes they belong to my interlocutor, but evidently they have already been digested through the process of experience, inscription (in field notes) and selective reproduction in this thesis. The most important aspect of these "fabulations" or "crystalline narrative segments" (see Deleuze 1989 Chapter 5) is the production of affect in a reader. Placing certain common, even banal comments in the context of a thesis changes their meaning, and can, in itself, mean rethinking our relationship to these positions, and our implication in their production. A second-person narrative commands you to experience its content. And as for evaluation of this technique, an epistemic approach as such would invalidate the truth that affect can uncover:

> Affect as immanent evaluation, instead of judgement as transcendent value: "I love or I hate" instead of "I judge." Nietzsche, who had already substituted affect for judgement, warned his readers: beyond good and evil does not in the least mean *beyond the good and the bad*. This bad is exhausted and degenerating life, all the more terrible, and apt to multiply itself. But the good is outpouring, ascending life, the kind which knows how to transform itself, to metamorphose itself according to the forces it encounters, and which forms a constantly larger force with them, always increasing the power to live, always opening new "possibilities." (Deleuze 1989, 141)

These fragments of crystalline narrative are meant to leave the reader feeling, and thinking about how this feels; they supplement the main thrust of the text, and in reading them alongside the central argument, they amplify certain points, and put a twist on others. Frantz Fanon's work, in both *Black Skin, White Masks* and *The Wretched of the Earth* shares this approach, as does, for instance, Michael Taussig's magical-realist anthropology (e.g. Taussig 1991, 1997, 2004).

Intertextual Discourse Analysis

I used intertextual discourse analysis to interpret the data I gathered, including the data from my field notes. My use of intertextual discourse analysis was chiefly concerned with how texts work to produce and reproduce a colonial conception of the world. The adjective *intertextual* refers to the situatedness of texts (a term to be interpreted very broadly, and including all manner of cultural production). Each text within a given cultural milieu does not carry meaning in and of itself, but requires cultural translation through the act of reading in order to have meaning:

> The meaning and value imposed on the world is structured not by one's immediate consciousness but by the various reality-making scripts one inherits or acquires form one's surrounding cultural/linguistic condition. (Der Derian and Shapiro 1989, 11)

In my own intertextual analysis I used a variety of social forms of expression, and demonstrated how they relate to one another and how they work upon the subject to reify and reproduce colonialism. These included radio broadcasts, television programs, newspaper and magazine articles, repetitious national and other symbolism, and artifacts of daily life. I utilized different data from each site, as

well as the field notes from my autoethnographic work. Analyzing these materials allowed me to examine the various techniques of subjectivation in the Canadian colonial context.

The intertextual approach to discourse analysis thus parallels the poststructural, and (more specifically) Deleuzian ontology that informs my work. For Deleuze and Guattari, flows, nodes, assemblages, events, and processes are what make up (social) reality—including the subject itself. Thus, in order to understand subject formation, it is important to situate that subject in a social context as a kind of nexus or node amid the web of social flows. The subject can be viewed as a text which only has meaning within a given inter(subjective con)text; it is defined and derives meaning through relations with other subjects, and in the daily workings of various techniques upon itself. However, in broadening my gaze through autoethnography, I also broaden how social texts can be analyzed—I have analyzed techniques of affective production as well as the work that texts perform in constructing discourse.

2.3 Sites of Interrogation

In this thesis I attempt to answer my principal question regarding the reproduction of colonialism through whitestream subjectivity by interrogating three sites: talk radio, hockey, and humour. Each site is of general applicability to subjectivation in Canada: humour is a universal attribute of any society, and is particularly stressed in the contemporary context (Billig 2005); the sensory life of the average Canadian is saturated with media's images and sounds; and sport,

particularly the game of hockey, putatively engages Canadians from all walks of life, both players and spectators.

Three main sources of data were used in this study: media and other texts, accumulated through both focused collection and daily observation; keeping an autoethnographic journal; and conducting interviews. The interviews were conducted with white, male anglophones (the putative centre of the whitestream) concerning humour in their daily lives. As mentioned, I kept an autoethnographic journal throughout the thesis, which served as both a means of data gathering and for interpretation. Media texts were gathered for the talk radio chapter based on diffusion and variety of the two programs selected; other texts were gathered through research and, frankly, happenstance. Examining each of these sites allowed for a better understanding of how the multiple flows of colonialism run into the whitestream current.

I feel that I need to address what may be an aporia in the choice of sites of interrogation: property relations. There are a number of reasons for not having specifically addressed property/land/territory here. First, the determination of sites was based primarily on their relationship to the production of my own subjectivity. My identity is marked by my relationship with humour and talk radio, and even while I have a certain distance from hockey, as a white male in Canada, hockey is a constant negotiation (in all senses of the term). While this thesis could have had, for instance, a chapter on the importance of home and garden media (television, magazines) and the Lockean obsession with renovation within the whitestream, I

find myself only marginally implicated in such flows, even while my trajectory is preparing me for insertion into them. Second, there are excellent studies on the relationship between colonialism and private property, both historically (Harris 1997; Harris 2003; Blomley 2007; Griffin 2010), and contemporaneously (Blomley 2003; Blomley 2010). Third, while my focus on micropolitics may unsettle the discipline of political science to a certain extent, I have still been disciplined by it, and property relations are generally marginal to a discipline that concerns itself mostly with the state.

Talk Radio

Canadians are immersed in a sea of media: newspapers, radio, television, and the Internet; digital broadcasting in elevators and on hand-drying machines; advertising on buses, in lavatories, and in doctors' offices. An important element of this media barrage is the radio. In chapter 3 I analyze two talk radio programs: CBC Radio's *Sounds Like Canada*, hosted by Shelagh Rogers, and Corus Radio Network's *Adler Online*, hosted by Charles Adler. The two radio shows are representative of ostensibly very different political views. The first is a model of the CBC's multicultural approach to journalism. In it, Rogers interviews people from all walks of life—all Canadian or with ties to Canada—often with particular emphasis on those who have overcome obstacles or made important contributions in their field. Charles Adler's program is a nationally broadcast call-in show, representative of a set of political sensibilities that can broadly be labelled conservative. The content of his show is more dictated by current news stories.

Although in many ways these two radio programs differ dramatically in political perspective and sensibility, I argue that each in its own way reproduces colonial subjectivity in its listeners. I explore how they accomplish this, through the inculcation of two affective states in their listeners: sympathy in the case of *Sounds Like Canada*, and outrage in the case of *Adler Online*. These two affective states hook into the listener through a variety of broadcasting techniques, setting the whitestream apart from racialized groups (distinction) that are then either commanded or coaxed to integrate/assimilate (absorption). I recorded four weeks of each radio program for analysis, and, in the case of *Sounds Like Canada*, included a number of segments from outside the period of study that were part of a special series on Aboriginal people called "Home and Native Land."

Hockey

The link between sport and subjectivation has been convincingly argued, using a colonial context no less, by C. L. R. James in his classic work *Beyond a Boundary* (1993). In what James insists is a history of cricket in the West Indies, particularly the island of Trinidad, we find a rich analysis of how the sport of the colonizer works to create colonial subjectivity through inculcation of British norms that are part and parcel of the game of cricket itself. Indeed, the cricket pitch serves as a stage for playing out the hostilities between social classes and skin shades among the colonized, and against the colonizers themselves—a stage upon which all rules of the game are strictly followed. And as Sherene Razack (2000) rather chillingly demonstrates in her study of two white, middle class athletes who raped

and murdered an Aboriginal prostitute, the homosocial environment of men's sport produces a masculinity that identifies itself in terms of its capacity to inflict horrific violence on women. She also argues that such violence must be seen in terms of the history of colonialism, in which white males have come to see themselves as entitled to the land, rights, and privileges of the state, distinguishing and excluding racially and sexually.

Although James and Razack are right in focusing on the production of such values directly through the playing of sports, the nature of sport as a spectator activity means that the values within the game spill over into the broader society, just as the values exhibited in a sport are often expressions of the wider society. It is this relationship, between Canadian society and spectator sport, that I analyze in my second site of interrogation. Following Razack and James, I argue that sport has a direct bearing on the production of colonial subjectivity, working to reproduce the values of society through engagement with it. In Canada, the obvious example of a sport central to the country is hockey.

My sources for this examination include the miniseries and accompanying coffee table book *Hockey: A People's History* (McKinley 2006) produced by the CBC in 2006, as well as popular histories of hockey including a number of players' biographies and other hockey-related books; Don Cherry's well-known commentary on the game; and autoethnographic data gathered during the 2010 Winter Olympics and the 2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs. Engagement with hockey (whether watching or playing it) produces masculine subjectivities who engage with the world as the

players on (and off) the ice engage with each other; Don Cherry's ideal hockey player, the good Canadian boy, who wears less protective gear and plays a very aggressive style of hockey is an excellent demonstration of this. Beyond this, however, popular and academic literature on hockey is part of a discourse about Canada that reproduces the overlapping racial and gendered hierarchies of colonialism, the effects of which are often physical violence against racialized and gendered bodies.

Humour

My investigations into humour derive from an initial intuition regarding the disciplinary work undertaken by many kinds of humour. Specifically, I investigate humour whose joke-work uses social groupings distinguished from the whitestream (e.g., nonwhites, women, nonwhite heterosexuals); I follow the literature in psychology in terming this *disparagement humour*. My contention is that this humour persists and works to reproduce colonialism, even while changing in the face of the multicultural educational policies of the past three decades.

The prolific humour researcher Michael Billig (2005) has put forth a structural theory of humour, in which humour plays a disciplinary role, specifically in relation to embarrassment. He claims that the laughter amongst the onlookers of an individual who contravenes social codes is a means of reaffirming those codes, effectively chastising the individual being laughed at through the inducement of embarrassment. We follow social codes in order to avoid embarrassment. Although I find this theory reductive and simplistic, Billig has a point about humour's often-

disciplinary role. The performative repetition of disparagement humour both constructs the categories that are its currency (such as *the* "Indian," *the* woman, *the* homosexual) and works to ensure that those who are engaging in the humour do not challenge the use or existence of these categories. Thus although I agree with Howlitt and Owusu-Bempah when they note that "racist humour is an aspect of racist society and not just an idiosyncratic feature of a particular individual or group" (2005: 45-6), I also want to say that the relationship between the racist society and racist humour is not unidirectional; engaging in disparagement humour is a means through which the racist—or, for the purposes of my research, colonial society—both shows and reproduces itself. Exclusionary humour both expresses and produces the whitestream.

However, even while disparagement humour reproduces and reinforces the whitestream, the nature of this humour has changed over the years. First, and most obviously, it has for the most part stopped manifesting itself in public; Mickey Rooney's yellowface performance in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* would be viewed today not as humorous but as distasteful. The taboo against racist and other forms of disparagement humour[33] is, however, frequently broken in private. And although the humour persists, it takes a different form, being often far subtler than Rooney's portrayal of a blatant stereotype. Again, Howlitt and Owusu-Bempah claim that "the function of racist jokes is to reinforce the presumed superiority of one racial or

[33] It seems clear through a cursory review of comedy on television, particularly standup, that racist jokes enjoy the highest level of taboo, particularly if the comic is white. Jokes about women and effeminate males (whether or not the reference is to homosexuality) are, however, far more common.

ethnic group over another" (2005: 50). This statement forms the point of departure for the chapter on humour: is all humour that mentions distinguishing categories meant to define those who are identified by them as inferior? Can racist or otherwise disparaging humour upset colonialism itself—the ostensible ideal that motivated the creators of *All in the Family*, with the infamously racist patriarch Archie Bunker offered up as a buffoon (see Lockyer and Pickering, 2008)?

In studying humour and colonialism, I carried out ten structured, in-depth interviews with white, male, anglophone Canadians. The interviews were centred on a series of recordings of comedic broadcasts that utilized disparagement humour to a greater or lesser extent. I asked questions about whether the interview participants engaged in such humour in their daily lives, and continued into more detailed examples of such humour if they answered positively. The goal of these interviews was to explore the nature of disparagement humour as engaged in by representatives of the dominant subject position who had gone through a multicultural education; thus I targeted participants of roughly my own generation, that is, those born between 1975 and 1985.

Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the interview topic, I utilized a snowball sampling procedure, starting with acquaintances, and working outward from their own social networks. Using this sampling procedure meant that I could take the *presence* of disparagement humour as axiomatic; the fact that I have no white male acquaintances who do *not* engage in disparagement humour may not be a scientific basis for this axiom, but I hold it as meaningful nonetheless.

Quantification of experience is not what I am pursuing; thus the potential statistical significance of my sample is irrelevant to my goal of exploring the *nature* of disparagement humour in Canada.

2.4 Conclusion

Studying the techniques through which colonialism is reproduced in contemporary Canada must utilize methods that correspond to the techniques themselves. Here I have attempted to lay out a theoretically robust conception of how contemporary colonialism *works*—not what it *is*—and a methodological approach that will enable me to investigate these workings even further. As mentioned, of course, this theoretical chapter is the result of a great deal of meditation on my experiences in researching this thesis. It is not an a priori, categorical determination of the defining characteristics of colonialism that are then applied or tested in the field. It is the product of a great deal of research and reflection on the way colonialism produces itself in subjectivity, and specifically how the whitestream's libidinal, affective, and moral economies hook into the reproduction of colonialism.

The next three chapters examine sites of the reproduction of colonial subjectivity in Canada: talk radio, hockey, and humour. The techniques that I analyze are discursive, affective, and, in some cases, disciplinary. They are all micropolitical in the sense that they work at the prereflective, preconscious level, and in a sense produce those actions and thoughts that traditional conceptions view as central to a subject's agency. My analysis here is not meant to totally deny any

agency whatsoever to the subject; I do want to underscore, however, the situatedness of anything that we might want to term *agency*. I recount how subjectivity is produced, how desire-flows become habitual, and how this habit is colonial. But in understanding this, literally in doing the research, in becoming better attuned to my prereflective, so-called commonsensical perspective and imagination, I am cultivating a sensibility that must change the habitual flows, at least in what is marked as *me*. These flows resonate through the network that constitutes me, and thus have repercussions far beyond the subject marked as me. This is how micropolitics views change and agency, and in coming to understand the micropolitical means through which colonialism persists, we are necessitating a change in its nature—though not necessarily its "overcoming." We could term this a line of flight, at least from the standard approach to colonialism in Canadian political science; I prefer to think of it as the forcing open of a crack, in the hopes that some of the flows might slip through, producing new grooves and habits whose ultimate effect is unforeseeable.

CHAPTER 3:

TALK RADIO

The pace of the voice accompanying your morning changes. You have become accustomed to its rich, bubbling tone, a perfect complement to the cup of coffee you have brought back to your desk – but now there is weight to it. It has always been sincere, even when making quips, but now the sincerity has deepened. There is real concern in the voice. It causes you to pay more attention to it, to her and her interlocutor. They are discussing the deaths of those children in Saskatchewan on the Indian Reserve. "What a tragedy," you think. "Their father was drunk, but where was their mother?" Or perhaps you ask yourself "What made him go out in the freezing weather?" Whatever you are thinking, it is likely that listening to Sounds Like Canada *on the morning of February 4th, 2008, has made and/or reinforced certain links in your mind – whether conscious or unconscious – between First Nations/Indians/Aboriginals, alcohol, and tragedy; the tone of Shelagh Rogers' voice has also coded these concepts in a very particular way: in recalling the relationship between these concepts, sympathy becomes a predominant response.*

The next day, February 5th, a different talk show – and very likely a different listener. This time the voice accompanies you on your way home from work, as you dodge other commuters, all careening through traffic together; or in the last hours of the work day, a time of anticipation, of awareness of each second as it sluggishly ticks by. The voice of Charles Adler resounds like sandpaper scraped over a drum, gravelly and sharp. A phrase catches your ear: "Tyranny of politeness" – it brings your attention to the discussion. There is a liberal MP on the air, joining in Adler's condemnation of human rights tribunals. This MP, this liberal MP, is making a lot of sense. Adler is actually agreeing with him, which is rare. Ever since you heard about the abuse of taxpayers' money by these tribunals, they have outraged you; these things are eroding freedom of speech. Maybe you decide to call in and complain about how these processes are discriminatory themselves, how if you are a white person that you are denied access to them.[1] *Or perhaps you disagree with Adler on the issue, and think that minorities require a certain amount of recourse to the state in order to prevent discrimination. Either way, Adler's tone and delivery are likely to unnerve you, even to outrage you. And if you are a frequent listener to the program, this outrage is well practised.*

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[1] "One time when I tried to file a complaint when a member of an Indian band a few months ago had said there are only two ways to deal with a white man, one was to shoot him, and the other was to do something else, I was told by all these places that there was nothing I could do. I'm sure if I had been Jewish or Muslim I would have gotten further" (call-in to *Adler Online*, February 5, 2008).

How is talk radio political? Much political science literature answers this question through discussion of talk radio's capacity to inform its listeners as to their political choices, and by judging its content on the basis of whether or not it improves the listener's capacity to make such choices (cf. Page 1996; Hartley 2000; Buckley 2000; Barker 2002; Dale and Naylor 2005). These approaches take a conception of the listener as a preformed subject, someone who consumes information, deliberates, and makes decisions about (political) problems, and they often cite the importance of the media in Habermas' concept of the public sphere (Habermas 1989). In constructing the subject as rational and prior to media interaction, these approaches ignore both the importance of media to the formation of subjectivity and the political nature of this subject formation.

However, listeners do not come to radio with their perspective, views, mindset, and conceptual vocabulary fully formed, awaiting the sonorous voice of authority to provide the last piece of information they need to determine whom to vote for. Rather, the act of listening constructs the listener, the listener's mindset, perspective, and *subjectivity*. Those authors who do focus on radio's role in subject formation often use the opportunity to criticize the invasion of the airwaves by shock jocks and inflammatory hosts hailing from the conservative end of the political spectrum, arguing that the populism stirred by such programs work to undermine democracy (Sampert 2009; Gingras 2007). Although these authors accept radio as a medium of interpellation, their critiques ultimately function to reinscribe the conception of radio as a means of disseminating information in a democracy.

Very little scholarship on radio attempts to link the experience of the listener to the political process of subject formation.

In one notable exception, David Theo Goldberg (1999) argues that sports talk radio in the United States works to reproduce race, class, and gender hierarchies in its listenership. For instance, he says: "Men's investment in spectator sports . . . becomes investment in their own projected superiority through the superiority of the best athletes (who 'just happen to be' men)" (36). The capacity for radio programming to reproduce class, race, and gender hierarchies relies not just on information interpreted by the listener, but on the capacity of the broadcast to hook into the listener's affective and emotive states, make connections between disparate elements (class consciousness, masculinity, and derision for public radio), and both construct and deconstruct real and imaginary frontiers (racialized athletic bodies can be admired on the court, but must be prevented from entering white neighbourhoods; reproducing conceptions of masculine superiority through identification with male athletes and denigration of female athletes).

The purpose of this chapter is to explore the way that radio functions as a medium of colonial subject formation in English-speaking Canada. The Canadian public as a whole listens to an average of 18.6 hours per week of all types of radio programming; taken as an aggregate, talk programming and the CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) account for 21.8 percent of this time (Statistics Canada 2007). The processes described by Goldberg work beyond the confines of the admittedly hypermasculine arena of jock-talk radio. I argue that they also occur in

the everyday listening experiences of Canadians. In the following I analyze two national talk radio programs, CBC's *Sounds Like Canada* (*SLC*) and Corus Radio Network's *Adler Online* (*AO*), with a view to exploring their capacity to produce and reproduce colonial subjectivity in their listeners. Specifically, I examine certain affective and discursive techniques that work together to reproduce this colonial subjectivity: *SLC* produces sympathy in its listeners, which severs any links between the listener's subject position and the Canada's history of colonialism; and *AO* mobilizes outrage to turn the white male into a victim of women and minorities, whose primary aim is to stifle freedom of expression.

3.1 Talk Radio and the Production of Colonial Subjectivity

Colonialism does not exist independently of its social production. One way that colonialism in contemporary Canada is produced is through interaction with the media. As stated above, listening to the radio should not be conceived of as a passive exercise in absorbing information for deliberation; the listener engages with the sounds emitted from the radio, producing conscious and unconscious mental and physical states, interpreting meaning linguistically, imagining characters, personalities, speakers, and situations visually, and forging affective linkages between radio discourse and lived experience. Thus engaging with the radio (and other media) is not only about the interpretation of meaning, or "decoding" messages in order to interpret their relation to, for instance, hegemony (as in Hall 1980); listeners are always in the process of producing their own subjectivity through the act of listening.

In weighing the importance of radio for the production of subjectivity, we should consider the changing relationship we have had with the technology. In radio's early days, listening to the radio was often a group activity, with families gathered around the large machine dominating the living room. With the advent of television and the increasing portability of radio technology, radio is now most often an individual activity (Crisell 1994). The voice coming out of the radio commonly communicates directly *to* the listener (Sampert 2009), almost always in the context of isolation, whether in the car or at work. Thus the experience of radio, particularly talk radio, works towards the production of subjectivities that relate to their worlds through the lens of the individual. Additionally, there are the more obvious—but still often overlooked—aspects of radio communication that are beyond the bare words of a program's transcript: the tone of voice of the announcer; techniques used to place announcers and interviewers geographically in order to ensure their "reality" (Crisell 1994); the use of repetition of previous segments to give the listener a sense that a story has a history or is linked to other stories; the crafting of questions by the journalist; and the control over the telephone line exerted by hosts of call-in shows (i.e., their capacity to choose which callers to air, determine when to interject during a caller's comment, and when to hang up).

In this section, I will analyze the listening experience of *Sounds Like Canada* and *Adler Online*, taking into account techniques that bring about changes in audience perspective, mood, ideas, and visceral reactions. Each show had its own flavour, and used its own particular techniques to animate the stories. These

techniques are detailed below. Both the discourse and the technical, affective work of each show were often reproductive of a colonial subjectivity, even when not dealing directly with, for instance, Aboriginal politics. I listened to and recorded each program for a period of four weeks in the month of February, 2008. In addition to the twenty programs from each show, I also listened to online recordings of the *Sounds Like Canada* series "Our Home and Native Land," which dealt specifically with Aboriginal issues. I kept extensive notes during listening, which allowed me to revisit segments with ease.

My analysis is a mixture of discourse analysis, meant to draw out the colonial discourse of the shows; interpretation of personal affective responses; and attempts to construct alternate listening paradigms, allowing me to analyze how each show worked at the level of subjectivity. By *discourse analysis,* I refer to the technique of linking the characteristics of a particular text—here, the respective radio programs—to a broader discursive landscape, in this case that of contemporary Canadian politics, the history of colonialism in Canada, and the work on colonialism and subjectivity referenced in chapter 2. In some cases, my own subject position as a middle-class white male anglophone was useful in determining the features of this landscape. In keeping with my Deleuzian theoretical framework and my autoethnographic method, I attempted to not only analyze and code what I was listening to, but to be aware of other thoughts produced by my own consciousness, as well as affects or emotions that were played upon—or that I suspected could be played upon—by the programs. I was thus particularly attentive to aspects of the

programs that drew me in, or may have been meant to do so, and those that repulsed me.

Sounds Like Canada (*SLC*) and *Adler Online* (*AO*) are in some respects similar radio programs and in others very different. *SLC*, hosted by Shelagh Rogers, was broadcast between 2002 and 2008 on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) network, a public broadcaster relying on governmental funding. The CBC enjoys very high ratings in all cities in Canada, and during the listening period of February 2008, was the single highest-ranked radio station in the major centres of Toronto, Vancouver, and Calgary (Bureau of Broadcast Measurement 2008). *AO* is broadcast by the Corus Radio Network, and airs in fifteen cities, including all major Western Canadian cities; it advertises itself as "Canada's only national private sector talk-show," and is among the most listened-to shows of its kind where it is broadcast, enjoying the highest listenership for its time slot amongst talk radio programs in Toronto, Edmonton, and Calgary, and second-highest listenership in Vancouver.[2] Both shows utilize the interview format heavily: for *SLC*, the objective is literally to gather sounds from Canada, and in order to do so they interview a wide range of Canadians. *AO*'s interview format is often focused on politically current topics. Commonly, Adler's interviewees are either journalists or political pundits. Adler also includes short call-in segments. Politically, neither show is extreme, but they represent opposing sides of the left-right spectrum: *SLC*, and the CBC in general, is left-leaning in tone and content. Adler's show represents a conservative political

[2] As confirmed in an email communication with Toronto AM 640 program director, Gordon Harris, January 13, 2010.

perspective, though his conservatism is weighted more towards libertarianism than social conservatism. Although any comments about the programs' audiences would be entirely speculative, it seems clear that Adler's program is catering to largely white listeners with a conservative political perspective. Rogers' audience is likely to follow the trend in CBC radio and appeal to educated Canadians of a left-liberal persuasion.

Finally, the tone of the two programs as set by their hosts is markedly different. Rogers' voice bubbles out of the radio, her vowels are rounded, and her tone is most often light. She utilizes wry humour. Adler has a gravelly voice, which is frequently raised, his tenor is aggressive, and he has a definite charisma, often punctuating his surly style with high-energy belly laughs. His listeners call him Chuck. The running time of each program is similar. *SLC* ran from 10:00 a.m. to 11:30 a.m. in all time zones (a half hour later in Newfoundland, as the CBC saying goes) with breaks at the half hour and hour for news. The national version of Adler's program, which originates in Winnipeg, runs from 3:00 p.m. to 5:00 p.m., Central Time, with regular breaks for commercials and news every half hour, and is broadcast live.

3.2 Sounds Like Canada

This discussion of *SLC* is broken into two parts. The first focuses on the contrasting representations of Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in the show, and on the relationship of the feeling of sympathy, often produced in the listener, to colonial subjectivity; the second examines one segment—an interview with two

Aboriginal leaders—and how both its form and content reproduced colonial subjectivity.

Sympathy and Colonial Subjectivity

While it seems clear that feelings of sympathy make the boundaries between self and other more porous, and thus have the potential to upset colonialism's hierarchical relations, I want to pull out other, more subtle workings of sympathy, which reinforce the dominant subject positions of colonialism. The following will discuss how sympathy maintains the racial hierarchy of colonialism through positioning Aboriginal and other racialized subject positions in a lower position on a unidirectional track of development, and, in some cases, by essentializing Aboriginal people as tragically incapable of agency.

On May 7th, 2008, as part of their series on Aboriginal issues titled "Our Home and Native Land," *Sounds Like Canada* aired a five-part call-in show, one for each time zone in the country, asking a single question: "Are reserves working against the best interests of Canada's First Nations?" In Rogers' opening segment for the May 7th call-in show, she claimed that taking children away from their families, their language and culture, and their "home and native land" was "simply wrong." Her voice had weight, her pauses were pregnant. For the listener, this was neither a statement of fact nor a point to be debated: the *way* that Rogers made this claim was beyond fact, observation, or argument. It was not only a conclusion drawn from the general principle that children belong with their families; it resonated with our concept of "family," inviting us to imagine what it could have been like for us to be

taken from our parents, or to have our children taken from us. The people that most Canadians now often refer to as Aboriginal[3] have lived through this experience, and we were invited to imagine their pain, and approach their continuing social problems with sympathy for the wrongs inflicted upon them in the past.

In claiming that residential schools were "simply wrong," Rogers was making a clear separation between the past, where harmful and detrimental mistakes were often made, and the present, where we have learned from these mistakes and are now in the process of fixing them. We know better now, and would never repeat this horrible mistake—and our current practices are exactly those that will benefit their recipients, the Aboriginal people of Canada, by *absorbing* them into our great country. The dramatic delivery of this introduction created a sympathetic resonance between the listener and the plight of the reserve-bound Aboriginal; listeners were able to sympathize with victims of past injustice insofar as they were not made to identify with the institutions responsible for committing such injustices.

Contrast the sympathy that we feel in reference to Aboriginal peoples in Canada with the respect and admiration that we give to those who selflessly work to improve the lives of the less fortunate, a respect and admiration that gives way to a

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[3] Alfred (1999) criticizes the political usage of terminology: "In Canada recently there has been a turn towards politically correct, non-offensive terminology that attempts to assuage the guilt of colonialism, but in fact it is only a cover for the state's continuing abuse of indigenous peoples. . . . The only value in the word play is for white people, who do not have to face the racism built into the structure of their supposedly enlightened country. Natives face the same conditions and suffer the same abuses, except that now the problem is less obvious because, instead of being Indians governed by the state as wards under the Indian Act, they are now recognized as 'Aboriginal' peoples with an 'inherent right' to 'self-government.' Go to a reserve, look around, and ask yourself if Indians are any better off because white society has relieved itself of its terminological burden." (83)

pride in sharing (Canadian) citizenship with such people. *SLC*'s programming in 2008 was replete with examples of Canadians who had done extraordinary work in developing countries. For instance, these included Rogers' February 15th interview with Tom Boisvin, a Canadian working in Vietnam dealing with the health effects of Agent Orange; and a February 29th interview with Cathy Knowles regarding her work building libraries in Ghana. Beyond the potential for such work itself to be construed as neocolonial, the interviews gave the listener the sense that the local people in these areas where Canadians were doing good work had no means of helping themselves with these problems. The Canadians working overseas presented their stories to Rogers, discussing their work in places where people were poor and did not have access to the comforts of life that were so commonplace in Canada. The unfortunate were thus brought some taste of these comforts through the philanthropic work of Canadians. Again, lurking behind this narrative was the honey-toned pit of sympathy for those who cannot help themselves, who are victims of circumstances beyond their control—beyond *their* control, but not beyond the control of the Canadians who would come to help them.

> *"You're near the end of your year and a half stay in Baltimore, one of the most **crime**-ridden cities in the US, and a good friend has come to visit. Knowing that she is a fan of The Wire, you take her on a short tour of some of the neighbourhoods where the program was shot. With the boarded up windows and doors, the "cornerboys" staring at you as you drive past, it is as if you have entered the show itself. You chat about the socio-economic conditions and structural racism that produce this scene of **helplessness**; statistically, the future of these young men lies in **prison** and **death**. Later that night, you awake screaming, convinced that your house has been invaded by a **dark figure** – a shadow of those boys that had evinced pity hours before, but now provoke only **fear** (January 9, 2009)."*

Here we can begin to see a relationship between sympathy and a stripping of agency. Agency remains a normative foundation for Euro-American societies, including Canada; in performatively demonstrating that (racialized) subjects in developing countries are incapable of realizing their will in the world, *SLC* also degraded their status, showing us that they needed our help to rise to our level. In these examples, *SLC* positioned the listener in a hierarchical relationship with people in developing countries, through both rhetoric and affect; here, *SLC* was taking a racial historicist view of history (Goldberg 2002).[4]

This theme also played itself out in much of *SLC*'s programming relating to Aboriginal peoples. On February 4th, Rogers began her show with a segment on two children who had frozen to death on the Yellowquill Reserve in Saskatchewan a few days previously. In the segment, she interviewed a reporter who had visited the reserve and had compiled a series of short sound clips to share with Rogers. In ending the segment, the journalist stated solemnly, "I hope this helps," to which Rogers replied, equally solemnly, "Me too." The sombre tone of both their voices, the visualizations of the scene produced in the mind's eye, and the sullenness of the relatives of the dead children all weighed heavily on the listener. Again, the interaction between the listener and the program drew out a sympathetic resonance for these people upon whom tragedy was so often visited. *SLC*'s self-imposed task of relaying the tragic existence of Canada's Aboriginal population represented

[4] As outlined in chapter 2, racial historicism, attributed to thinkers such as Locke, Hegel, and Marx, holds that while nonwhite races are inferior to the European, the spread of European values through colonialism has the potential to elevate the colonized from their degraded position.

Aboriginal people as helpless and lacking agency; her coverage of such tragic events worked as a call for help for those who could neither help nor express themselves.

On February 20th, Rogers addressed what she labelled the alcohol epidemic on-reserve, part of a week-long series on the issue focusing for the most part on abstinence programs and efforts by some Indian bands to make their reserves dry. The format of the segment was the same as the segment on the Yellowquill Reserve mentioned above, with a journalist being interviewed by Rogers and providing clips of interviews she had conducted. As the segment began, the listener could hear a flute playing a beautiful, melancholy Aboriginal motif; the voice of a tearful youth came to the foreground. He was recounting his own struggles with alcohol to an audience of peers, counsellors, and, ultimately, radio listeners. This young man was part of a group of high school students in Winnipeg who took part in a challenge to stay sober for the length of the school year. Of seventy-two students, we were told, only nineteen successfully completed the program. The segment was heart wrenching, full of the doleful accounts of students' attempts to stay away from alcohol, and emblematic of *SLC*'s capacity to produce sympathy.

SLC's presentation served to yoke the so-called alcohol epidemic among Aboriginal people to a discourse equating Aboriginal people and alcohol abuse.[5] The average listener of *SLC* is likely to have already formed connections between *Indian*

[5] Something that at least one *SLC* listener picked up on, declaring in her letter to the program: "The solution in combating addictions on reserves is not to ban alcohol; in fact, one must seriously question the racist undertones of this consideration. Just because I am a member of a certain race is it right to ban me from drinking alcohol? This is a Band-Aid solution based on paternalistic thinking and generalizations about Aboriginal people. As an Aboriginal person, who is, get ready for this, not an alcoholic, who enjoys a glass of wine with supper and a couple of beers on the patio, why must I live in fear of being a negative role model, of losing my job, or being driven to drink in secret?"

and *alcoholism*; such essentialism, for instance, continued to be part of curriculum in British Columbia high school social studies through the 1990s:[6]

> [According to the text book] Aboriginal people became "dependent on the brandy or rum forced upon them by [fur] traders." Weakened by alcohol and dependent on trade goods, they then succumbed to European diseases and often died, "even though the sickness was not fatal to Europeans." (Furniss 1999, 58-59)

While listening to the segment, the listener's images, ideas, and feelings about Indians intermingled with the sounds coming through the radio, producing new conceptions that drew heavily on those already incarnated through, for instance, high school education. Previous connections between concepts of *Aboriginal* and *alcohol* were strengthened, their channels mixing and becoming indissociable;[7] the segment linked up with what has been for many non-Aboriginals the only interaction with Aboriginal people that they have: the alcoholic on the street begging for change. And for those others who perhaps have an Aboriginal co-worker, what would cross their minds when they are invited for an after-work drink?

SLC's description of the teens' struggle once again promoted a sympathetic view of their predicament; this production of sympathy could connect to and reinforce the listener's view of Aboriginal victimhood and lack of agency. The problem here is that these issues were very narrowly treated, and were not given a

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[6] It should be noted that as a high school student in BC in the 1990s, I used this very textbook.

[7] The September 16, 2008 comments of Darlene Lannigan, an assistant at the Barriere Lake constituency office of Conservative MP Lawrence Cannon, to a group of Algonquin protesters, when asked whether they would be arrested for protesting, are telling in this regard: "If you behave and you're sober and there's no problem and if you sit down and whatever, I don't care" (CBC News 2009).

historical or social context.[8] David Campbell (2007) discusses a similar problem in relation to photojournalism in Darfur, which, in stripping much of the context from their subjects, "reif[ies] identity and replicate[s] neo-colonial relations of power" (380). And so, even while it is clear that the *SLC* segment attempted to bring attention to a very real social problem, it may also have reinforced an essentialized stereotype in the minds of listeners. Furthermore, as Bhabha notes in his discussion of the stereotype, discussed in chapter 2 (Bhabha, 2004: 94-120), there is always an ambivalence in how stereotypes work to essentialize certain subjects as inferior. Thus, even though many of the youth portrayed in the segment were working to extricate themselves from the grip of addiction, once they succeeded they became, by definition, dry-drunk Indians: in this way the perception that all Indians are drunks—even if they are sober—was reinforced (see note 3, above).

The format of *SLC*'s segments dealing with Aboriginal issues was also important in reproducing colonial subjectivity. *SLC* was a human-interest program; the majority of segments were interviews with a wide cross-section of Canadians, including everyday people; writers, filmmakers and other celebrities; and politicians. The majority of these segments delved into the details of the subject's life, or the current project she was working on, or the book he had just published; they could be upbeat, focusing on either the success of the individual being

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[8] Additionally, when the issue of history was brought up by *SLC*, as it was on February 6th during a segment celebrating the 400th anniversary of Québec City, it was to demonstrate that in the early history of Canada, European explorers and colonists depended on a good relationship with Aboriginal people in order to survive. This re-evaluation of popular conceptions of history is admirable, but once again the more recent history relevant to the abuse and dispossession of Aboriginal people by Euro-Canadian people and institutions has been ignored.

interviewed, or they could be sombre, detailing the obstacles that the interviewee had overcome in order to obtain success. What tied the majority of *SLC*'s segments together was that they were about an individual's experiences. However, segments relating to Aboriginal people specifically concentrated on that which set them apart as a group from the whitestream. All segments with interviewees identified as Aboriginal dealt only with the implications of their Aboriginality, and each time that Aboriginality figured into a segment, it had a negative connotation, triggering a sympathetic response from Rogers. In contrast, those segments[9] that dealt with non-Aboriginal marginalized groups (those singled out by the program for their ethnicity, class, sexual orientation, or immigrant status) either dealt with the success of the people in the group (four of eight segments), or an injustice being suffered as a result of being a member of the group (four of eight segments). In the case of segments dealing with immigrants to Canada, the benefits of their decision to immigrate were often given great weight. Thus, even while Aboriginality was not the only way that *SLC* marked off members of certain groups from the mainstream, it is clear that non-Aboriginal marginalized groups were represented by *SLC* in a very different light, in that they were seen as having access to the success that marked the mainstream in *SLC*'s discourse, and, if not, they had a concrete injustice to blame for their lack of access.

In those segments dealing with Aboriginal issues, interviews with experts, politicians, or segments mediated by a journalist outweighed interviews with

[9] Note that for the purposes of this discussion, only those *SLC* programs broadcast during February 2008 are included.

everyday people, a ratio of 8 to 1. Figuring in all marginalized groups, including Aboriginal people, this ratio decreased by nearly half, to 4.5 to 1, indicating that those who were not Aboriginal but were still identified as marginalized had a much better chance of speaking for themselves. However, even this improved ratio went against the trend of *SLC*'s non-Aboriginal segments, nearly half of which (thirty-seven out of seventy-six) were direct interviews with everyday people. Of those non-Aboriginal segments that were not with everyday people, sixteen were letters or other regular segments, and four were promotional segments. If these twenty segments are discounted, the proportion of non-Aboriginal segments dealing with everyday people to those that either dealt with politicians and celebrities or were mediated by a journalist becomes 2 to 1. Given these narrative trends, it seems that the fact of being Aboriginal is precisely what stands in the way of success; this identity was only seldom linked to injustice (e.g., colonialism) by Rogers herself, while in the narratives around non-Aboriginal marginalized peoples, injustice figured prominently.[10] Instead, solutions to the problems invariably associated with this identity (poverty, alcoholism) were discussed in terms of changes to the legal aspects of this identity (reconfiguring the reserve system, implementing dry reserves). The following tables show the breakdown of Aboriginal and non-

[10] Of the eight segments dealing with non-Aboriginal marginalized people, four detailed injustice faced by them; the others generally followed the trend of focusing on success. For instance, one segment dealt with ways in which immigration programs in Nova Scotia had been used to defraud new immigrants; another examined how guest worker programs in Alberta were exploiting workers from the developing world.

Aboriginal segments, and marginalized and nonwhite marginalized segments, respectively.

Table 1

Breakdown of Aboriginal and Non-Aboriginal SLC *Segments by Type of Interview, February 2008*

	Aboriginal Segments	Non-Aboriginal Segments	**Total**
Interviews with "Everyday People"	1	37	**38**
Interviews with Politicians, Celebrities or Experts	6	13	**19**
Interviews mediated by journalist	2	7	**9**
Regular Segments	0	16	**16**
Promotional Segments	1	3	**4**
All segments	**10**	**76**	**86**

Table 2

Breakdown of Marginalized and Non-Marginalized SLC *Segments by Type of Interview, February 2008*

	"Marginalized" Segments (including Aboriginal segments)	"Non-Marginalized" Segments	**Total**
Interviews with "Everyday People"	4	34	**38**
Interviews with Politicians, Celebrities or Experts	7	12	**19**
Interviews mediated by journalist	4	3	**9**
Regular Segments	0	16	**16**
Promotional Segments	1	3	**4**
All segments	**18**	**68**	**86**

Thus the very way in which *SLC* presented Aboriginal issues reproduced a colonial perspective: it held the colonized up as an object for the white gaze, and denied the colonized a voice, through their being represented either by a journalist, an expert, or a politician. It therefore reinforced the colonizer's subjective stance towards the colonized in presenting them as a group and not as individuals: only their leaders, those who have come to inhabit positions recognized by Canadian institutions as legitimate, were seen as capable of speaking to the Canadian public, and of course when they did they almost always spoke as representatives of their people, again performatively homogenizing the Aboriginal in the minds of the dominant.[11] Only allowing Aboriginal leaders to speak reinforced the notion that only certain Aboriginals actually have an individual character: all others can be grouped together and be spoken for either by a journalist, or in reference to statistics. Here the promise of development in the racial historicist perspective seems to break down: the colonized are outside of history and its developmental path, existing instead in a constantly shifting essentialism (Bhabha, 2004), incapable of realizing the improvement afforded them under a racial historicist gaze.

The production of sympathy in the *SLC* listener played a central role for the show. In some ways, this production of sympathy had an ambivalent relationship to the reproduction of colonial subjectivity. Sympathy brings us in close to its object; the distinction between individuals erodes through the working of sympathy. In this way we can see how Rogers' constant invocation of sympathy in her listeners,

[11] This fact resonates with Ponting's (2000) findings that Canadians are far more likely to support Aboriginal political demands when they are articulated by Aboriginal leadership.

through the coverage of the suffering of the disenfranchised, had the potential to subtly undermine established power relations, including those power relations entrenched in Canada's colonial society. The next time we encountered an Aboriginal person on the street begging for change, our first reaction might not be one of disgust, but perhaps one of pity for this victim of circumstance, and we might offer a donation of a few coins.

Sympathy also reinforces universal humanism and the racial historicism undergirding *SLC*'s discourse. *Becoming sympathetic* is a desire-flow in multicultural liberalism. It contributes to the conceit of understanding, connecting those who live and espouse potentially incommensurable positions. It also helps to structure the temporal hierarchy of racial historicism: the object of sympathy flounders at a lower rung in the unidirectional timeline of progress. In her study on sympathy in philosophy and literature of the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, Amit S. Rai (2002) claims that "[d]ifference must be both produced and effaced in the sympathetic operation" (58). Sympathy effaces difference through drawing the agent of sympathy and its object together; difference is produced through the distance necessary to experience sympathy rather than the actual suffering of sympathy's object. Objects of Canadian largesse in other countries are in want of the comforts of industrialized society, and through such largesse, combined with their own efforts—structured and channelled over the last centuries through the beneficent work of missionaries, colonial officials, countrymen educated in the metropole, and even well-intentioned Canadians—they will one day succeed in fulfilling this want. The

same spirit of charity enlivened Rogers' discourse on the plight of Aboriginal people in Canada: in amplifying sympathy for them, *SLC* placed them in the role of victims of circumstances beyond their control, which could be remedied through generosity bestowed upon them by the mainstream population, and, again, their own hard work. We need only to *allow them* to discover their own potential, and they too will realize their ultimate goals of absorption into the liberal-capitalist machine;[12] Canada's colonial past would be covered over, its relationship to contemporary social issues among Aboriginal people erased.[13]

Here I also want to argue that the production of sympathy in the *SLC* listener might preclude a feeling of responsibility. In order to feel sympathetic towards someone's predicament, one cannot also feel that one is responsible for that predicament; if one believed that one held responsibility, one would not feel sympathy but, more likely, shame or guilt. Such affective responses are also likely to lead to very different actions; if one feels sympathy for another, perhaps one would react charitably, charitable actions being at one's discretion. But if one feels responsible for another's situation, then whatever action one might take as a result of a feeling of responsibility would no longer be discretionary; it would carry moral weight—action would become obligatory. In reinforcing Canada's commitment to justice in the present, Rogers' approach to Aboriginal issues effaced the past's

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[12] This view, that current political institutions deny Aboriginal people their capacity to fully realize themselves through access to capital, is also the main thrust of the recent book *Beyond the Indian Act: Restoring Aboriginal Property Rights* (Flanagan et al. 2010).

[13] Margaret Philp's (2007) article on the response to the crisis with Kashetchewan's drinking water documents an upsurge in charitable donations to Aboriginal people on-reserve, and interest from international development organizations in the plight of Aboriginal people in Canada.

impact on the present, turning issues related to colonialism (such as residential schools or the Aboriginal alcohol epidemic) into discrete problems that were not structurally linked to contemporary Canadian social and political institutions, or the lives of the listeners themselves. The listener is very likely to have a visceral attachment to these institutions (he or she is already listening to the CBC, after all); they form part of the listener's identity. If *SLC* were to make a strong connection between listener's identity and the nation's past—between, for instance, the listener's comfortable middle-class lifestyle and Aboriginal social problems through the history of colonialism—the listener may not react with sympathy but instead experience an unsettling, a "disturbance of faith," to paraphrase William Connolly (Connolly 2005, 26). Such an unsettling or disturbance could have the potential to open the listener up to the ramifications of a personal connection to Canada's colonial history, and perhaps a feeling of responsibility for the problems facing Aboriginal people today; it could also provoke a reactionary, defensive stance: "I didn't take their land, I've worked hard my entire life, I don't owe anything to anybody." But *SLC* never gave us the chance to see the results of such an unsettling, since it ignored and covered over the link between past and present, between Aboriginal social issues and colonialism.

"Sounds Like Indians"

A number of these themes were present in the first hour, broadcast in the Atlantic time zone, of *SLC*'s May 7th call-in show. I should underline the uniqueness of this call-in show for *SLC*: it was a special event, part of their series titled "Home

and Native Land," with different guests for each of the four main time zones. The question driving the show was "Are reserves working against the best interests of Canada's First Nations?"[14] Rogers' first two guests were Patrick Brazeau (who has since been appointed to the Senate by the Conservative government of Stephen Harper), the National Chief of the Congress of Aboriginal Peoples (CAP); and Rick Simon, the Assembly of First Nations (AFN) Vice Chief and regional Chief for Newfoundland and Nova Scotia. CAP represents non-Status Indians (i.e., people who identify as Indian, but are not registered as Indian by the Government of Canada) as well as Status and non-Status Indians living off-reserve, and Métis (Congress of Aboriginal Peoples 2008b). CAP's politics are very much in line with neoliberal approaches to governance; for instance, Brazeau's biography on the CAP Web site claims that he "spearheaded CAP's participation in the First Nations Governance initiative[15] launched in 2001" (Congress of Aboriginal Peoples 2008a) and that he "is a strong advocate of accountability, responsibility and transparency" (ibid.). AFN describes itself as "the national organization representing First Nations citizens in Canada . . . regardless of age, gender or place of residence" (Assembly of First Nations 2008). This representation is through Indian bands, which are political institutions sanctioned or imposed by the Government of Canada. CAP and AFN often have conflicting political opinions and strategies. AFN opposed the *First*

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[14] The question itself, and Brazeau's argument, echo the project of the White Paper nearly forty years earlier.

[15] This failed initiative was sharply criticized by many First Nations leaders due to its municipalizing self-government, and stipulating that the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* would be applicable to Aboriginal governments and lands. (See (CBC News 2008c)

Nations Governance Act, claiming that it sharply circumscribed the potential powers that First Nations could claim under self-government, and riled against its imposition of the *Charter of Rights and Freedoms* on-reserve (see CBC News 2008c). These differences came out in *SLC*'s segment; they also resonated in very different ways with listeners:

> *Brazeau answers Rogers first; his voice is sharp, clear, calm. It pierces the air as it emanates from the radio's speakers. While not expressly against the abolition of reserves, Brazeau argues for a significant change to the way that the Indian Act works. Indian bands are wasteful institutions that prey upon the goodwill of Canadian citizenry; over 200 of the 600 Indian bands in the country are in financial difficulty; over half of the 11 billion dollars spent by Indian Affairs each year goes to support reserves. Corruption is rampant on-reserves, and chiefs are only accountable to the bureaucrats at Indian Affairs; they do not represent the interests of their band members. Aboriginal people should be integrated into Canadian society, not kept separate; duplication of services on-reserve when such services are readily available in cities is a waste of public money. This integration is different from assimilation (the colonial policy of the Canadian government meant to eradicate the Indian through acculturation); integration does not imply the loss of culture and language. To keep one's language and culture is, of course, an "individual choice." First Nations must "be accountable, open and transparent with our decisions, and be honest with the Canadian public."*
>
> *In hearing this articulate and obviously young Aboriginal politician, you are put at ease; he speaks your language, he is speaking to you in terms that you understand, that are familiar. You imagine him animatedly speaking to Shelagh, his concern for his people fuelling his political agenda. And, as he points out, he himself is a Status Indian – you are sure that he could have easily boarded the gravy train of Indian politics by becoming chief of his band. He is just so well spoken. He may have been speaking for ten minutes straight, but his argument was so well structured, it seemed to fly by.*[16]
>
> *Now Chief Simon is allowed a turn to speak; contrasted with how you imagine Brazeau to be, a clean ponytail hanging down the back of a well-fitting suit, his collar unbuttoned, you imagine Simon as big, fat, likely*

[16] During the entire interview segment, Brazeau spoke for 13 minutes 26 seconds; Simon for 10 minutes 45 seconds. The disparity is mostly accounted for in Brazeau's lengthy opening remarks, at 6 minutes 36 seconds, while Simon's opening comments lasted only 2 minutes 41 seconds.

wearing partially shaded, large, gold-wire framed glasses, a brush cut, a checked shirt containing his girth, and probably a black nylon jacket with the name of his band on the back. All of this comes to you through Simon's voice. He is gruff, he has an accent. And as you listen to his responses to Brazeau, it seems that Simon has no new ideas. His basic answer to Rogers' initial questions about reserves is that they are a good thing for First Nations people, but he is stuck making rebuttals to Brazeau. Where Brazeau backed up his claims with statistics, Simon claims that statistics can be manipulated to support any argument whatsoever; in attempting to counter Brazeau's claim that many First Nations were in financial difficulty, Simon can do nothing but put more blame on the federal government's lack of spending. He seems to be just another of the insatiable and corrupt Indian chiefs that Brazeau is condemning. Simon's delivery is also far from eloquent, with the constant interjection of "um" and "uh"; and in responding to questions from Rogers or from callers to the program, he does little more than return to Brazeau's arguments and attempt to ridicule them. You're glad that Rogers has cut his opening statement short, and has cut back to Brazeau for a reaction.

Of course the potential listening experience described above is not necessarily that of every listener; however, the structure and content of the segment resonate dramatically with a discourse popular in many segments of the Canadian population.

First, the difference in the way the two speakers expressed themselves is very important. Brazeau could not be described as anything but well-spoken; Simon fumbled through his answers, often punctuating them with "um" and "uh" and making vague attacks on Brazeau and his positions. The demeanour and discourse of Brazeau's interlocutor, Chief Rick Simon, played to a number of negative aspects of Aboriginal stereotypes, reinforcing the conception in the listener that First Nations leaders have an insatiable appetite for public money, are corrupt, and do not themselves understand accountability. Simon's position was in defence of reserves. However, his argument was made entirely in reference to Brazeau's claims;

when Brazeau brought out statistics to defend his argument, Simon clumsily claimed that statistics could be manipulated to support any argument whatsoever; in attempting to counter Brazeau's claim that many First Nations were in financial difficulty, he could do nothing more than blame the federal government's lack of spending. This juxtaposition immediately gave Brazeau a rhetorical edge, and played into his construction as a "good Indian."

The first point to make here relates to the impression that Brazeau made, particularly in contrast to Simon: he was extremely well-spoken, which as a designation conceals an expectation that persons of certain racial identities are not normally capable of articulating themselves. They speak in idiosyncratic ways that may be difficult for the dominant group (the putative majority) to understand, or they may seem to have a limited vocabulary and an accent, as was the case with Simon.[17] To be well-spoken is not just to excel at communication; no such sentiment would arise from listening to Rogers' Euro-Canadian guests. Also, Brazeau's political position was already consonant with whitestream common sense, and his vocabulary was one that listeners would be comfortable with: he was not asking for

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[17] The designation *well-spoken* is often given to black American political and media figures. Cf. Chris Rock's outraged commentary:

> Colin Powell can't be president. . . . Whenever Colin Powell's on the news white people always give him the same compliments, always the same compliments, "How do you feel about Colin Powell?" "He speaks so well," "he's so well spoken," "he speaks so well," "I mean, he really speaks well," "he speaks so well." Like that's a compliment! Speaks so well's not a compliment okay, speaks so well's some shit you say about retarded people that can talk. What do you mean he speaks so well?. . . He's a fucking educated man, how the fuck do you expect him to sound? You dirty motherfuckers, what're you talking about? "Speaks so well," what you talking about, "he speaks so well." What voice were you looking to come out of his mouth? What the fuck did you expect him to sound like? "I'm gonna drop me a bomb ta-day, I be pres-o-dent," get the fuck out of here (Rock, 1996, quoted in Weaver, 2010).

more tax dollars. He displayed a concern for his people but for the most part did not make specific claims regarding the importance of culture and tradition—the maintenance of these was an "individual choice," and thus their disappearance could not be linked to institutions with which the listener identifies. Thus Brazeau's well-spokenness amplified the resonance of his political position with the whitestream's common sense. Put simply, Brazeau was a "good Indian," and the good Indian does not complain about the past, is not on welfare, is not a drunk, is educated, and has a job. The good Indian goes against the dominant stereotypes of Aboriginal people, but must, due to the racial chauvinism inherent in colonial society, remain distinguished, marked *primarily* as an Indian; he is absorbed into the whitestream, but only to a point, allowing for future distinction or renunciation based on some essential Indian quality. Brazeau's charisma amplified the resonance that his statements already had with the dominant colonial subjectivity; Simon's incapacity to make coherent arguments, and his point that First Nations continued to need more funding, worked to portray his political position as retrograde in contrast to the competence of Brazeau.

Secondly, Brazeau's discourse connects uncannily well with what is a very prevalent view of Aboriginal politics among Canadians. Brazeau called for the abolition of the *Indian Act*, labelling it a discriminatory document that prevents First Nations from reconstituting themselves in order to reflect their precontact political and cultural institutions. Instead, in this view, the *Indian Act* continues to privilege corrupt chiefs who are only accountable to Ottawa, who run organizations with no

transparency, and who are dishonest with the Canadian public. This argument parallels both popular discourse on First Nations and the discourse of new public management now dominant in political and bureaucratic circles. It resonates with large segments of the listenership, linking concepts associated with responsibility to Brazeau while Brazeau's castigation of First Nations leadership aligns itself with commonly held prejudices about the untrustworthy character of Aboriginal people and the popular wisdom that their leadership is corrupt and incapable of managing funds.[18]

Furthermore, Brazeau's position as a Status Indian made his argument ripe for adoption by conservative political elements who use the discourse of equality to undermine the historical importance of Aboriginal and treaty rights in Canada (see Flanagan, 2000 for an example of this approach). This rhetorical strategy involves playing on the importance placed on *authenticity* in popular culture, particularly in reference to Aboriginal peoples (whose authenticity is regulated by the government). A so-called authentic Indian who adopted the rhetoric of new public management and called for integration of Aboriginal peoples—claiming that the safeguarding of one's culture and language was an individual choice and thus ignoring the long history of forced assimilation in Canada—would lend immediate

[18] These common sense conceptions were voiced in a CBC News online interview with AFN National Chief Phil Fontaine (CBC News 2008b); questions were emailed to CBC by readers of their website. One such question claimed that "native peoples" received $80,000 per household from the federal government, and asked Fontaine to explain the figure. According to Fontaine, the figure was false; a First Nations family of four living on-reserve receives an average of $36,000 annually in services, compared with a national average of $64,000 in goods and services for a family of four.

credence to parallel arguments stemming from the political right. This was likely the key factor in Brazeau's senatorial appointment.

> *Your seatmate on the flight is a chatty, affable fellow. You strike up a conversation that fills the long hours you spend cramped over the Atlantic..."I was listening to Shelagh Rogers the other day, and she was interviewing the leader of an organization that represents* ***Indians*** *living off the reserve, and he was saying that it isn't money that's the problem, but that the problem is money going to the wrong places – to the* ***Chiefs****. These chiefs are letting their people* ***rot*** *while they live in* ***style****. And this guy, he was* ***educated****, and he was really speaking for his people, you know? He also said that there are just too many Bands, like* ***600*** *something Bands – can you imagine? No wonder these guys* ***can't get their shit together. What I think is we need to help Indians live like Indians****. Yeah, they're out in the* ***bush*** *miles from nowhere, and they can't drink the water – what do you expect? Why would you put a water treatment plant out there in the first place?" (April 19, 2007)*

Thirdly, Brazeau also ignored the important history of the attempt to do away with the *Indian Act* by the Government of Canada under Trudeau with 1969's *White Paper* (officially the *Statement of Government of Canada on Indian Policy, 1969* under Minister of Indian Affairs Jean Chrétien). The *White Paper* attempted to do away with a differentiated citizenship for Status Indians in Canada, claiming that Aboriginal and treaty rights were irrelevant in a modern polity such as Canada; after intense political pressure from Aboriginal groups, many formed in response to the *White Paper*, it was defeated in 1971. The government's attempt to do away with the *Indian Act* was often viewed as an important motivation for the Canadian Aboriginal political renaissance of the 1970s (Turner 2006).

This omission of an extremely significant historical event in Brazeau's (and Rogers') discourse is another example of *SLC*'s tendency to ignore the history of colonialism in Canada when broaching Aboriginal issues. The issues of the

corruption and irresponsibility of First Nations politicians (whether real or imagined) are taken as *discrete*; that is, the responsibility for them may partially fall on the federal government, but mostly it falls on the politicians themselves (greed being an individual character trait). In this way, Brazeau's discourse specifically, and *SLC* in general, effect a dislocation of mainstream Canada and Aboriginal issues. Aboriginal issues are inherently linked to the history of colonialism in Canada, as is the wealth and prosperity enjoyed by the mainstream population, but this mutual link to the past is erased through a performative amnesia.

It should be noted (as I mentioned in the description above) that Brazeau was granted much more time to make his initial argument than Simon. He also went first in the segment. Of the five callers in this segment, four believed that reserves were not in the best interest of Canada's Aboriginal people. Judging by the amount of times that the listeners agreed with Brazeau's arguments, often mentioning his name, it seems that both what he said and how he said it held significant resonance with the callers' previous beliefs. The only caller that did not believe that reserves were against the best interests of Aboriginal people was a member of a First Nation herself; she agreed with Brazeau, however, that the current structure of First Nations governments was a problem, that chiefs and other leaders were not accountable, and that there must be change.

3.3 Adler Online

While the formats of *Sounds Like Canada* and *Adler Online* (*AO*) are ostensibly similar—both consisting, for the most part, of interviews—*AO*'s segments are far

less discrete than those of *SLC*. The techniques of *repetition* and *connection*, as well as Adler's tone, mark *AO*. Rogers' interviews, unless explicitly part of a series, are distinct; Adler's segments, while covering different topics, run into each other through the repetition of key words, phrases, concepts, or affective hooks. For instance, while a segment on car culture (February 8) may seem to have little to do with one discussing the war in Afghanistan (February 18), the focus (albeit momentary) on the technical aspects of vehicles available to Canadian soldiers links the two through a masculinist fixation on mechanized production of velocity. Other, far more deliberate connections abound, both during a day's programming and between days. For example, Adler seized upon the comments by one of his guests, denouncing them as female chauvinism, and brought the segment up repeatedly in the days following (see discussion of Leslie Primeau below). Repetition is also effected through Adler's call-in segment; nearly every caller parrots Adler's vitriol, and those few who do not are upbraided and cut off. These call-in segments thus work to reinforce Adler's own discourse, opening a space for listeners to voice their opinions only so long as they correspond to Adler's, and thus producing a feedback loop that intensifies the outrage marking Adler's program.

In addition to the connections made within the show, Adler is capable of making many more connections beyond the show. This is most obvious in the fact that *AO* is broadcast privately, and is thus interspersed with advertising. *SLC* is interrupted only by the CBC news; CBC's self-referential character as the state-broadcaster is reinforced by this insulation, mirroring the process by which the state

breaks and relinks symbolic chains to position itself at the centre of all discourse (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988). Adler's commercial breaks connect him to capitalism explicitly; Adler's own discourse also effects increasing links with the world outside the show, as he makes reference to popular culture icons, current film, and television both in explicitly produced segments and in offhand remarks; in making these connections, the world outside Adler's radio program becomes coded by Adler's particular views.

Given the intercalation of *AO*'s segments, it is difficult to separate specific issues analytically; when one piece is pulled from the mass, it sticks to others, which in turn pull others out with them. The interconnectedness might best be represented as the webbing of a net, with each intersection of filament representing an issue (nodes), and the filaments themselves carrying information on how each issue connects to others. Frequently, more than one of these filaments connects issues. The following analysis of *Adler Online* focuses on several such nodes: Adler's discussion, over numerous segments, of the perceived abuse of Human Rights Tribunals; the U.S. primaries; the war in Afghanistan; and certain other miscellaneous segments that intercalate with these. I argue that Adler's treatment of these issues works to reaffirm the dominance of the white male subject position through casting the white male as the victim of discrimination, which thus effaces the hegemony—both historical and contemporary—of whiteness and masculinity. Finally, I should point out the importance of outrage to Adler's program: it plays a similar role to that of sympathy in Rogers' program, but is often far more audible. When reading the

quotations that I have taken from Adler's commentary, imagine a gruff, gravelly voice, sometimes picking up tempo as he makes points that are meant to provoke the most outrage in his listeners.

Adler mentioned Human Rights Tribunals four times during the listening period, with three of these being segments explicitly discussing the issue. Adler's opposition to Human Rights Tribunals does not reproduce colonialism in itself; rather, the way Adler deals with the issue reproduces colonial subjectivity. The first discussion was on February 5th, when Adler interviewed Keith Martin, a Liberal MP who had introduced a private member's bill to have section 13(1) of the federal *Human Rights Act* repealed; this section prohibits exposing "a person or persons to hatred or contempt by reason of the fact that that person or those persons are identifiable on the basis of a prohibited ground of discrimination" by telephone or Internet (Commission 2008).[19] The interview itself was rather banal, with Martin dodging most of the questions that Adler asked. Adler explicitly linked the Human Rights Tribunals to a waste of taxpayers' money, claiming that "Canadians gave their lives in two World Wars" to preserve the right to free speech. The call-in segment also worked to connect the Human Rights Tribunals to a sense of white victimization. One caller volunteered her own experience with an attempt to make a complaint about her coworker:

> One time when I tried to file a complaint when a member of an Indian band a few months ago had said there are only two ways to deal with a white man, one was to shoot him, and the other was to do something else, I was told by

[19] Which gained Martin the praise of a white supremacist group through their Web site (CBC News 2008a).

> all these places that there was nothing I could do. I'm sure if I had been Jewish or Muslim I would have gotten further.

The next mention of Human Rights Tribunals linked to comments by a guest relating to the American primaries (discussed below). The third mention was on February 7th, when Adler presented a news story about an individual who had been prescribed medical marijuana; he was prohibited from smoking outside a restaurant, and proceeded to make a complaint to the Human Rights Commission of Ontario. Once again, Adler effected an outraged tone in discussing the case, claiming that "the Human Rights Commission is becoming a wrong" and that it had "impaired judgment." Here Adler invoked the concept of the double standard, which is the same principle behind white male victimhood: if smoking tobacco inside is illegal, then smoking medical marijuana must be illegal; he continued to lambaste the Human Rights Commission for providing legal counsel for the complainant, while the owner of the restaurant was threatened with loss of his business due to mounting legal fees. All five of Adler's callers agreed with him. Most of them did not present new information or opinions; Adler underscored their agreement through rhetorical strategies such as stating, in a questioning tone, "And you don't think this should be before the Human Rights Commission," to which the first caller responded "Not at all."

Adler's final mention of the Human Rights Commission came with an interview on February 13th with Ezra Levant, then the publisher of the conservative newsmagazine *The Western Standard*. Two years prior to the interview, a complaint to the Alberta Human Rights Commission had been brought against Levant by Syed

Soharwardy, a leader of the Muslim community in Calgary, for having published the now infamous Danish cartoons of Islam's Prophet Mohammed. On February 12th, Soharwardy withdrew the complaint,[20] claiming in an op-ed in the *Calgary Herald* of February 13th that he now realized that his dispute with Levant should have been settled in the "court of public opinion" (cited during the broadcast). The tone of the interview was jovial, it being obvious that Levant and Adler were friends. Levant set himself up as a victim of an egregious complaint brought to a kangaroo court in which the proper legal rules of evidence did not hold. Additionally, Levant made it clear that if Soharwardy *had* brought his complaint before a court of law instead of a tribunal, and then backed out has he then did, he would be liable for Levant's legal fees—leading Levant to decide to sue Soharwardy for defamation. All of this, plus Adler's commentary, painted Levant as a victim of both a process that was inscrutable and problematic, and of a malicious man who was attempting to bring "Saudi Arabia values to Canada" (Levant).[21] White male victimization was thus linked to the perceived attack on freedom of speech by the Human Rights Tribunal system.

Once again Adler repeated the question containing the expected answer: "Do you think the Human Rights thing has just simply gone too far?" The single caller accepted by Adler also claimed to be a victim of the flawed Human Rights Tribunal system, having been forced to pay $5,000 personally plus an additional $5,000 for a

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[20] However, a separate Muslim group in Edmonton had already filed a complaint over the same issue.

[21] It should be noted that Soharwardy is not of Saudi origin.

Web site that he was running. When pressed for details, the caller stated that he ran a white nationalist Web site on which he had posted negative comments about homosexuality and homosexuals. Reactions by Adler and Levant were interesting; suddenly very careful about their response to the caller, Levant claimed that the Web site was "obviously not stuff for polite company," and Adler responded "not my cup of tea, but I'm not willing to sic the government on him." Levant continued with a cost-benefit argument, asking which was "more scary," a "nobody" in his basement distributing hate literature on his computer, or a government spending hundreds of thousands of dollars to police what citizens can say. Neither Levant nor Adler was willing to strongly object to white nationalist rhetoric, downplaying the potential impact it could have in their characterization of it. Additionally, the ever-present complaint of governments wasting taxpayer's money resurfaced here.

Adler continued to remind his listeners of the injustice of Human Rights Tribunals even during segments that did not explicitly deal with them. The same day that he initially raised the issue of Human Rights Tribunals, Adler hosted a segment including a number of fellow radio hosts and journalists, discussing the American primaries. This occurred on February 5th, Super Tuesday, when twenty-four states including California and New York held their primaries to determine candidates for the presidency. When asked who she would vote for on the Republican side, Leslie Primeau (a host on CHED Edmonton, another Corus Radio Station) was reticent to give an answer, claiming that the candidates were all "old, white, nonwhite, inventive-creative-passionate men" to which Adler immediately

replied "You female chauvinist!" Although this exchange seemed playful at the time, Adler seized upon it, railing against it during another segment on the American primaries the next day, and then replaying it at the end of a segment on anti-Americanism. He proceeded to link Primeau's remarks to Human Rights Tribunals and the perceived pervasiveness of attacks on white males in Canada:

> Imagine if Leslie had said the same things about someone who isn't white, imagine if Leslie had said the same things about a different ethnicity, a different religion. . . . Why if she hadn't said "old white man," if she had said "old black man" or "old Muslim man" or "old Jewish man," or fill in the blanks, old "Aboriginal" man, that could be interpreted by some people as an attempt on your part or the part of your guest . . . of creating antipathy toward a visible minority or other kind of minority. You know where I'm going with this, because the Human Right [*sic*] Commissions are filled with this. You publish the wrong cartoon, you say the wrong thing about the wrong person and all of a sudden you're accused of starting a riot. You're accused of being a hate monger. But if you just say "hey, old white guys uncreative, uninventive, lacking in passion, these old white burnouts," you can go to town on that all day long. And nobody will say "well that's a problem." So should it be a problem? And this is not yours truly asking for permission to bleep her and to bleep somebody every time they say something like that, I'm not asking for permission. I'm simply asking you whether this double standard business has gone too far. So . . . has the bashing of the white man in this country gone a little too far? (February 6)

Here again, connections between discrete issues are made, this time between Primeau's female chauvinism, Human Rights Tribunals, and the assault on white males in Canada.

Almost all (six of seven) of Adler's segments on the American primaries focused on painting Barack Obama as an indefensible candidate incapable of giving specifics about his policy plans, whose supporters were "scary" (February 26th), and who was a "shimmering vacuity" (February 29th). On February 5th, a caller chimed in with an observation relating to race: "If Obama was white, nobody would be

looking at him." The only segment that did not specifically include an attempt by Adler to denigrate Obama's candidacy concerned an interview on February 4th with Jed Babbin, a conservative against McCain. Although portraying in a negative light a candidate who was ideologically opposed to Adler's position should be expected from such a politically partisan program, the way that Adler mobilized the issues of race and gender in the primaries went beyond ideological disparity. On February 6th, during the first segment in which he revisited Leslie Primeau's female chauvinist comments from the day before, Adler's guest was unequivocal in her claim that the primary race *was* about race and gender. Kathleen Parker, a conservative syndicated columnist in the United States, claimed that black Americans and men would vote for Barack Obama, and women would vote for Hillary Clinton. Adler agreed with her, and proceeded to play her Leslie Primeau's remarks from the day before; Parker's response was: "It's open season on white males." Adler qualified his comments about the white man getting "bashed day after day" by saying: "This isn't Adler putting on the bed sheets here, the cape and the cowl." Parker had a more nuanced view of the issue, reminding Adler that white men were still in charge of most institutions, but the discussion was hurried away from this fact. Adler continued to lament the fact that white men were the only identity category who were prohibited from claiming that their white maleness influenced their decisions, insisting that Hillary carried the primaries in California and New York because the large Asian and Hispanic populations there

would not vote for a black man. The connection between white male victimhood and limits to freedom of speech was further cemented.

These connections surfaced in another topic, Adler's consternation with David Suzuki. Twice during the listening period, Adler hosted segments dealing with Suzuki's support for a carbon tax. On February 25th and 27th, Adler inveighed against the tax, implying that Suzuki was a fraud for attempting to make arguments about the economy. On the 25th, Adler claimed to be most interested in what he referred to as the scam that Suzuki was using to promote the carbon tax: namely, the tax burden would shift from income tax to carbon tax. His tone was very condescending, stressing his incredulity: "All of you *polluters*, you put a hundred billion dollars into the pot and then it will be kind of *spread* to all the boys and girls in Canada and we're all going to really enjoy that." Additionally, he connected Suzuki and his views on the anthropogenic nature of climate change to the stifling of free speech, stating: "Sometimes it feels like you are in Saudi Arabia if you don't go along with David Suzuki and Al Gore's version and vision of the climate crisis."[22] On the 27th, Adler claimed that Suzuki and those who supported the carbon tax "love the business of punishing people who make money on crude, and punishing people like yours truly who insists on driving 500 horsepower Kyoto Antichrists."[23] Over the course of the two days, all but one caller agreed with Adler, particularly on the unlikelihood of carbon tax relieving income tax. The penultimate caller on the

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[22] Note the similar rhetoric used against Soharwardy above, where he was accused of attempting to bring Saudi Arabian values to Canada (even though he is not from Saudi Arabia).

[23] Adler would often refer to his automobile as the "Kyoto Antichrist."

27th, however, attempted to take Adler to task for his rhetoric, claiming that Adler's use of the "horse and buggy rhetoric" had gone too far. Adler's response was typical when confronted with a caller who disagreed with him; he cut him off. His tone became more aggressive, and the rate of his speech increased:

> You want me to change my rhetoric. . . . Well just go to the CBC and you'll get the kind of rhetoric you want, I mean nobody will be offended, nobody will be stimulated. I think you understand that I speak in metaphor, I think you understand that when I speak about the horse and buggy days it's not a literal thing. My point is that he wants to punish the movers, the shakers, the achievers, the people who want society to motor on, he wants to slow things down. We're in an economic slowdown as it is and so I don't feel like slowing down, so if some people don't like the horse and buggy stuff like I say, the CBC I guarantee they will never speak in metaphor for you, they will bore you to death with technocrats.

A number of characteristic themes were present in these two segments: first, the familiar freedom of speech issue, with Suzuki being associated with the antidemocratic regime of Saudi Arabia, and the ever-present fear of government mismanagement of tax money. Adler focused on consumption, production, the economy, and what he seemed to perceive as the right to pollute. Suzuki was characterized as being driven by a desire to punish those who excel in contemporary society—the "movers, the shakers, the achievers."

Adler's denigration of the CBC also came up in comments he made after interviewing military historian Jack Granatstein on the legacy of Lester B. Pearson, which connected his segments on Suzuki to those dealing with the war in Afghanistan. On February 4th, the two discussed the injustice done to Pearson's legacy by those who would focus on his receipt of the Nobel Peace Prize for his invention of UN peacekeeping in his response to the 1956 Suez Crisis. Both Adler

and Granatstein were appealing to their version of a Pearson more willing to go to war in order to justify increasing military expenditures by the Canadian government. Adler also shifted the discussion towards his belief that it was not just the United States, but "North America that was attacked" on September 11th, 2001, asserting that "there were Canadians that died." Adler's commentary on the CBC was made after the interview, just before the closing of the show, where he apologized to his audience for being more reverential to Granatstein than what they were accustomed to:

> So if you notice every time I have J. L. Granatstein on I'm a little more reverential than I ordinarily am, then I will simply confess to you that I hold him in reverence, that I hold him in awe. Why? Because he inspired me. When I *did* go to university, and I *did* spend a lot of time in those library stacks at McGill, it was the Jack Granatstein mind that connected with me. He was the one who lit the history candle. . . . I didn't learn my Canadian history from the CBC, which of course teaches everyone that they've got to hate everything about this country because this country was about nothing else other than racism and oppression and all the rest of it. But Jack Granatstein helped me to love this country even more because he taught me what Canadian history was all about.

Here Adler's mistrust of left-liberalism, and his pro-Americanism and prowar sentiments are brought to the fore.

Implicit in Adler's comments on the CBC was the elevation of the white male subject position: the CBC "teaches everyone that they've got to hate everything about this country" and that Canada is racist and oppressive. Of course the oppression and racism purportedly attributed to Canada by the CBC is a historical fact, and, in my opinion, carries forward in contemporary Canadian society (it is the topic of this thesis). Along with the freedom of speech/white male victimhood

complex marking much of Adler's discourse, the denigration of the CBC version of history worked to shore up the white male as the subject position against which others must be defined, and which inhabited the paramount position in the hierarchy of subject positions in Canada.

This work was also performed by Adler's support of the war in Afghanistan, and his linking of segments related to the war with the film *Charlie Wilson's War*, a good example of Adler connecting his show to the broader media landscape. On three occasions, Adler mentioned the film, all in the context of either the war in Afghanistan or Middle Eastern politics. On February 6th, Adler interviewed Senator Colin Kenny, who came on the program to discuss the problems that the Canadian government was having distributing aid money in Afghanistan. Kenny claimed that Canadian aid money (one billion dollars over five years) distributed through the UN, the Red Cross, and other international agencies was lining the pockets of corrupt middlemen in Afghanistan. Kenny's argument corresponded well with one of Adler's oft-used themes, the waste of Canadian taxpayers' money. In discussing opposition to the war, and the timeline for withdrawal proposed by Liberal leader Stephane Dion, Adler asserted: "I'm not a pacifist, I'm all for fighting the bad guys and beating them and I have no problem with [General Rick] Hillier calling them scumbags, that's exactly what these headchoppers are, they're scumbags"; he went further, predicting criticisms of his line of argument in stating that "If we don't want to have the money stolen from hard-working Canadians [and we demand

accountability] we're told that we're . . . ethnocentric, we're imperialistic, we're colonialist."

Adler continued this antipacifist line on February 15th, interviewing Michael Ross, a former Mossad agent, about the February 12th assassination of Imad Mugniyah in Damascus by the Mossad. Ross provided Adler with a long list of hijackings and killings allegedly perpetrated by Mugniyah; the result was justification for the assassination of such "bad guys," as well as making connections between Hezbollah, Hamas, Al Qaeda and the governments of Syria and Iran. Adler also took a moment to laud *Charlie Wilson's War*, a film that the interviewee had not seen. Again on February 18th, during an interview with retired general Lou Mackenzie on the war in Afghanistan, Adler gushed about the film, tying its message—that the United States should not have left Afghanistan to fend for itself once the Soviets had been driven out—to the current war as both a reason for its initiation and a rationale for staying. Mackenzie agreed, claiming that Canadians "have a short attention span," and that winning the conflict would involve "sticking around" in order to build relationships and not just killing all the enemies. On February 25th Adler made his final mention of *Charlie Wilson's War* during a segment discussing the Academy Awards; he had wagered that Philip Seymour Hoffman would win Best Supporting Actor for his role in the film, but lost the bet.

As with the integral place that sympathy played in *SLC*'s affective economy, outrage is central to Adler's program. Outrage was present in each of the discursive connections constantly being made between various issues by the filaments of

perceived white male victimization, freedom of speech, and government mismanagement of tax funds. This outrage was evident in Adler's tone, and came through even in the transcripts of his commentary; it also showed itself in the way the callers parroted Adler's opinions, and even began to creep into my own personal life as I was listening to the program: my partner began to notice my increased irritability and shortness of temper. Outrage is married with these discursive connections, overriding the actual points that Adler made, and hooking directly into the soft, fleshy core of the subject, triggering the often-enjoyable sensation of being wronged by those forces outside of one's control and the violent impotence of outraged chatter.

> *Ahhh . . . you are beginning to relax as the massage therapist works on your muscles. Your neck injury is starting to act up again. She is asking the general, polite kinds of questions that come with such interaction: "How was your summer?" "It was great, I was out in BC working, so I missed the garbage strike." "Oh," she responds, "what kind of work were you doing out there?" "Working for an Indian band on part of an environmental assessment. There's lots of money for that kind of thing . . . " you are about to continue with "because it's a project linked to the oil industry" but she stops you: "Because it's for the Indians, right? Yeah, my family is from Australia, and down there the Aboriginals get everything from the government – they've got big TVs and new cars, and they don't work for any of it. And my family told me not to go out at night, the Abos are dangerous down there." She doesn't even have her own mouth anymore. (September 14, 2009)*

Nostalgia is the other main feeling evoked by Adler, as witnessed in his interest in Granatstein's version of Canadian history and his fascination with *Charlie Wilson's War*. Granatstein's history gives us a narrative that glorifies Canada, that gives us something to be proud of, that exalts white males as the driving force behind our history—they were both the generals and the soldiers in the field, they

"gave their lives in two World Wars" (Adler, February 5th) to protect our freedoms. Adler's adoration of *Charlie Wilson's War* also works as a nostalgic device: in a time when white males are being attacked from all sides, when they perceive themselves as losing their historic dominance to people from different racial/ethnic communities who are being hired simply because they have different skin colour, *Charlie Wilson's War* gives Adler and his listeners a (recent) past to remember where white men ran the world, were unapologetic about their misogyny, and could meddle in international affairs without worrying about being sensitive to local cultures. Charlie Wilson did not have to worry about being construed as "ethnocentric, . . . imperialistic, . . . colonialist" (February 6th).

Adler's history is thus an amnesiac's narrative, which first wants to discredit the perceived denigration of the white male by Liberalism/liberalism by silencing those who would replace Granatstein-style triumphalism with an increasing awareness of privilege and the violence which reproduces it. Remember, he did not learn his history from the CBC, "which of course teaches everyone that they've got to hate everything about this country because this country was about nothing else other than racism and oppression" (February 4th). Secondly, the present is characterized as an enlightened meritocracy where "racial and gender inequality have been remedied" (Ferber 2003, 327).

However, even while Adler insists on the difference between his view of history and that espoused by the CBC, both construct a perspective on the past that effects a break with it, and in doing so, both efface the significance of past violence

on current sociopolitical reality. In the perspective of the CBC (or at least *SLC*), there were many mistakes made in the past which we are in the process of remedying; we have the formula, and all that is required is its application. In Adler's case, racism is no longer of any political or social significance; there may be racism in the world, but it has not been politically significant for decades. Therefore equal opportunity programs, Human Rights Tribunals, and other institutions meant to bring racism into the public sphere are in fact spurious remnants of the problems of previous generations, and function only to the detriment of the white male, the real victim of chauvinism.

Both white male victimhood and Adler's obsession with freedom of speech rely on a mix of this nostalgic view of history and a perceived double standard between the rights and privileges of minorities/women, and those of the white male. Like the justification for fighting against the Nazis in the Second World War, to which Adler connects it on February 5th, freedom of speech is a stable discursive anchor for determinations of good and evil. It is impossible to defend a position that would result in constraining freedom of speech in the democratic polity of Canada; freedom of speech is sacred. However, as Adler mentions time and again, it is only the white male who is prevented from freely voicing his opinion publicly. All other groups attack the white male indiscriminately and with impunity, while the white male is prevented from defending himself by a culture of political correctness and insane liberal institutions such as the Human Rights Commissions and tribunals that function to reign him in. In this way, it is white males, and not women or minority

groups, who become the victims of discrimination. The implicit assumption in Adler's discourse is that all people should be able to attack all others, which amounts to a mischaracterization of the right of freedom of speech, ignoring the importance of the *limits* placed on this speech by liberal institutions (Gingras 2007).

Using a similar logic on February 6th in the interview with Kathleen Parker, Adler claimed that minorities and women make decisions based on racial and gender solidarity, which is perfectly justified, and therefore white males should be allowed to claim that their decisions follow similar rationales. So there is a double standard here, where norms apply to white males differently than to others. The implication of this discourse is a kind of egalitarian racial communitarianism—the same separate but equal ideology that nourished segregation in the U.S. South, and was behind the British colonial policy which created bantustans and homelands in Southern Africa (South Africa, Northern and Southern Rhodesia) and Indian reserves in Canada, and linked to the United Negro Improvement Association and African Communities League of Marcus Garvey, as well as Zionism (Cambre 2007).

According to Adler, if restrictions on freedom of speech were removed, white males, like everyone else, would be able to speak their minds, and democracy would be served better. But in reality it is difficult (if not impossible) to argue that racialism can exist without hierarchies already in place. The contemporary Canadian polity is marked by racial and gender stratification; the claim that these restrictions on white males are unjust thus simply reaffirms the hierarchies that already exist (of course, hierarchies that are the ostensible targets of liberal institutional responses such as

Human Rights Tribunals). Adler's discourse amounts to little more than crypto-racism, an evident carryover from the far less cryptic white hegemony that marked ideological constructions of racial hierarchy in the classics of political philosophy (Hobbes, Locke, Rousseau, Kant, Hegel) and continues to mark Canadian society. Through inculcation of a sentiment of injustice against white males, and appeals to the sanctity of freedom of speech, Adler shores up white hegemony.

The literature on white male victimhood in the United States posits it as a backlash against perceived gains made by the civil rights, gay rights, and feminist movements, as well as the end of the postwar economic boom and the loss in Vietnam (Savran 1996). Much of it (e.g. Savran 1996; Ferber 2000; Arthur 2004) has a narrative structure of false consciousness: white (working class) males are positioning themselves as victims since they perceive that they are losing ground to women and minorities; however, they face a similar situation as these others—they are all losing ground to the corporate elite as income stratification intensifies in the United States, well-paying factory jobs are outsourced, and so on. Giroux (1998) claims:

> Threatened by the call for minority rights, the rewriting of American history from the bottom up, and the shifting racial demographics of the nation's cities, . . . whites felt increasingly angry and resentful over what was viewed as an attack on their sense of individual and collective consciousness. (92-93)

If these arguments are right, it would seem that racial consciousness trumps class consciousness, at least in American politics.

However, it is not entirely clear that the resentment expressed in Adler's radio discourse and theorized in the backlash literature mentioned above is novel.

The literature that claims it to be a *result* of certain historical transformations—such as civil and women's rights—would need to establish that white working class men did not express racial- or gender-based resentment prior to these changes. This literature also seems to provide this resentment with a founding mythology, almost playing into the nostalgia evident in the white male victim discourse: "at one time, we ruled this country, but now we are 'the new niggers' (Savran 1996, 128)." The worry evident in Giroux (1998), for example, that white American youths are "experiencing a crisis of self-esteem" given that they now must view themselves as the oppressor could also be viewed as the liberal version of Adler's discourse: whites, like everyone else, require a strong racial consciousness, and in constantly eroding it (through "the rewriting of American history from the bottom up"—in the Canadian context, ostensibly the purview of the CBC) we are eroding the confidence of those who identify as white. Adler, and in some respects Giroux, imitate the claims of abuse that they perceive others to have used to their advantage; this makes one feel like a victim, and at the same time occludes the historical responsibility for colonialism and the persistence of white privilege.

This element imbues Adler's antipacifist "get the bad guys" rhetoric as well, likely another reason why he thought so highly of *Charlie Wilson's War*. The main premise of that movie is that the United States had a moral obligation to help defeat the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. In taking an antipacifist stance, Adler supports solving political problems with violence, contributing to the predominance of hypermasculinity in Canadian society. Of course solving problems with violence

spreads far beyond the use of assassination and war internationally; Adler's very tone and his constant state of outrage could be characterized as violent. The actions of Phillip Seymour Hoffman's character—a disaffected CIA agent—in *Charlie Wilson's War* appeal directly to this violent sensibility, as well as speaking to Adler's audience. Adler's love for this character was reaffirmed numerous times over the course of the listening period. Hoffman's character knows the score, but is constantly being stymied by a system that will not allow him the leeway to effect change. However, he is somehow so important to the organization that he is able to get away with violent behaviour in the office. When he does not achieve the goals that he has set for himself, he becomes angry and violent, lashing out at whatever happens to be available. In one scene, after a dispute with his superior, he takes a hammer and smashes a large window in the superior's office. This scene is meant to imbue the audience with a sense of righteousness. It thus illustrates the position that Adler's program inculcates in the listener: an idealized masculinity that, even for its being oppressed by the vagaries of contemporary political misguidance, can carry itself forward in a state of righteous indignation, and understands violence and intimidation as legitimate responses to personal or political problems.

Adler's discourse and techniques work to reaffirm the supremacy of the white male subject position within the Canadian sociopolitical landscape, a supremacy directly connected to the history of colonialism. Through cultivating outrage against perceived threats to this supremacy, and legitimating violent responses to it, Adler reinforces the hypermasculinity that served and continues to

serve to delegitimize expressions of gender identity or political organization that do not foreclose femininity or androgyny. His inculcation of a sense of victimization in his white male listeners supports an effacement of the history of white male privilege, and the violence committed in order to gain and keep that privilege. Adler's discourse uses the fact that freedom of speech cannot be legitimately questioned or criticized in Canadian society to reinforce a crypto-racism in his listenership: the culturally and economically dominant white male, in coming to view himself as a victim, believes it only fair that he have the same recourse to racism and sexism that others in subordinate subject positions flaunt daily. Adler's discourse thereby legitimates the racial and gender hierarchy that marks Canadian society, the same hierarchy that we can observe in Rogers' deployment of difference-effacing sympathy. It is the same hierarchy that has structured Canadian politics since its foundation.

3.4 Conclusion

Radio's capacity to reach into us, to guide our perspectives through appeal to channels that are deeply rooted in our subjectivities, is undertheorized in political science. Most work on the radio tends to focus on radio's discourse and how it forms political choices in its listeners. In this chapter, I have attempted to expand beyond the political science literature on radio and its ramifications for political opinions to highlight the capacity for Canadian talk radio to reinforce dominant colonial subjectivity. The two programs analyzed here represent opposing poles on the political spectrum, but each in its own way has worked to amplify colonial flows

within the whitestream. In setting up sympathetic resonance, *SLC* reproduced white dominance through placing the white subject in a position from which to view and judge subordinate subjects. Adler's vitriol closed off the dominant subject from engaging with those holding subordinate subject positions within the colonial hierarchy through setting up the white subject, and particularly the white male subject, as a victim of the privileges held by nonwhites. Those holding subordinate subject positions continue to attack the position of the white male, who is prevented from defending himself through a variety of cultural and legal proscriptions, such as norms against racism and the threat of being dragged before a Human Rights Tribunal. Thus each program, in its own way, reinforced colonialism's foundational relationship with Canadian political discourse, reproducing the whitestream.

This brings into question the success of multicultural policies as well as the impact of the entrenchment of Aboriginal rights in the Canadian Constitution. Continued reproduction of colonialism in our daily micropolitical interactions with institutions such as the media poses serious threats to the realization of Aboriginal political goals and the potential for Canada to truly assume the mantle of a multicultural society. It is not that multiculturalism is not yet entrenched *enough*, but in fact that multiculturalism grows out of our colonial past and plays a part in colonialism's reinforcement. The techniques through which colonialism reproduces itself are many and varied. Political science needs to adapt its approaches in order to come to grips with the problem that colonialism's persistence poses to the connected goals of realizing Canada as a pluralist society and of reconciliation with Aboriginal

groups who have experienced the worst of colonialism's violence. The implications for either sympathy *or* outrage in forming dominant constructions of the self need to be better understood; this chapter has made steps in that direction.

CHAPTER 4:

HOCKEY

> *The pub was absolutely packed. My cynicism is no match for the wall of emotion that we confront upon entering; the place is like a nationalism gland. We approached the bar, and each ordered a pint. Our eyes, and the eyes of everyone in the place, were fixed on the television screens suspended from the walls. If Canada loses this game, they will be eliminated from the Olympic hockey tournament. That prospect puts me, and everyone in the place, on edge. But even while I find myself relishing the togetherness, the camaraderie, that we display through our national pride, I also feel another feeling, one that seemed long-gone: I feel like I'm once again in high school, perhaps in gym class, and I need to watch my back. On the big screen above the bar, larger than life (or at least as large) some Russian player ploughs Weber with only minutes left to play, Canada leading 7 to 3. The crowd is furious. I hear someone behind me offer a sage reflection: "Well, they got pride too, right?"*

In the last chapter, the focus was very narrow, and the data utilized to build the argument strictly defined. Given the ubiquity of hockey in Canadian society and culture, I have cast my net wider in this chapter, analyzing discursive and affective techniques mobilized in the media, in academic and popular literature, and in everyday experience. I am concerned here with not only the spectator relationship to what Burstyn (1999) refers to as the "sport-media complex," but also with the sport as it is played at the local level. During the course of my research, I took every opportunity to engage with acquaintances and strangers on issues central to hockey; I played street hockey, indoor ball hockey, and, once, found myself lacing up on a frozen lake in Northern British Columbia. For approximately six months in early 2010, I immersed myself in hockey culture in Canada, regularly watching games and discussing the sport in bars with friends, neighbours, and strangers, during the Winter Olympics and the Stanley Cup Playoffs in particular. I absorbed as much

hockey media as I could, reading popular books, newspapers, and blogs, and watching the CBC's 2006 series *Hockey: A People's History* on DVD. I must disclose here that prior to this research, I was never much of a hockey fan; granted, if I am given the choice of a sport to watch, I will always pick hockey. I enjoy the game for what it is—but I am not a true hockey nut, and have never played it in an organized league. However, given that I am male and Canadian, much of my life has entailed negotiating this sport, nodding along and feigning interest (or sometimes comprehension) while coworkers, friends, and family members are engrossed in discussions, ensuring that even while I do not play hockey, I *appreciate* the game, I have played it informally, and I am not a fag. (Here, I perform precise justifications for my access to the masculine subjectivity I am recording.)

I take hockey to be what Deleuze and Guattari (Deleuze and Guattari 1988) term an "abstract machine," an assemblage that connects with numerous others within Canadian politics and society, and that has innumerable, constantly shifting functions. Certain of these connections manage to overwhelm others, gaining hegemony through official, state-related processes, and, more central to my own research, daily micropolitical manoeuvres in the lives of everyday Canadians. I explore these latter kinds of connections here, leaving counterhegemonic projects (to use Gramscian language) or projects tracing "lines of flight" (to remain within Deleuze and Guattari's framework) to other research.

This chapter is broken up into two preliminary sections—"Colonialism, Subjectivity, and Sport," and "Hockey as an Abstract Machine"—followed by four

substantive sections. The first preliminary section is a brief examination of how literature in social sciences approaches the intersection of colonialism, subjectivity and sport. Sport's usefulness in moulding subjects was first mobilized in a self-conscious way in the nineteenth century, and used explicitly by European and American colonial powers to develop a certain kind of subject: one who was competitive, thus mirroring capitalist forces; one who played according to a certain set of rules, and was submissive to the final decision of an arbiter; and, essentially, one who reflected the dominant values of the colonial culture (Gruneau and Whitson 1993).

The second preliminary section discusses how Deleuze and Guattari's concept of the abstract machine relates to hockey in Canada. The idea here is that hockey is a force that hooks into numerous other forces in Canada, and while it has the capacity to amplify forces that subvert colonial discourse/values/practice, here I focus on how it reproduces and reinforces colonialism in contemporary Canada.

The four substantive sections each deal with an intersection of forces that reproduce or amplify colonial subjectivity. Taken individually, their relationship to colonialism may be tenuous. However, in their overlapping, they amplify their capacity to reinforce the dominance of whiteness and hypermasculinity in Canada, two trends constitutive of contemporary colonialism. They also produce a conception of space that, while not exactly the same as previous colonial aesthetics that emptied the Canadian hinterland of humans in order to present it as ripe for exploitation, maintains a similar effect. The first section deals with violence,

masculinity, and race; the second, hockey, sexuality and gender; the third, space and time; and the fourth section deals with nationalism and multiculturalism. Each of these sections discusses the numerous means through which hockey hooks into and amplifies the normative hegemony of whiteness, a certain kind of masculinity, and a colonial relationship to space and time.

4.1 Colonialism, Subjectivity, and Sport

While we may think of sport as a natural outgrowth of the energies of youth, beginning in the mid-nineteenth century sports came to be viewed more and more as a means of inculcating social values in players, and of course, particularly in the young men who played them. As C. L. R. James points out:

> [Victorians] found ample scope for character training and the inculcation of moral excellence in the two games, football and cricket, and of one of them, cricket, they made the basis of what can only be called a national culture. "A straight bat" and "It isn't cricket" became the watchwords of manners and virtue and the guardians of freedom and power. (James 1993, 165)

In England, sports such as cricket and football began their lives as disorganized country games, but developed into institutions through the calculated manoeuvring of heads of schools and other institutions, who saw them as means of spreading bourgeois values of work, discipline, and manliness through the young, tender vessels of their own class, and ultimately the entire nation.

Of course this attitude about the capacity for sports to mould minds through the body extended beyond the metropole, manifesting itself both domestically and in the colonies of numerous imperial powers. Gems (1999) discusses the importance of sports for the American colonization of the Philippines. Not only were sports a

means of civilizing the savage Filipino, they also worked to unite Filipinos into a nation through competition, and prepared Filipino students for the capitalist economic system:

> Competition served as the basis of the capitalist economic system, and sports imbued the drive and aggressiveness necessary for success and greater production in the modern world. The transition from a traditional craft-based economy required not only different skills, but also a different mindset. In this respect the colonial administrators even surpassed the interscholastic coaches in the U.S. by organizing local, provincial, regional, and national competitions. The emotional expression inherent in sport and the exuberance of its fans also substituted for the loss of the more traditional tribal festivities, and transferred a measure of Filipinos' religious enthusiasm to secular outlets. (Gems 1999, 575)

Thus, sports education has been linked to a grand plan by institutional authorities in numerous countries to discipline the minds and bodies of those at home and in the colonies, in an effort to reproduce bourgeois values. James's quote relating to Victorian sports education is taken from his influential and important reflection on sports and colonialism, *Beyond a Boundary,* written in the guise of a treatise on West Indian Cricket. In what James insists is a history of cricket in the West Indies, particularly the island of Trinidad, we find a rich analysis of how the sport of the colonizer worked to create colonial subjectivity through inculcation of British norms, which were and are part and parcel of the game of cricket itself. Indeed, the cricket pitch served as a stage for the playing out of hostilities between social classes and skin shades among the colonized, and against the colonizers themselves—a stage upon which all rules of the game were strictly followed.

However, as Gruneau and Whitson (1993) point out regarding the Canadian experience, "The Victorian quest for a highly regulated, respectable form of sporting

enterprise was shot through with contradictions" (193). Violence was to become an essential part of hockey. Domination of one's opponent may seem a natural outgrowth of the competition and rivalry that are necessary components of team sports, and particularly of sporting events where teams represent a given community (be it the village or the nation). As I discuss below, only certain kinds of violence are acceptable within hockey. Violence (even illegal violence) had become central to the game in its early days. This violence came to be viewed as contributing to the formation of upright citizens, and of securing against a "*crisis of masculinity*" (Wilson 2005, 316; emphasis in original).[1] Thus extralegal aspects of the game became central to it, and this undoubtedly contributed to the formation of Canadian colonial mythology as a nation of rough-and-ready pioneers shaping a hard, cold land through toil (Mackey 2002).

4.2 Hockey as an Abstract Machine

Deleuze and Guattari's (1988) *abstract machine* is an overarching, inclusive concept. An abstract machine includes within it forces that both conserve and disrupt a given system. They use both capital and the subject as examples of abstract machines; the state apparatus, while not itself an abstract machine, is associated with the conservative (overcoding) function of the abstract machine. An abstract machine both allows for openings and brings them under control. What I want to underline in this short section is the capacity for hockey to amplify forces that are both disruptive and conservative; that hockey is both an "abstract machine of

[1] Hockey supplanted the game of lacrosse in popularity late in the nineteenth century, due to the latter's attempt to maintain a "gentlemanly" amateur basis of the sport (Robidoux 2002)).

overcoding" and an "abstract machine of mutation" (Deleuze and Guattari, 1988: 233). In this way, hockey amplifies colonial processes of distinction and absorption.

Hockey in Canada works to both conserve and further the dominance of certain forces, and disrupt these forces all around us. Evidence that hockey amplifies what I am calling conservative forces is easy to find: Don Cherry's still-popular weekly soapbox provides one example. During his two-minute discussion, we can witness the game of hockey being linked to such values as hard work and determination, traditional masculine values of toughness and violence, to patriotism/militarism (nearly every time a Canadian soldier dies in Afghanistan, Cherry holds his or her photo up to the camera and sheds a tear), and to anglophone chauvinism (the frogs and Europeans are, of course, wimps; (Elcombe 2010). Capitalism and the state work together, selling hockey and the nation through beer, Kraft Dinner (Canada's number one grocery product—and Theo Fleury's saviour from unpalatable Czech food[2]), hockey documentaries, hockey books, and of course hockey itself, in the form of the NHL and international tournaments.

But hockey is also a means through which these dominant structures can be escaped, undercut, or mutated. Take Sheema Khan's experiences with hockey related in her *Of Hockey and Hijab* (2009):

> "When I used to play hockey," I began telling my coworkers over lunch. All of a sudden, eyes looked up in disbelief. "You played hockey?" asked a friend incredulously. "Yes," I replied with a smile, thinking, "Doesn't every Canadian play hockey at some point in their life?" And then it hit me. Muslim women, especially hijabis, aren't expected to be interested in sports, let alone play. (99)

[2] See Fleury, 2009, p. 38.

Khan subverts the dominant views of what hockey is, and who can play it. Many women have done this before her—think of Abby Hoffman, for whom the trophy of the Canadian National Women's Hockey Championship is named. In order to play hockey during the staunchly conservative 1950s, Abby cut her hair and played in a boy's league. While she was eventually discovered (after being selected to play on an all-star team), this instance of a girl outmatching boys on the ice was sure to have unsettled the received opinions of many Canadians at the time (McKinley 2006).

The two colonial processes of distinction and absorption are constantly at work, with what could be described as a conservative quotient of forces and flows generally determining the mainstream. What the concept of the abstract machine, and Deleuze and Guattari's approach in general, allows for is a view of social structures in constant change, one that recognizes the capacity for conservative forces to recapture those forces that would subvert the system, which in turn initiates a change, however minor, in the conservative forces themselves. The remainder of this paper will examine how certain assemblages of these conservative forces and flows maintain their dominance within the discursive and affective landscape of hockey, and how they reproduce colonial subjectivity within the Canadian mainstream.

4.3 Violence, Masculinity, and Race

Violence plays an important part in hockey. Checking is integral to the game, and, at least in the NHL, fighting is an accepted means of resolving disputes

between players, even if it is technically outside the rules. The NHL itself considers violence a "'goods characteristic,' an attribute of the product deliberately fostered by teams to generate revenue in their drive to maximize profits" (Jones et al. 1996, 231-232). This violence, pervasive throughout minor leagues as well as professional hockey, works both to construct and to reinforce specific conceptions of masculinity and the racial hierarchy so central to Canadian society.

"The Code"

As mentioned above, francophone (as well as European) players in the NHL are frequently characterized as wimps in popular English Canadian discourse—they are incapable of playing in the corners, they do not fight, and they overemphasize their putative injuries (e.g., Claude "the Fraud" Lemieux). By implication, a good (English) Canadian boy knows how to give a hit as well as take one, will defend himself and his teammates, and will not back down from a confrontation when things need to be taken to the next level.

These characteristics are emblematic of what Atkinson and Young (2008) term *the Code*, a set of unwritten rules governing the use of violence in the NHL, and men's hockey in general. These authors argue that the Code was acutely visible in the discourse around two highly publicized and brutal hits in the 2000s, both involving the Vancouver Canucks: Marty McSorley's stick-swinging assault on Donald Brashear in 2000, and Todd Bertuzzi's 2004 attack on Steve Moore. The way that the hockey world—media commentators and league officials—dealt with such incidents made the aggressors into victims, and "publicly frame[d] violence in the

game as noncriminal, socially unthreatening and rare—and therefore tolerable" (173). Regarding the attack on Brashear, which resulted in an exceedingly rare criminal charge against a player for on-ice actions, Don Cherry commented:

> I'll tell you why it happened. . . . [Brashear] ridiculed an old warrior, an old warrior. . . . You should never ridicule and humiliate an old warrior. . . . You play with the bull, and you're gonna get the horns. (quoted on page 181)

The Code effects an embodiment of a violent and dangerous masculinity that normalizes brutality in the guise of protection of a teammate, and justifies illegal hitting and fighting as honourable means of extracting vengeance .

The attitude of the hockey-watching public in Canada towards violence in hockey is often rather blasé. While only 38 percent of Canadians in a recent poll held that fighting was an acceptable part of hockey, that number is nearly double among the 31 percent of Canadians that are "huge hockey fans" (Macfarlane and Adams 2010, 37). When asking an acquaintance at a sports bar what he thought of violence, and the fact that there was much less overt violence (such as fighting) in the European game, he responded that, first, there was nothing intrinsically wrong with fighting, so long as the participants consented, and second, that the European game was rife with dirty tricks such as slew footing.[3] This view reinforces both the Code and the stereotype of Europeans as cowardly (for having to rely on dirty tricks to get the upper hand on an opponent). We are thus reassured that the way we play our game is the way that it is meant to be played, and that since the violence in the game

[3] An interesting aside here: Canada is, according to the president to the Ultimate Fighting Championship, a Mecca for mixed martial arts; it is the best per-capita market for the UFC brand (Diebert 2010).

is between consenting adults, there is nothing inherently wrong with it, even though the same kind of violence would be treated as criminal if it were to occur in any other public venue.

Furthermore, during my research, every person with whom I discussed hockey violence put forward a version of the (very Freudian) "catharsis theory" of violence in hockey (Gruneau and Whitson 1993). They held the belief that, in order to avoid more serious violence later in the match (such as the kind of life-threatening brutality unleashed by Marty McSorley in his February 21, 2000 hit on Donald Brashear), hockey-playing men must at times drop the gloves. And while none of the people with whom I discussed violence in hockey believed that it was cathartic or therapeutic for them to watch hockey fights, most agreed that fights were exciting. However, as Gruneau and Whitson argue, psychological research has disproven the catharsis theory; committing violence does not decrease its future likelihood or level—in fact, violent behaviour begets violent behaviour:

> Academic researchers investigating the links between sports and violence stress two recurring themes: first, that exposure to violence and to socially acceptable aggression is likely to lead to more violence rather than less; and second, that there is more evidence to support sociological and cultural explanations of violence than psychological or biological ones. (ibid: 178)

"The Code" and Race, or the Heart of Darkness in Surrey, BC

Race and violence intersect in hockey, reinforcing colonial flows that place white, male anglophones at the core of the whitestream. Take the treatment of francophones in professional hockey as an example, even beyond Don Cherry's familiar tirades. While many Canadians disagree with Cherry's opinions, they are

not in fact his own; he merely expresses a series of stereotypes regarding francophone players in the NHL (and, arguably, in the junior leagues). As Dallaire and Denis (2000) argue, Cherry "navigates the same discursive waters as the rest of us: it is the anchoring of his rants in Canadian culture (including the political culture) that makes him so popular on Hockey Night in Canada" (419-420).[4] The stereotypes mobilized in Cherry's polemics maintain themselves through performances on and off the ice. Bob Sirois, a former NHLer himself, compiled exhaustive statistics comparing francophone players to the rest of the NHL from 1970 to 2009 (2009). His findings reveal the link between the Cherry discourse and the practice of the NHL: on average, francophone Québecois playing in the NHL outperform the rest of the league both offensively and defensively. A full 42 percent of francophone career players from Québec (those playing over 200 games) received some award or other from the league, reinforcing Sirois' hypothesis that in order to gain admission to an institution that is contemptuous of their mythical defensive inferiority and wimpiness, francophone players must outperform their anglophone counterparts. This underrepresentation also explains why anglophone players from Québec are more than twice as likely, per capita, to gain entry to the NHL than francophone players. In Sirois' words:

> voyez-vous, maintenant, le problème, c'est que plusieurs des hockeyeurs qui utilisaient ce langage primitif [*fucking frenchman* ou *fucking frog*, sur la glace] pour nous désigner sont présentement employés par plusieurs équipes de la LNH. Ils occupent des postes stratégiques à titre de dépisteurs,

[4] And, in fact, beyond; not only did Cherry place seventh in CBC's "Greatest Canadian" program in 2004, but, incredibly, he was voted Canada's *leading public intellectual* by the readers of the *National Post* a year later (Elcombe 2010).

> d'assistanants-entraîneurs ou d'instructeurs dans les ligues mineures professionelles et même dans la LNH. Alors pensez-vous que leur culture s'est civilisée avec le temps? Non, ils sont aujourd'hui devenus de parfaits Détritus. (260)[5]

These opinions regarding francophones have become received wisdom throughout institutional hockey in English Canada; perhaps you heard Cherry's comments on the television, and then they were repeated by your coach at practice, or by parents in the neighbourhood. Through these overlapping experiences, youth continue to be brought up to believe that French speakers possess some inherent inferiority, and in this case such an opinion is reproduced and reinforced through one of the most important institutions in Canadian life, what, given the amount of resources dedicated to the game, amounts to a public religion.

> *"You know something I really admire about Sidney Crosby? When he moved to Rimouski to play junior hockey, on top of playing and going to school, he started taking French lessons. Doesn't that say so much about his character? Other guys his age were out chasing girls, but this kid was dedicated, he was a hard worker. He didn't need to learn French, but he chose to so that he could get along with the people in the town. (April 29, 2010)"*

In their analysis of hockey played in the Inuit community of Holman, Collings and Condon (1996) discuss the different ways that Inuit players use violence in the game:

> Many non-Inuit who play hockey in Holman invariably complain about the style of play. . . . The game is often violent in a manner unfamiliar to these outsiders. . . . A former [Euro-Canadian] recreation coordinator once complained that the problem with the way Inuit play hockey was that they "weren't real men." They relied on hitting people from behind and skating away (what Holman players call "bothering") instead of dropping the gloves

[5] The last reference is to a comic-strip character from Asterix and Obelix who was sent by Caesar to sow discord among those heroic Gauls, and who Sirois sarcastically compares to Don Cherry—without actually mentioning his name. It also merits mention that *détritus* means *garbage* in French.

> and fighting it out on the ice. . . . This infuriates all Euro-Canadians witnessing or experiencing the violent action, but it makes perfect sense in light of traditional Inuit methods of violent expression, which rarely involve face-to-face confrontation. (Collings and Condon 1996, 257)

This view of Inuit not being "real men" is another example of the way the Code is mobilized in mainstream Canadian hockey culture. The introduction of any sport to a group will result in a cultural appropriation that redefines how the game is played. This seems particularly true of sports played in relative isolation (see Paraschak 1997 for a discussion of the differences in Aboriginal sporting cultures in the Arctic and in southern Canada).[6] Thus the Code works in this example to emasculate a cultural group—it assigns certain negative characteristics to the Inuit in much the same way that it does to francophones. Neither are purported to be "man enough" to drop the gloves and fight. Here masculinity and race overlap, with the alternative violences practised by a colonized culture necessarily pointing to its lack of masculinity.

During the interviews undertaken for chapter 5, one interview subject, who I call Ron, related experiences playing hockey against teams from Surrey, BC, which were composed mostly of Sikh players:

> Ron: When I was growing up, playing hockey, when we went to play Surrey, which was predominately East Indian um, my mum told me, and in all seriousness and not judging just for the sake of saying, you know, as like a beware, that if you call an East Indian man, not all of them, but the right East Indian male a derogatory [i.e., racist] term you're insulting his honour and

[6] Think of the famous example of the Trobriand Islanders (the seemingly archetypical example of syncretism), who adapted cricket to their cultural and political terms, changing the rules significantly and adding elements that most cricket fans would find alien, including ritualistic dances, as detailed in the ethnographic film *Trobriand Cricket: An Ingenious Response to Colonialism* (Leach and Kildea 2004).

> then you basically need, he needs retribution and he's coming for you and he's coming for you scary and . . .
>
> Interviewer: Scary, he's coming for you scary?
>
> Ron: Like you've just shown that you're dishonourable so he doesn't have to act with honour anymore sort of a thing, he can club you with his hockey stick if he so decided, and whether it was true or not, I didn't call them any names. I know people who did who were instantly in fights. Whether it's true or not, there's differences in culture and the way people are brought up.

As in the case of the recreation coordinator in Holman, here Ron views apparent displays of violence that do not correspond to the Code as attributable to culture. East Indian men do not follow the Code because of the imputed importance of honour in their culture. Of course honour is ostensibly also very important in the Code—but in mainstream hockey, name-calling is not supposed to warrant attacks with a stick. It does, however, often lead to fights, which makes one wonder how differently these two groups—Euro-Canadians and Sikhs in the Fraser Valley—actually approached the game of hockey.

These examples are congruous not only with how the Code governs mainstream thinking on hockey violence; they also fit within a very old discourse on the violence of the nonwhite savage. The same interview subject, Ron, also related a story about one of his teammates being chased out of an arena by a Sikh team:

> Ron: We played an East Indian team when we were 20, 21. One of the guys, it was already a very heated game so tempers were pretty high, one of the guys he said something, I don't know for sure what, obviously racist and they chased him around the rink, they being the line that was on the ice, four of them did, one of them told the other guys on the bench what he had said, they pile off. Uh, and he left the arena, and they out of the arena, four or five of them plus some people from the stands cause they had got what he said, um, and they had uh, a machete, and they went at him with a machete.
>
> Interviewer: One of them had a machete? Wow.

> Ron: He got outside and was like "holy crap" like you would be like "oh man, they really overreacted" but then they kept coming, and he's like, what, he just had no context for what the hell do you do now, so he's you know kind of like, I'm not going to, we're in the middle, it's daylight, we're in the parking lot, there's people everywhere, what are you doing, cause there's just no white Langley kid concept of this, right. You beat the crap out of the guy on the floor, and if you don't get him to your satisfaction you remember what he looks like, you remember his number, and you get him the next game.

Here, the appearance of a machete at a hockey game indicates the capacity for an East Indian to take things too far, perhaps to revert to some premodern, tribal violence that transcends the Code. It racializes a violent response that is outside the Code—suffering a verbal slight on the ice may be grounds for dropping one's gloves, but never for pursuing someone outside the rink. A similar view is taken of Aboriginal peoples by the whitestream, the very peoples whose initial misidentification led Ron to geographically qualify Indo-Canadian hockey players as East Indian.

In the first episode of *Hockey: A People's History*, CBC Television's ten-part documentary that links the development of the game of hockey to the development of Canada's national character,[7] there is a short section that details the origins of the sport. Hockey is linked to the ball and stick games of the ancient civilizations and we are told that "as civilization spread westward, so did its games, taking root in Europe and the British Isles." But "it wasn't until the old country games arrived with the immigrants on the shores of Nova Scotia that the last missing pieces were found." A drum is heard beating rhythmically, and we are shown a tableau of

[7] The first person to speak other than the narrator in the first episode claims: "We were the nation that was created when the game was created."

hundreds of bronze-coloured, shirtless men carrying curved sticks, obviously competing in a game. "The French called it lacrosse. In the native tongues it had many names, including one that means '*little brother of war*'" (CBC Television 2006). Cut to Michael McKinley, hockey expert and author of the companion coffee table book:

> The Aboriginals considered sport as a rehearsal for battle, and consequently in these games it was winner take all, literally. Sometimes the opposing players might be killed.

And while McKinley claims that the new immigrants likely imitated the intensity with which the natives played, it is clear that this imitation did not go so far as to descend into a battle to the death. And so, in a 2006 documentary by the self-consciously polite and correct CBC, we once again get a nod back to the purported barbarism of Canada's first peoples.[8] It is also interesting that this so-called rehearsal for battle is dealt with in such a dramatic fashion by the program—as anyone who has read or listened to hockey commentary knows, it is rife with war analogies and metaphor.[9] As with most popular discourses relating to Aboriginal peoples, McKinley's story homogenizes a wide group of cultures by referring to "the Aboriginals" rather than a specific group who were playing the game in this way.

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[8] The irony is that Canada's national pastime is a mixture of Aboriginal and European ball and stick games, but becomes used as a tool for crafting colonial subjects out of the Aboriginal population through its regimented application in residential schools.

[9] This connection between hockey, the nation, and the military continues in CBC's broadcasts of *Hockey Night in Canada*. For instance, for their January 30, 2010 "Hockey Day in Canada" special, the CBC included a segment on Canadian Forces personnel playing ball hockey in Afghanistan, and the Toronto Maple Leafs donned camouflage jerseys for their warm-up skate in honour of the Canadian military and veterans.

Michael Robidoux (2002) quotes a conflicting account from an eighteenth-century English traveller who claims that while Chippewa players of lacrosse often wounded each other on the pitch, "there never appears to be any spite or wanton exertion of strength to affect them, nor do any disputes ever happen between the parties" (212). McKinley seems delighted in detailing the savagery that the Aboriginals inflicted on one another, even while ignoring at least some documentary evidence that goes against whatever (undocumented) evidence he uses for his argument. The point here is not that the Aboriginal peoples who played this game never played it as practice or pretext for war; many did (as documented by other historical accounts in Robidoux, 2002). But the significance of the game (and, indeed, of war) to a culture so far removed from the whitestream—not only by tradition, but by centuries—is difficult to fathom. Thus this kind of simplistic caricature of Aboriginal culture does little but extend the essentialism so common to constructions of colonized peoples.

4.4 Hockey, Gender, and Sexuality

> What you have to understand is there was never any doubt. None whatsoever, at least not in my mind. When my wife, Cindy, and I found out we were going to be parents for the first time, I just knew we were going to have a boy. A boy who would love hockey. A boy who would play hockey. It wasn't so much wishful thinking as it was a rock-solid assumption.
>
> Now, I know how that sounds. I mean, I do get it. Any time a child is born there's a fifty-fifty chance it's going to be a boy. Or a girl. It could go either way and it's not something you can actually control. Besides, at the end of that glorious day when he or she does arrive, the only thing that ultimately matters is that the baby and the mother are healthy.
>
> So, yes, I will admit it was possible we could have been the proud parents of a baby girl and had that happened it would have been no less a day of joy

> and wonder for us and we would have loved that little girl to pieces. Hey, some of my best friends have daughters.
>
> But it wasn't happening, not to us, and I just knew it. We were going to have a boy. And we did. He was going to love hockey. And he did. He was going to play hockey. And he did. . . .
>
> I know what you're thinking. Just because a newborn baby is a boy is no guarantee he will grow up to like or play hockey and, yes, I get that too. I understand a boy could grow up to love baseball or playing the piano or solving math problems more than hockey.
>
> That is, if, in my case, he were adopted. (McKenzie 2009, 1-2)

Violence in Women's Hockey: "Too Rough for Gals"

In November of 2009, the hockey media lit up briefly after Hailey Wickenheiser, perhaps the most famous female of the sport in Canada, facewashed Dion Phaneuf's younger brother in an exhibition game between Canada's women's team and a junior men's team. Phaneuf had hit Wickenheiser along the boards, and Wickenheiser retaliated. Online discussions of the event ranged from questioning why women were playing against teenage boys, to derisive comments about the quality of women's hockey,[10] to outright misogyny.[11]

When we speak of hockey being integral to Canada, we are generally speaking of men's hockey; by no means does women's hockey hold the same importance in Canadian society. Of course the place of women in hockey (and sport in general) has increased in recent decades; in fact, *Hockey: A People's History* would

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[10] "When will the novelty act of women's hockey finally go away? This politically correct side-show has gone on way too long. Why are unskilled players still making news headlines because of their gender?" Comments by user Odiedodie of 25stanley.com (25stanley.com 2009).

[11] "That was barely a bump, Hayley was probably on the rag." Comments by user Skorka85 of hockeyfights.com (hockeyfights.com 2009).

have us believe that women were more interested in gaining the right to play hockey than in any other endeavour, sporting or otherwise. One of the reasons that women's hockey *may* be marginal to the mainstream is its relative lack of violence—as many hockey fans have opined to me, hockey is an entirely different game without the hitting. Open-ice contact is prohibited; only "rubbing" along the boards is generally allowed in women's rules (a rule-set more or less the same as oldtimer's hockey).

This was not always the case—again, something that *Hockey: A People's History* underscores. During the 1920s and 1930s, women's leagues enjoyed unprecedented popularity, and the rules governing their play (as well as extralegal violence) were the same that spectators had become accustomed to in watching men's hockey (Norton 2009). The fact that women are currently prohibited from engaging in the same level of violence that Canadian society *expects* of men points to the postwar resurgence of the ideal of the lady[12] and her expected role as mother and caregiver just as it also points to the importance that violent retribution plays in the crafting of Canadian masculinity. This hooks into Nandy's (1983) argument that British colonialism in India worked to prohibit androgyny, by separating gender and sex into a binary with clearly demarcated roles and attributes. As Nancy Theberge points out, the "modified model" of women's sports that came to

[12] The negative attention brought by the media to the members of the Canadian women's Olympic hockey team caught smoking cigars and drinking champagne on the ice is further evidence of the persistence of the norm of ladylike behaviour in Euro-American societies, particularly juxtaposed to the way Jon Montgomery became a media darling after parading through the streets of Whistler with a pitcher of beer after winning gold in men's skeleton during the 2010 Winter Olympics.

prominence in women's athletics after World War II "came to symbolize and reinforce the myth of female frailty that the growth of women's sport from 1890 through the 1930s had initially challenged" (1989, 512). The newly normalized perspective on female frailty was neatly summed up by Clarence Campbell in the mid-1950s when he claimed that hockey was "too rough for gals" (quoted in Norton 2009, 9). This development also undermined the liberal ideology of ever-increasing gains towards civilization, itself consonant with the colonial conception of time outlined in chapter 2. And while the modified model was gradually replaced by rule-sets compatible with men's games in other sports, starting in the 1970s, violence in women's hockey has been curbed by the relatively recent prohibition of body checking in women's leagues, which started in the 1980s.

After conducting participant observation with a women's hockey team in Ontario, Theberge (2000) concluded that the main obstacle to body checking in women's hockey was the social norm against women playing violent games. Prior to 1989, when the rules in Ontario were changed to prohibit open-ice hits, adult women playing in leagues suffered a high number of injuries. The response, of course, was to modify the rule-set, and prohibit body checking. This change neglected the actual problem that lay at the root of these injuries: women were not being trained in how to hit and take hits, in a sport where hitting was fundamental to the game. Furthermore, Theberge's research shows that the majority of women playing on her team were in favour of reintegration of hitting, indicating that they enjoy the physicality of the game when the opportunity presented itself. However,

in quoting a marketing executive from the Canadian Hockey Association, Theberge underscores the persistence of the expectation that women's sports should refrain from violence, and that women athletes should be ladylike:

> It's a lot easier to sell [a game like] women's tennis where the emphasis is on finesse. It's tougher to see women participating in those physical games. It's not a positive in terms of sales circumstances; it's a hurdle to overcome. (2000: 136)

This comment reinforces Varda Burstyn's view, that "Both the amazonian and androgynous body styles and iconographies [expressed by women's sports such as hockey] contain and express genuinely challenging and emergent ideologies about gender and the body" (1999, 152). However, these challenges make the hockey mainstream ill at ease, and force them into an (often violent) reproduction of gender/sex binaries.

Here I would like to tell a slightly different story about the modified model and its implications for the persistence of colonialism. These processes work through both absorption and distinction. The "modified model" described by Theberge (1989) mobilized a desire to produce female sports and sporting communities that were distinguished from their male counterparts by being less competitive and aggressive, "slower and less physically demanding," and focusing less on individual capacity and more on teamwork. Thus, zoning changes to women's basketball in the early twentieth century prevented one skilled player from continually running the ball up the court and scoring (ibid. 510). And while these changes to sport may have been inspired by misogynist conceptions of female frailty, they responded to this denigration though creation of a sporting culture that distinguished itself from

masculinity while simultaneously conforming to these conceptions of frailty *and* debunking them. The modified model is thus not only a maintenance of distinction—it is a challenge, a line of flight or a leaking from the cracks in the malestream.

Thus we have an alter-sport constructed against the male norms, but maintaining the strict gender division, and reproducing gender solidarity (an especially important component of colonialism, as discussed below). As discussed in chapter 2 and below, in "Homoeroticism and Hockey," gender solidarity plays an important role in colonialism. The leaks that an alter-sport present cannot but run along the deep channels that gender division/solidarity produce and reproduce. These channels provide the line of flight with a path towards its own reterritorialization. The modified model is thus under constant challenge; it reterritorializes itself through ideologies of similarity, absorbing women into the whitestream. In fact, women do not require an alter-sport; they are or can be just as competitive, aggressive, strong, and violent as men. However, these qualities are only allowed to express themselves within a gender-distinguished arena. Thus sports are male and masculine per se; women's sports require the gender qualifier to distinguish them from the genuine article.

Violence against Women

Of course in discussing women, hockey, and violence, the prohibition of hitting in women's hockey is rarely the central concern. As Laura Robinson argues (Robinson 1998), a "rape culture" pervades men's minor hockey. Investigating a

series of cases from the 1980s and 1990s, Robinson uncovers a pattern: the way that young hockey-playing men are placed on pedestals in Canada infuses a sense of entitlement to sex, which can and does result in sexual assault. However, as a number of cases detailed by Robinson show, the victims of such assaults are often accused of mischief, as charges against their assailants are dropped by a justice system that, from police through to Crown prosecutors, is intimately linked to the junior hockey establishment through ownership, coaching, and billeting of players. In other cases, victims do not bring charges against their assailants. For example, in the case of Jarrett Reid, his girlfriend (the victim of multiple sexual assaults) did not want to charge her boyfriend because she "was concerned that . . . if the charges did go through then it would affect his [chances in the NHL] draft" (ibid: 33).

The men and boys who commit these crimes are also often untroubled with remorse; in the cases both of Jarrett Reid and that detailed in Razack [-Razack, 2002} discussed below in "The Rink," "lost opportunities weighed more heavily" on their minds than the assault of another human being (Razack 2002, 149). The refrain "these are good boys, they wouldn't do something like that" seems to recur in the cases detailed by Robinson, as well as in the case detailed by Sherene Razack (2002).

And while these horrific instances of sexual assault and cover-up may be marginal to mainstream experience in Canada, the masculinity that allows for women to be treated as sex objects is not. When watching hockey with friends in a bar and not discussing the on-screen entertainment, talk often turns to women, and

is almost invariably of the sort that reduces women to part-objects.[13] This homosocial environment, where men relate to one another through a fetish or proxy (admiration for a player's finesse with the puck, or expression of sexual desire for a comely waitress) is a reflection of the same forces that produce the "rape culture" that Robinson points to. As Varda Burstyn (1999: 171-173) argues, organized sports and military service both share an aversion to femininity (softness) that is often expressed through aggression, ranging from disdainful disparagement to outright violence against not only women, but also men who display feminine traits.[14]

Homoeroticism and Hockey

While staying with a friend, I walked into the living room where my friend's brother and his friend (both self-identifying as gay men) were sitting close to each other watching the television. On the screen was a tangle of obviously male flesh, and I immediately asked them if they were watching pornography together. No, they replied, they were watching rugby. While the homoerotic significance of the "organized hug" (Krüger 1999, 204) that is the rugby scrum may be obvious, my immediate reaction reinforced the performative boundary between sport and sex (while also iterating a common stereotype of gay men as hypersexual, and therefore inclined to be casually watching pornography together). That this sporting event was immediately taken by me to be a sex video is telling of the erotic power immanent to sport, as well as the repression of this eroticism in the mainstream

[13] A psychoanalytic term that describes the breaking of the body into distinguishable and detachable parts.

[14] See CBC News (2010) in which the two gay victims of a hate-motivated assault linked their experience to the holding of a mixed martial arts event in their city that night.

consumption of, and participation in, sport. While (homo)eroticism is, and has always been (at least according to Guttmann 1996), an important part of sport, hypermasculine norms deny acknowledging that part of the attraction of both watching and playing sports is sexual.

Homoeroticism is virtually absent from the literature on sport, which is significant in itself. The construction of the whitestream is heteronormative; sexual pleasure can only be conceived of as between man and woman, and straight men do not watch or play sports to admire the physiques of the players—unless the players are themselves women. In a search on a popular cross-disciplinary database (Scholar's Portal), inputting "sport and homoerotic*" returned just three journal articles, two of which were literary analyses (Hardin 2000; Brown 1997). One examined how women playing recreational softball performed hetero- and homosexual roles (Higgs and Schell 1998), again reproducing heteronormativity through marking a binary distinction between "hetero" and "homo." As Pronger (1999) states, "while there have been important critiques of sport along the lines of class, nationality, race, ethnicity, and gender, there has been little attention given to the construction of desire in competitive sport" (375). Allen Guttmann, whose book *The Erotic in Sports* (1996) examines sex in sport from ancient Greece through to the present from a structuralist theoretical position, connects the dearth in the academy to the pervasiveness of the mainstream perspective: "Scholarly specialists in sports studies appear to have joined the fans and the coaches in a conspiracy to suppress all mention of an erotic element in sports" (3).

However, regarding the issue of *homophobia* in sport, one is presented with a resounding consensus on the matter: modern sports construct a space in which men (and, some argue, women) play together in a way that must be anything but sexual, and therefore violently deny the possibility of physical love between members of the same sex (see for instance Burstyn 1999; Theberge 2000; King 2009; Eng 2008). As Pronger (1999) puts it, "the homophobia of competitive sport allows men to play with each other's bodies and still preserve their patriarchal heterosexist hegemony; they can have their (beef)cake and eat it, too" (Pronger 1999, 374).

As mentioned above, sports were an enormously important tool for moulding colonial subjectivity. But as Arnd Krüger argues, in relation to the British empire,

> . . . the Empire that was to be built and maintained had to have a firm basis in the friendship of men who knew how others were thinking. For these purposes the team sports system was very practical—and so sport was put at the basis of colonial expansion and administration of a vast Empire. (204)

As Krüger argues, the analogous institutions of the boarding school, military, and sports club, all centres of (until recently, predominantly male) homosociality, each played an important role in maintaining the empire, but these institutions were allowed to be anything but homoerotic. Robinson (1998) blames the similarly insular, homosocial environment of institutionalized hockey for allowing sexual predators such as Graham James the freedom to abuse so many boys. And, frankly, these disturbing breeches of trust are still the kind of behaviour that comes to mind when one thinks of, or brings up in a conversation, the issue of sexual desire and sport. The point here, of course, is not that the fact of sex in sport is responsible for these abuses; it is our collective denial of sex in sport that allows them to continue.

Furthermore, even as it would seem that homoeroticism has become mainstream through the ubiquity of chiselled male bodies—in, for instance, magazines such as *Men's Health* or *GQ* that are targeted at male audiences—the potentially disruptive substance of this gay aesthetic is denied through its absorption into the whitestream:

> It is no accident that the political neutralization of progressive meanings in gay imagery should take place via the commodification of the athletic dimensions of gay culture. For advertising is a discourse of social compliance, and flaunting the feminine would be considered an act of noncomformity. (Burstyn, 1999: 219)

4.5 Space and Time

Discursive and affective techniques mobilized through hockey work to construct conceptions of both space and time that reproduce whitestream colonialism. From early in their childhood, hockey-playing boys learn that they are entitled to the space of the rink, a fixture central to many communities across Canada (Adams 2006). Racialized teams of Aboriginal players are systematically excluded from the whitestream through the production of the reserve as a space of hostility and potential violence (Robidoux 2004), even while entitlement-bearing young athletes enter the urban reserve to commit horrific violence against the colonized in acts that reinforce the dominance of white masculinity (Razack, 2002). Entitlement to the space captured and overcoded as Canada also reproduces itself in less egregious techniques of mediation that produce the Canadian hinterland as a recreational paradise, signalling a transformation from the earlier palimpsestual production of resource-rich space, empty of inhabitants, that was thus ripe for

colonization. Finally, the experience of hockey, broadly construed, positions white masculine memory as authoritative, privileging a conservative perspective of time.

The Rink: Space of Entitlement, Exclusion, and Exception

As Mary Louise Adams (2006) argues, the rink is constructed as a space of masculinity, and entitlement to that space is ingrained in the mentality of boys; the space itself becomes masculinized. Bruce Kidd (1990) claims in his widely cited article that the arena—from the NHL's palatial playing surfaces to the modest community rink in every small town—is a cultural centre for Canadian men. And since arenas are most often constructed with public money, the connection between hockey, masculine entitlement, and the state becomes readily apparent. Consider the countless arenas that were constructed to mark Canada's centennial; in this instance, we have the nation-state commemorating itself with the construction of space intimately linked to hockey, and thus to men's culture. A sense of entitlement not only to this space, but also to what amounts to privileged citizenship, cannot help but be established within masculine subjectivity.

The space of institutional hockey also effects an exclusion, of both women and of those who would use the ice for pursuits other than hockey. Women who would like to use the ice to play hockey continue to be stonewalled by institutions that allocate ice time based on prior use. While Adams (2006) points to a 1994 study by the City of Toronto that addressed the problem women had in accessing artificial ice, complaints by women denied access to community rinks in the city were again

raised in the winter of 2009/2010 (Vincent 2009). The issue of unequal access to ice persists despite the report prepared sixteen years ago.

This space of exclusion extends beyond mere physical exclusion. Professional hockey culture is, like "monasteries, mental institutions, [and] cults," extremely insular (Steven Ortiz, quoted in Robinson, 1998: 57). Criticism of certain of hockey's shibboleths, such as illegal violence, automatically marks one as an "outsider." Theoren Fleury demonstrates this, in discussing media commentary on the 1987 Canadian world junior team being disqualified from the tournament due to participating in a bench-clearing brawl:

> Brian Williams (with the CBC then, and now a commentator with TSN) kept breaking off, calling it an ugly, disgraceful incident. The guy probably never even laced up in his life. The most adversity he ever faced on ice was making it to his car in the winter. Don Cherry was behind us because he played the game, so he understands the game. I don't think it gives him the right to be as critical as he is sometimes, because he was never a big success story in the game, but he knows what goes on in the heat of the moment. It gets out of hand at times. That is the nature of hockey. (Fleury and Day 2009, 43-44)

Fleury's comments echo an oft-repeated feature of hockey discourse: that Canadians play hockey, and, by implication, those who do not play lack the credentials to discuss the national passion, and perhaps even the nation itself.

Furthermore, masculine entitlement to the space of the rink resonates with the entitlement to women's bodies exhibited by many hockey-playing youth. Sherene Razack's (2002) study of two white, middle-class athletes who raped and murdered Pamela George, an Aboriginal woman who occasionally worked as a prostitute, is a case in point. The area in Winnipeg where Pamela George was working the night she was murdered is an example of a marginal space, even a

space of exception, like the Indian reserve. In this study Razack rather chillingly demonstrates how the homosocial space of men's sport produces a masculinity that identifies itself in terms of its capacity to inflict horrific violence on women. She also argues that such violence must be seen in terms of the history of colonialism, in which white males have come to see themselves as entitled to the land and the rights and privileges of the state, to the exclusion of racialized Aboriginal people. Hockey narratives and practices perpetuate a colonial relationship to space that privileges the dominant, settler-colonial narratives of hard work (and hard play).

Michael Robidoux (2004) explores how the Canadian mainstream maintains the spatial segregation of colonialism through hockey, in his article detailing race relations in Southern Alberta. The Kainai Minor Hockey Association, a First Nations hockey association, was ejected from the regional hockey association, not for having broken league rules (which they had), but because the parents of another (non-Aboriginal) association in the league continuously complained that travelling to the reserve put their children and themselves at risk. They claimed that the teams fielded by the Kainai association and the parents of the players both posed a direct threat to their safety, and threatened to withdraw their own teams from the league.

Robidoux argues that the incident in fact demonstrated a double standard, for, in doing research on non-Aboriginal minor hockey in the same Southern Alberta area, he found that violence and aggression on and off the ice were commonplace. In analyzing the letters from parents sent to the minor hockey association, he found that First Nations people were overwhelmingly characterized as "unruly and

dangerous" (293). These parents did not want to play against Kainai teams—not because of the infractions levelled against Kainai, or any other quantifiable reason; but because "they want[ed] nothing to do with Kainai. In other words, it is not desirable for these communities to go to the reserve to play hockey because it is not desirable to go to the reserve in general" (292). It was not desirable because of course it hooked into general conceptions of Indian reserves that directly defy the middle-class norm of well-manicured lawns and well-maintained homes in favour of rusting hulks on front lawns and dilapidated, overcrowded housing.

> *You're the designated driver for the night; there has been some heavy drinking and you're driving some of the revellers home.*
>
> *"Who was that guy that wouldn't leave me alone all night?" asks one of your passengers, who didn't appreciate the behaviour of another rather boisterous person in your party.*
>
> *"I think he's actually a chief of some First Nation up here," you reply.*
>
> *"Well he's just another drunken Indian to me." (September 2, 2008)*

The Ragged Edge of Civilization

In the discourse on hockey produced by CBC documentaries, biographies, autobiographies, and fiction, the Canadian wilderness and weather play an important role. Even those who are critical of institutionalized hockey, such as Robinson, often link the sport to an idealized view of Canada:

> Canadian winters are long and cold. Ice forms in most of the country by late October and stays well into spring, and there is a time for all Canadians in the darkest of winter when we are sure spring will never arrive. We either live winter out or perish, and if there is any communal way to help endure, even celebrate, the season, it is through the game of hockey. (Robinson 1998, 1)

And while *Globe and Mail* sports columnist Stephen Brunt's two recent works—the first on Bobby Orr (2006), the second on Wayne Gretzky (2009)—are by no means simple flag-waving, celebratory narratives, it seems that he can't help himself in linking the development of hockey genius to the land itself. In a passage retrospectively prophesizing the coming of the Great One, Brunt simultaneously reinforces two central hockey myths: humble origins, and the importance of space:

> He would be born to a decent, hard-working family, a hockey genius sprouted straight from the landscape, from the rocks and trees and ice and snow. That's what Canada did. (2009, 10)[15]

Such passages naturalize and nationalize the emergence of a talent who one day became the only international star known to hockey. This process of territorializing Gretzky as (at least at one time) a typical Canadian kid obfuscates the global nature of celebrity and capital (cf. Wong and Trumper 2002).

Another excellent recent example of the intersection of capital, nation, hockey, and space is the Molson Canadian advertisement that ran frequently during the 2010 Winter Olympic coverage on CTV. The commercial, drawing on a palette of sombre greys, frigid blues, and pale yellows, is a montage of scenes of young Canadians enjoying the outdoors. There are shots of men jumping into a lake, the announcer telling us: "There's a reason why we run off the dock instead of tippy-toe in; it's because that water is frozen six months a year." Cut to a lone skater flying across an enormous frozen surface, then a group of burly, bearded men dressed in

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[15] As Blake (2010: 20n5) states, "In the service of attacking hockey essentialism, academic critics often rob such statements of their context, or ignore the possibility of irony." While I am not blind to the potential for irony in such statements, the issue here, as in many analogous statements that pepper the hockey literature, is with irony itself: irony has a capacity to undermine a set of assumptions *while* it reproduces them.

plaid flannel, rushing full steam across a frozen alpine lake, jagged mountains rising from the shore: "And that frozen water brought on a sport we can call our own." We are told that Canadians have "more square feet of awesomeness per person than any other nation on earth" and that "we know we have the best back yard in the world, and we get out there every chance we get."

These narratives and visual cues construct Canada as a rugged space; however, rather than constructing a frontier space where hard work yields well-earned fruit, in this discourse the hinterland, the wilderness that we are told defines what it is to be Canadian, has but one purpose: recreation. This space has created the game that "we can call our own," and this space seemingly has nothing more to offer. And while, as I mentioned above regarding Stephen Brunt's comments on the origins of Wayne Gretzky, hard work maintains a role in the back-story of every hockey myth, the "rocks and trees and ice and snow" actually produce hockey players, rather than minerals and timber—or food and shelter. Nineteenth- and twentieth-century Canadian landscapes have been critically examined for their *emptiness*, a technique of constructing space that performed the excision of Aboriginal people from Canada, rendering a virgin space ripe for colonization (cf. Mackey 2002; Manning 2003). The landscapes of this newer narrative are in fact populated—by pleasure seekers. These pleasure seekers are also naturalized. In the Molson ad, they seem to have popped right out of the landscape, just as Stephen Brunt claims Gretzky did. To quote the tag line of the Molson ad, they are "made from Canada"—they are native to the place, and the place seems to have been

constructed precisely for their recreational pursuits. Such a construction of space speaks both to the overwhelmingly urban character of contemporary Canada, and the view that this urban population has of the wilderness. Forests are to be admired, not clear-cut; lakes are to be skated across, not used as tailings ponds. And the complex traditional relationship that Aboriginal peoples have to the land is, of course, totally effaced. At a minimum, this aspect carries forward from the prior narrative of the empty wilderness. What is more, this newer narrative is possible given that the wilderness is no longer a frontier that requires breaking in order to be absorbed into the empire. Rather, the hinterland is already broken; it remains simply as a surplus for the use of the already striated ribbon of land running along the U.S. border.

The hyperbole present in the Molson advertisement (water being frozen six months of the year, for example) is common to a standard myth of hockey's foundation. Even while the character of *hinterland* has mutated in recent literature and media, the made-from-Canada discourse that has become Molson's new slogan is anything but novel. The mythology that hockey sprung from the land itself has itself been reinforced by none other than Roland Barthes. In his script for Hubert Aquin's 1959 film *Le sport et les hommes* (*Of Sport and Men*), Barthes makes a marked departure from customary critique of such constructions. For him, hockey is the exception to the rule; it is a national sport that literally came from the "matter of the nation":

> Qu'est-ce qu'un sport national ? C'est un sport qui surgit de la matière même d'une nation, c'est-à-dire de son sol et de son climat. Jouer au hockey, c'est

> chaque fois redire que les hommes ont transformé l'hiver immobile, la terre durcie, la vie suspendue et que précisément de tout cela, ils on fait un sport allègre, vigoureux, passionné. (quoted in Blake 2010, 4-5)

This sentiment, that Canadians transformed winter and its attendant frozen earth and suspended life, persists in the national mythology, and ties in with a latent pride in the whitestream's pioneering past.

Narratives of Nostalgia

> If you want to light up the eyes of a Canadian of a certain age, be they a judge, doctor or blue-collar worker, ask: "Do you remember when Maurice Richard?" (Carrier 2003)

Gretzky came from the fecund soil of Canada itself; but he also came from "the kind of place where most Canadians really lived" – Brantford, Ontario (Brunt 2009, 1).[16] These kinds of narratives of nostalgia, of which Brunt's works – and so many hockey (auto)biographies[17] – are exemplars, play on collective memories of better days, of simpler times, and connect explicitly to the experience of the baby boom generation.

The Walrus recently ran a cover story whose narrative runs a similar course. David Macfarlane toured the new hockey arenas in the Sun Belt of the United States. His article laments the way the game has become nothing more than entertainment for the American consumer machine, and he offers up a good-sized serving of the nostalgia typical to this kind of hockey writing:

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[16] Downtown Brantford is now a deserted community, a victim of globalized labour markets and the bankruptcy of two main employers, White Farm Equipment and Massey-Ferguson (Terpstra 2010). The only thing that they seem to have left is Wayne Gretzky, who himself has become a global star and a proponent of the sale of NHL hockey to the American consumptive machine.

[17] Cf. Gaston, 2006; Fleury, 2009; Denault, 2009; Melançon, 2009.

> Driving through the pouring rain, through a continuum of shopping malls and hotel chains and restaurants anyone not starving would be wise to avoid, I am thinking about home, about a frozen driveway, and leather hockey gloves that did nothing to ward off the sub-zero cold, and copies of *Chatelaine* magazine shoved under hockey socks for shin pads. (Macfarlane and Adams 2010, 37)

Another example comes form Stephen Brunt, this time from his book on Bobby Orr:

> The kids played on weekends, they practised a couple of times a week, they were on the ice officially in the winter months maybe four days out of seven (plus pond hockey, plus road hockey . . .), but no one was fixated on "development," on identifying professional prospects, on isolating the very best and pushing them forward. There was none of the hothouse pseudo-science that would seduce young hockey players and especially their parents in the decades to come. for the kids then and there, damn the cliché, it was still a game. (Brunt 2006, 28)

The CBC and the NHL utilized nostalgia in their advertising campaign for the 2010 Stanley Cup Playoffs, using the tag line "History Will Be Made." The campaign (print, radio, and television) was structured around a series of famous moments of past NHL playoff seasons. The first television spot featured Bobby Orr's game-winning goal in the 1970 Stanley Cup finals, where he was tripped and flew through the air immediately after putting the puck in the net; the second showed some exceptional stick handling by Mario Lemieux as he tied the defence in knots and scored during the 1991 Stanley Cup finals. Even while the second goal belongs to a more recent time, the techniques used produce the impression that both events were in the more distant past. They began with a still of the players after they had scored the goal, and the video was played in reverse, developing a grainy texture and a sepia tint.

The narrative of nostalgia running through so much hockey literature and media works on the same register as the nostalgia/resentment/victimhood nexus

mobilized by Charles Adler in his radio program, as discussed in the preceding chapter. Nostalgia "always looks backwards in search of authentic origins and stable meanings" (Tannock 1995, 453). The idealization of the past is necessarily accompanied by a selective amnesia, one that ignores (or, perhaps more likely, rehabilitates) those policies and actions that many now consider to be unjust, such as overt misogyny and racism in the workplace, residential schools, and the like. However, this is not the aspect of nostalgia that I will focus on here. More importantly for this discussion, these narratives of nostalgia maintain the legitimacy of one kind of memory, and of one kind of subject—the white, hockey-playing male (though, interestingly enough, not necessarily anglophone)—through perpetually repeating the same clichéd memories of playing for pure pleasure, of using improvised equipment, of being there (i.e., being a spectator via radio or television) during a particularly momentous occasion (the 1972 Summit Series, Orr's famous goal, or Gretzky's trade to Los Angeles). They produce an idealized memory of a certain generation, specifically male baby-boomers. They are the ones who played until they couldn't feel their fingers in backyard rinks, they are the ones who watched the NHL's downfall through American expansion, and they witnessed Gretzky's betrayal of the country and its national sport.[18]

> *The sun is low in the sky even though it is already late in the morning. Your breath hangs in the air; sounds of crunching and scraping as you skate seem*

[18] These narratives also frequently include strong overtones of "father-son issues" (viz. Gretzky's father working him without respite, night after night in their backyard rink, the Tim Hortons commercial "Proud Fathers" detailed in the section below on nationalism, or the Don Cherry biopic written by his son). This trend in itself is worthy of further exploration, and also points to the inherently male nature of hockey story-telling.

> *amplified. Here you are, on the frozen lake, stick in hand, the first one down here. There is a singular sentiment rising in you, ineffable at first, but then you grasp it: this is what it means to be a man. (January 1, 2008)*

These narratives maintain (and pass down) a privileged and exclusive position relating to hockey, similar to the position taken by Theoren Fleury regarding the media detailed above. Thus, even while hockey is at once meant to be a totally inclusive *our game* (see "Nationalism and Multiculturalism," below), it also maintains an implicit boundary between those who can have authentic access to it through constant appeal to the deeds of white men removed from our contemporary experience by decades, and those who do not. *Our game* also means *not your game.*

The narrative of nostalgia moulds the creation of new memories, fitting our experiences into certain preexisting patterns; thus a friend who volunteered in the winter of 2010 to help maintain an outdoor ice rink in her neighbourhood told me that it both "feels like I belong to something" and "feels like a Tim Hortons commercial." In making this claim, my friend was not being dismissive of her experience. Tim Hortons commercials—many of which take the format of a short film—can be extremely powerful emotionally. My friend's reference locates her experience both in terms of thematic references (i.e., hockey's clichés) and affective ones (a lump in one's throat).

The linking of these experiences to a mediated ur-narrative, the production of memory via a formula that is explicitly connected by both its mediation and its filiation to a specifically white, male experience sets the memory of this experience as benchmark for endorsement of memories as Canadian, which therefore pass the

shibboleth of citizenship. It also sets up implicit boundaries for the absorption of nonofficial memories into Canada. For instance, even while more people play soccer in Canada than play any other sport (Piatkowski 2002), memories of freshly cut grass, of running in the rain, of a perfect header scoring a winning goal cannot access the legitimacy of hockey memories. They are illegitimate memories of a sport that is not Canadian. What *is* Canadian about soccer ends up being exactly what is meant to be Canadian about hockey (see "Nationalism and Multiculturalism"): that it can bring people from all backgrounds together.

4.6 Nationalism and Multiculturalism

Canadian nationalism is a beast that is difficult to tame; its properties and boundaries are argued over and over, ad nauseam. Although the "myth of diffidence" (Millard et al. 2002)—the idea that Canadians are a polite and deferential bunch—still maintains a hold (at least as a foil), expressions of Canadian nationalism[19] (such as those often heard during the 2010 Winter Olympics) have clearly taken on the bombastic character normally associated with our neighbours to the south. But while the form of Canadian nationalism may be nothing special, English Canadians continually assert their inclusiveness; as mentioned in the Introduction, diversity has become a matter of self-identity for the whitestream. This section sets out to trouble this inclusive self-conception. Here, I argue that hockey's

[19] While etymologically incorrect, when I refer to Canadian nationalism, I mean a support for the Canadian state, and exclude other nationalisms, whether compatible (Acadian nationalism) or not (Québec sovereigntism).

overwhelming whiteness and masculinity produce an embodied nationalism that is white and male. Furthermore, the mixing of this desire to be perceived of as inclusive, tolerant—*anything but* racist—with the white, male nature of hockey effects an absorption of difference, while maintaining a minimal distinction based on race (and as argued above, gender).

National Embodiment

Recently, a group of Italian neuroscientists extrapolated from experimental work that they had undertaken on macaques, to scientifically confirm the importance of what I term *sympathetic resonance* for human social interactions (Rizzolatti and Sinigaglia 2008; Iacoboni 2008). Their concept of "mirror neurons" allows for a scientific means of explaining the amazing feeling that we have when, for instance, we observe our favourite player on our favourite team going in for a breakaway and putting the puck away on the top shelf—or, alternatively, the way we shrink back when that same player receives a facewash from an opponent, or the despondence we feel when our favourite team suffers a loss. These Italian scientists hypothesize that the very basis of human sociability lies in our capacity to actually *experience* that which we see others experiencing, and they specify a certain set of neurons (the mirror neurons) that make this sympathetic resonance possible. Following this hypothesis, in watching hockey our brain is in fact reproducing the skating, puckwork, and finally the shot of the hockey player that we see on TV as if we were in fact going through the same actions. And of course this connection to the motor centres of our brain spills over into the production of affective states: for

instance, we feel the glory of victory and the despondence of defeat alongside the members of our favourite team (or, perhaps more importantly, with our children's teams). And this link is strengthened in cases where the sport that we are watching is one that we have experience playing ourselves (Sutherland-Shaw 2010; Uddin et al. 2007). It would seem that, as indicated by legendary goalie Jacques Plante's childhood reminiscences, sight isn't the only sense that can link us to the action:

> In the spring of 1944, when the Canadiens beat the Black Hawks for the Stanley Cup, I listened to those exciting Canadien names [on the radio]—Rocket Richard—Toe Blake—Elmer Lach—Butch Bouchard. When Bill Durnan made a big save in goal, I would try to "help" him by sticking out my leg or hand. (quoted in Denault 2009, 11)

So even when we are not physically playing a sport, we are putting ourselves in the game, possibly even when there is violence—such as an on-ice fight—that we may not consciously condone.[20]

Sheema Khan relays her experience of playing hockey in Montreal as a youngster. The way she recounts this story is telling of the importance of hockey and the nationally revered young men who play it in the NHL:

> I grew up playing street hockey, driveway hockey, and table hockey. I was both Danny Gallivan and Yvon Cournoyer, describing the play-by-play of an electrifying rush leading to a goal with seconds left to play. At the time there was no organized hockey for girls—only ringette. Later in high school I found a recreational league and laced up every week. In one game, I had a breakaway from the blue line. *I was Guy Lafleur*, ready to swoop in on the hapless goalie. (Khan 2009, 99-100)

Thus as a young *hijabi* girl in Montreal, Khan unself-consciously ends up embodying a white, male athlete in her daily recreational activities. This amounts to

[20] For a discussion of how a spectacle that does not accord with our proclaimed values may in fact be more powerful than one that does, see Iacoboni, 2006

more than viewing hockey players as role models for Canadian youth; hockey players literally embody the nation, and the nation embodies them. And those who we embody in watching and playing hockey have been, and for the most part continue to be, white and male (see "Narratives of Nostalgia," above).

The racial (and gendered) character of these embodiments cannot be underestimated. For instance, Varda Burstyn (1999: 206) discusses the possibility of racial subversion opened up by the amazing success of black athletes in the United States through the following example. During a lecture, bell hooks was deconstructing the image of Michael Jordan, critiquing the relationship between athleticism and capitalism (among other things). During her lecture, a white student commented that looking at images of black athletes on cereal boxes as a child was the first time that he wanted to be a black man. The comment forced hooks to revise her critical deconstruction, given the potential for subversion of racial hierarchies implicit in young white men embodying themselves as black.

But this is not the case with hockey,[21] the only real legitimate sport for young Canadian boys to idolize. As discussed earlier, not even francophones are to be held up as role models, let alone nonwhites. Subjects who are themselves racially constructed as lying outside the norm must perform their (sporting) identity through embodying white, male, anglophone hockey players. This is not a matter of lacking the properly racialized role models for nonwhite, nonmale Canadian youth; it is a matter of recognizing the importance that the white male body plays in

[21] The last North American professional sport to integrate black players was hockey; Willie O'Ree began playing for the Boston Bruins in 1958 (McGourty 2010).

constructing Canadian national culture. These are the bodies that we emulate as we swim within the current of the whitestream. Nonwhites reimagine their bodies as white, engage in further mythologizing professional hockey players as the nation's prized white flesh. They must seek to become that flesh as both spectators and players. Young boys and girls of all backgrounds must become Sidney Crosby.

"It's Their Game Too"

Saturday, January 30, 2010 was CBC's tenth annual "Hockey Day in Canada," where the national broadcaster dedicated virtually an entire day of material to the national sport. Hosted by Ron McLean (straight-man to Don Cherry), the day-long event was an exceptional illustration of hockey's abstract machinery. "Hockey Day in Canada" is officially titled "Tim Hortons Hockey Day in Canada"; the day included interviews with hockey greats, short journalistic pieces on what hockey means to Canadian communities, and segments linking hockey to Canadian military personnel fighting in Afghanistan.

One segment was dedicated to a group of wheelchair athletes (many of whom had very restricted movement) playing hockey in Stratford, Ontario. The segment showed the disabled athletes playing in the gym at Sunnyview Elementary School, and told the story of one athlete in particular, and how this opportunity meant so much to him. The journalist interviewed the player's family, including two of his able-bodied adolescent brothers, both of whom played hockey. The player's mother tearfully explained how important hockey was to all of her sons, to which her two able-bodied sons added that they fully supported their brother, and were always

excited to see him score a goal. Once the segment was complete, Ron McLean turned to the camera and earnestly proclaimed "It's their game too." And, just like that, disabled players were both absorbed into the nation and distinguished from it: they played the same game as we do, but the "we/they" language maintained a distinction.

Similar notions of extending hockey towards the margins of the whitestream crop up all over Canadian popular culture. In a recent Tim Hortons commercial titled "Proud Fathers," we see an elderly, ethnically Chinese man, Charlie, enter a hockey rink carrying a tray of Tim Hortons coffee. A gentle, lilting tune, its pentatonic melody evoking Chinese classical music, played in the background. "Based on a true story" appears in the top left corner of the screen, and we are instantly aware of a flashback: the colours bleed into sepia; a much younger Charlie approaches a group of children; he chides Jimmy for playing hockey all the time and not studying hard enough, and leads him back home. We are back in the hockey arena, and Charlie is approaching his grown sun, whose attention is fixed on the ice; Jimmy claps and exclaims "Thatta boy" before noticing the approach of his father. "Dad, what are you doing here?" he asks. "See Tommy. Double double," Charlie responds, handing his son a Tim Hortons coffee. Another flashback, with young Jimmy at the coffee table with his homework, hockey on the television. Charlie enters: "Jimmy-ah, you study, no hockey." The long-standing tension between father and son over hockey is established. But through another series of flashbacks (all involving Tim Hortons coffee) and interrogations by adult Jimmy, it becomes

evident that Charlie did support Jimmy's hockey, at least covertly—he secretly came to watch Jimmy's games (even though reality was all sepia and washed out, back then). The commercial ends with a father-son reconciliation. Jimmy says: "Thanks for coming, Dad." The final shot is of the two men's hands in profile, each holding a cup of Tim Hortons coffee, with tag line "Every cup tells a story."

In his prologue to Bill Gaston's *Midnight Hockey*, Will Ferguson describes the aftermath of a Leafs game in Toronto:

> The entire city had spilled out into the streets, whooping and cheering. Later, as Ian elbowed his way down Yonge Street he stopped. Looked around. There were men and women. Young and old. Kids in turbans. Guys in tailored suits. Paunchy oldtimers and noisy "*whoooooo!*" girls perched atop jock-drunk shoulders. Jamaican kids and Vietnamese, laughing, chanting, fingers pointed heavenward. It was Little Italy and Chinatown, new Canadians and old, all jumbled together as they celebrated . . . The Game. Our Game. That singular common denominator that crosses solitudes, that unites us as a nation. It was a beautiful moment. (Ferguson 2007, vii)[22]

All of these are beautiful moments. They have the capacity to bring a lump to our throats—something that Tim Hortons advertising agency is particularly good at—just as scenes of Terry Fox limping down a desolate highway, or Canadian peacekeepers handing out rations to starving children also do. These hockey-related pathos-machines all anchor their narratives to a Canadian national mythology of ever-increasing inclusiveness. "The Game. Our Game": we possess this sport, and *we* is universally inclusive of all Canadians, new and old, and of all ethnicities, genders and ages. This is also the overall narrative arc of CBC's "Hockey: A People's

[22] I would argue that this scene is more indicative of Toronto than of hockey—it is the civic spirit of this city that brings people together, not the sport of hockey (if any sport brings Torontonians together, it is soccer).

History," which—in between the official history of the rise of the NHL, the challenge by the WHA, the 1972 Summit Series, Bobby Orr, and Wayne Gretzky—includes intermittent segments on the ever-increasing inclusion of female (in particular), black, and Aboriginal *Canadians* into the great national sporting institution.

> *You're in the United States, where your partner has started a doctorate at a rather prestigious university, and has managed to get you visiting scholar status. Rather than hunker down and get to work on the thesis, you decide this is an opportunity to audit some classes with the distinguished faculty. In one class, "Black Political Thought," you want nothing more than to be accepted by the professor. Of course you feel the need to prove yourself to this crowd, coming from an unknown Canadian institution, and with brand-name education obviously valued by these people. But more importantly, you want this professor to like you, to taken an interest in you, to say hello to you in the hallway because he is black, because his positive response to you will guarantee that you are not racist.*[23]

This narrative both reflects and reinforces a certain flow within the whitestream in contemporary Canada: a desire to be perceived of as open and respectful, and definitely *not* expressing any sort of racism. A similar narrative is mobilized by *Sounds Like Canada*, as discussed in chapter 3. And this narrative is precisely that which denies the persistence of colonialism most overtly. It does not hide its ambition: to absorb all who were heretofore considered different or outside the whitestream. But this absorption requires a certain deterritorialization and reterritorialization (decoding/overcoding) of those who would express their difference. In the Tim Hortons "Proud Fathers" commercial, we are presented with a standard story of father-son alienation and the rapprochement that seems a pop-psychology cliché, and is another theme plentifully found in hockey literature (see

[23] See Richard Pryor's bit about white people in black neighbourhoods, chapter 5.

note 18). We are allowed to observe this emotionally charged moment, and it links to our desire to define ourselves as an open, welcoming society—and to characterize *our game* as a reflection of this openness. This is now a central narrative of the whitestream; it shows us that our institutions—hockey and Tim Hortons—are indeed universally accessible, and that immigrants come to adapt to them over time. And it is the perception of this accessibility (read: universality), of the openness of Canada to difference that intersects with the clichéd father-son reconciliation and puts the lump in our throat (and pours the coffee down it). But, of course, the openness to difference is cut off in this instance in two ways: the commercial relies on a shared understanding that people who look Chinese are different, and that this difference is slowly undermined by their integration into Canadian society. As I have been arguing throughout this chapter, hockey's historical definition of white masculinity persists. It is only through an absorption into this racialized, hypermasculine arena that Jimmy becomes Canadian. And even then, the commercial reproduces stereotypes of overbearing Asian families, reinforcing the whitestream's racial imagination.

> *Why don't you see any Chinese in the NHL?*
>
> *Because when they get into the corner, the open up a store. (June 23, 2008)*

4.7 Conclusion

What I have tried to show here in this overlapping, multifarious view of hockey, is that it produces a subjectivity and a normative complex that valorizes hypermasculine violence, and that puts the white (and, at least in English Canada, anglophone) male in a position of reverence to be emulated, reproducing racial and

gender hierarchies. Taken together, these aspects of hockey in Canada are an assemblage that runs in the same trajectory as historical and contemporary colonial, discursive, affective, and material techniques and practices. Gender, sexual preference, and race of the colonizer are further reproduced as the main current within Canada, the whitestream.

As I have been relating here, Canadian men are supposed to play hockey; masculinity in Canada is defined by the way this single sport is played. While I have never played in a league, I did play street hockey with friends and neighbours during my youth. However, the first time I skated onto the frozen surface of a lake in Northern BC near a family member's house, stick in hand, I was suddenly flooded with a feeling that I have rarely experienced—I felt like a "real man." All of a sudden I could identify with those hearty, bearded, plaid-clad men from the beer commercial as I rushed across the ice on my rusty pawnshop skates. The irony is that those with whom I would be playing later that night were mostly members of my sister's hockey team, and mostly women—and, for the most part, very aware of how things like masculinity and race work in Canada. I include this short anecdote here for two reasons: first, even those (such as myself) who attempt to maintain a critical distance from the hegemony of hockey's version of masculinity are susceptible to its allure. How could we not be, considering that we are nourished on a diet of images, sounds, and feelings that constantly reinforce this singular means of accessing manliness? Second, this story also undermines this masculinity—playing Canada's sport with a motley crew of social workers, school teachers,

painters, and municipal planners, all coached by the former chief of an Indian band, I may have finally gained access to this masculinity even while its content was being transformed by the circumstances.

CHAPTER 5:

HUMOUR

I have three main reasons for choosing to interrogate the relationship between humour and colonialism. First, humour is ubiquitous: everyone laughs, however infrequently. Second, I had an intuition regarding the micropolitical significance of humour in reproducing colonial processes, but also knew that humour had changed significantly in the years since, for instance, my parents were my age. Political correctness has defined the public realm for many years now, and it is not acceptable for racist, sexist, homophobic, or other kinds of disparagement humour to be used in public. When such humour is used in stand-up comedy, for instance, there are certain identifiable rules about its use, mostly relating to the identity of the comedian.

My third, and most significant, reason for choosing to investigate humour is more personal. I had read certain articles relating to humour claiming that any use of, for instance, race in humour perpetuated racism, and reproduced racial hierarchies (e.g. Howitt and Owusu-Bempah 2005). On the surface, this consensus in sociological and psychological literatures on disparagement humour (to be discussed below) is congruent with the arguments I have been making in this thesis; however, it does not accord with the way I felt about my own use and enjoyment of humour. My intuition was to disagree with these authors: how could all humour that uses race—or gender, or sexual preference, or disability—necessarily contribute to the reproduction of the hierarchies constitutive of colonialism? I pride myself on

my capacity to critically analyze colonial discourse, and, for the most part, on my progressive attitudes. In using racist humour in explicitly ironic and sarcastic ways, were my own actions themselves reproducing colonialism? Of course this kind of reasoning is the very target of this thesis, and its eruption is testament to the power of popular, reactionary resentment against the colonized that often takes the form of "it was so long ago, why do I get blamed for mistakes made by my ancestors?" – the kind of individualism that erases the structural effects of colonialism from the public conscience and consciousness. "But I'm so progressive and *careful*, I don't mean any harm, I'm just enjoying myself, *it's just a joke!*"

This chapter examines how a specific kind of humour (disparagement humour), mobilized in a specific place (in private), by a specific group (white, anglophone males) reinforces the social dominance of this group. I am attempting to answer a series of questions with this investigation: First, how is disparagement humour mobilized among white males of the multicultural generation (i.e., those who have grown up with multiculturalism), and how do they view this mobilization? Second, how does this mobilization reinforce colonial processes of absorption and distinction, and colonialism's attendant aspects – racial and gendered hierarchies, colonial conceptions of time – discussed in chapter 2? And third, does the use of disparagement humour, under any circumstance, necessarily reproduce these colonial hierarchies, or are there means of mobilizing it that work against their reproduction? In answering these questions, I interviewed ten white, male anglophones about their use of disparagement humour in their daily lives. I

begin this chapter with a discussion of the literature relating to disparagement humour, and contrast the consensus with Deleuze's concept of humour's potential for radical change. Following this is a section outlining the interview methodology. Then I discuss the main themes emergent from the interviews, focusing on the way in which the interview subjects characterized their own use of disparagement humour. Finally, I discuss these themes in terms of their potential to amplify colonial flows and processes in contemporary Canada.

A note on terminology: throughout this chapter, I refer to humour that uses any distinguishing social category as disparagement humour. I could have termed it *edgy humour*, but that is not a broad enough category. *Disparagement humour* may not be the best term, since it tends to make a value judgment on the humour; however, this is practically unavoidable, and the term is already in use in the psychology literature.

5.1 Disparagement Humour

In the prolific humour scholar Michael Billig's most comprehensive work on humour, *Laughter and Ridicule* (2005), he makes a distinction between two types of critical analysis of humour: the bossy and the crazy. The bossy critic dictates what is acceptable humour, i.e., what we are permitted to enjoy, while the crazy critic warns us against laughing *tout court*. The crazy critic calls into question humour's goodness. Billig (Billig 2005) thus formulates a critique of ideological positivism—that is, the trend to downplay the negative aspects of humour. He argues that ideological positivism is the dominant perspective taken on humour; through its

pervasiveness "[t]he cruelties of this social order are overlooked, as if there is an imperative to wish away negatives" (10). This accentuation of the positive promotes conformity to the social order, to those circumstances over which the individual is assumed to have no control, rather than facilitating a perspective through which the individual can focus on the negative in order to change it for the better. Humour itself has a disciplinary function, coercing individuals to conform, through fear of embarrassment (more on this later). But, as Billig himself maintains, crazy critics are a rarity; far more common are the bossy critics.

Contemporary research into disparagement humour, particularly popular in psychology, is invariably concerned with determining the negative social impacts of what Ford and Ferguson (2004, 2008) refer to as disparagement humour, that is, "humour that denigrates, belittles, or maligns an individual or social group" (Ford and Ferguson 2004, 79). This definition is rather broad; but Ford and Ferguson are in fact only interested in humour that maligns an individual, based on his or her social group (such as race or gender). Ford and Ferguson and their colleagues in psychology (Glick and Flake 1996; Ford et al. 2008; Angelone et al. 2005) who study disparagement humour deal principally with the individual. They proceed by determining the level of latent racism or sexism in each of their subjects by placing each individual on a series of scales (such as the External Motivation to Respond without Prejudice Scale, or the Internal Motivation to Respond without Prejudice Scale, Modern Racism Scale; (Ford et al. 2008)). Depending on the study, most of their subjects represent the traditionally dominant subject position of maleness and

whiteness. The important thing about this literature is that it finds that those people who the various scales have determined are racist are more likely to advertise their racism if they think that the environment permits it. The implication, of course, is that in engaging in disparagement humour (even if we are not deemed "really racist" — more on this in "Identity, Intent and Context," below) we actualize an environment hostile to those we disparage:

> When the recipient switches to a nonserious humour mindset to interpret disparagement humour, he or she tacitly consents to a shared definition of the social context as one in which the expression of prejudice need not be considered critically. (Ford and Ferguson 2004, 84)

Owusu-Bempah and Howitt (2005) epitomize Billig's "bossy critic." For them, all jokes that use race reproduce the centrality of race in society:

> Jokes are communicative acts which play a significant role in social exchanges — a medium through which society disseminates and generationally transmits its dominant attitudes towards outgroups. Racist jokes, therefore, act as propaganda in support of racist ideology. (49)

Importantly, furthermore, racist and ethnic jokes cannot be reduced to an individual's propensity for racial hatred; their employment and enjoyment is a characteristic of a racist society. Even in-jokes told by a group about their own circumstances are viewed by Owusu-Bempah and Howitt as reproducing racial hierarchies. Thus they categorically deny the potential for jokes that use race (or gender, or sexual preference) to have multiple meanings; if meanings other than the reproduction of race exist, then their value is overshadowed by the racist meaning of the joke. Also, the fact that the racist meaning is couched in terms of humour means that racists are able to communicate their views without being reprimanded by an

audience that follows the ostensibly antiracist mores of contemporary Euro-American societies.

One of the issues with the approaches discussed thus far is their definition of disparagement humour; the psychologists are very precise in what they *use* in their experiments; for example, two-line jokes that "require the participant to know various [in this case] female stereotypes"(Ford et al. 2008, 162). However, they are very broad in what they define as disparagement humour—as mentioned, "humour that denigrates, belittles, or maligns an individual or social group" (Ford and Ferguson 2004, 79). Owusu-Bempah and Howitt are even broader in what they consider racist humour: they say it is anything construed as humour that uses race or ethnicity. There are two separate problems with these approaches: the first lies with the definition of disparagement humour, and the second lies with a determined desire to eliminate the ambivalent, particularly in Owusu-Bempah and Howitt. First, the psychological approach maintains that the use of disparagement humour essentially primes targets who already hold derogatory views towards women or nonwhites for expression of these views in public. But the jokes they use are only a small subset of what their definition of disparagement humour could entail. For instance, in Ford et al (2008), examples of jokes used were:

> "How can you tell if a blonde's been using the computer? There's Wite-Out on the screen!" and "A man and a woman were stranded in an elevator and they knew they were gonna die. The woman turns to the man and says, 'Make me feel like a woman before I die.' So he takes off his clothes and says, 'Fold them!'" (162)

These jokes are undoubtedly disparaging towards women; they truck in derogatory stereotypes, and, as I argue in this research, they produce an environment in which those who hold sexist views feel secure in airing them.[1] This is an important conclusion, but relies on forms of jokes that, frankly, I am not interested in: social humour relies very little on this kind of scripted joke-telling, and far more on the situational humour of the moment. Likewise, humour in the media that we consume is mostly situational comedy, and popular stand-up routines, while scripted, consist largely of observational humour, not a series of individual jokes (though Larry the Cable Guy's routine does follow this format; his is more of a string of one-liners).

Owusu-Bempah and Howitt make a similar error in defining "popular humour" in the terms of scripted joke-telling. While all of their examples are of this kind of joke, they extrapolate their conclusions to social humour in general, including the enjoyment of, for instance, stand-up comedy that includes observational humour about specific ethnicities:

> Should we take the jokes made by Jewish people about Jewish life as a means of gaining insight into that community? There may be instances of this but we believe that the dangers of these are greater than any potential benefits. For example, just what do jokes made about Jewish mothers by Jewish comedians do to promote an appreciation of Jewish culture? (62)

In this example, they have confounded humour with progressive activism; they have also nearly completely ignored the importance that humour plays in

[1] In this case, the participants were asked to imagine that they were in charge of allocating funds to women's groups on-campus. Those already deemed sexist who were exposed to the disparaging humour prior to making the decision were more likely to cut funding for these groups; those who were already sexist but were not exposed to the humour were less likely.

transmission of culture (see Fagan 2005 for a concrete example of how First Nations humour transmits culture intergenerationally) while taking the whitestream perspective on the humour, and completely ignoring the perspective of the Jewish audience member. Whether jokes about Jewish mothers lead to an appreciation of Jewish culture is irrelevant to an audience of Jews with mothers, who are more than likely the target of this humour.

The categorical criticism of Owusu-Bempah and Howitt and (perhaps to a lesser extent) the psychological literature thus deny the existence of multiple meanings in humour. The same joke about Jewish mothers that provokes uproarious laughter from a Jewish audience may, in fact, fly over the head of a gentile audience. Both of these approaches seem to be equating disparagement humour with what Nilsen and Nilsen (2006) refer to as the "hate speech" humour that was common fifty years ago. They ignore the historical change that has occurred in humour within this time, and the issues that arise from the fact that most of the "ethnic humour" that we enjoy today is not being told by white males at office water coolers, but by members of diverse ethnic groups about themselves in front of microphones (or, in the case of *Little Mosque on the Prairie*, for instance, in the form of situational comedy), for general consumption.

Thus the psychological discourse on disparagement humour and Owusu-Bempah and Howitt mistakenly perceive humour as a univocal discourse. However, jokes and humour—like all discourse—is polysemic, and this fact is recognized by many humour scholars in the social sciences. While Lockyer and Pickering (2008)

maintain that there must be a means of discerning whether certain humour is acceptable or not, they recognize that not all humour that uses specific language must be determined to reinforce racial hierarchies:

> If there is a "right to offend," what remains crucial is whether the humour kicks socially up or down, whether comic aggression is directed "at those who are in positions of power and authority, or at those who are relatively powerless and subordinated." (812-813)

However, they too share the main concerns of Owusu-Bempah and Howitt. Disparagement humour is not innocent of the potential to reproduce racism, sexism, and homophobia simply because it can provoke laughter.

Weaver (2010) specifically discusses humour that "kicks up" at racism, in what he terms the *reverse discourse* of racist humour used by black American comics Richard Pryor and Chris Rock. A reverse discourse uses "identical signs" to a previous (racist) discourse, but "employs these signs for a reverse semantic effect" (32). In this case, black American comics use race and racism in their acts, including the word *nigger*, to turn racism on its head. Weaver claims that this technique is nothing new, however. Black minstrel entertainers in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries performed racist stereotypes— required in order to perform at all—then included subversive humour in their acts, often aimed directly at black audience members. This latter example divides the humour in two, aiming certain overtly racist aspects of the act at the white audience, and other antiracist or subversive aspects at the black audience. Here, evidently, there is clear intent; however, Weaver's central argument is that any use of race in humour always results in multiple interpretations: humour (as with all discourse) is polysemic, and

even in this supposedly black-and-white case, there must have been overlap in the interpretation of the jokes between the groups. Thus, while Owusu-Bempah and Howitt may be correct in claiming that all humour that uses race reproduces race, and therefore racism, it is also the case that humour using race has the capacity to overturn entrenched understandings of race.

Such a progressive calculus of reproduction and overturning of racist stereotyping is among the central aims of Howells' (2006) analysis of Sacha Baron Cohen's character, Ali G. However, even while Howells denies that his main concern in analyzing Baron Cohen's controversial character is to determine "whether or not people ought to find him funny" (171), his central question belies this claim: "This analysis will both describe and explain the Ali G phenomenon while ultimately trying to answer the pressing question: How does he get away with it?" (156). In answering the question, Howells explores Ali G's identity, and asks why the British and American public laugh at someone ostensibly lampooning black culture. *The Party*, for instance, in which Peter Sellers plays an Indian buffoon, is not amusing or acceptable to contemporary British audiences. The answer to Howells' question is that Ali G presents a "moving target" (165) of racial identification, thus allowing the polysemic nature of the humour to flourish.[2] The difficulty arises for the bossy critic when it is clear that even those who are the ostensible targets of Ali G's humour (whether whites, blacks, or Asians) seem to enjoy it equally. Thus

[2] Interestingly, in giving Ali G's character a more concrete backstory in the 2002 film *Ali G Indahouse* (where it is revealed he is a white, suburban poseur named Alistair Leslie Graham), something in the humour is lost.

Howells concludes that Ali G is catering to a desire to enjoy transgressive humour. He finishes his article with a rather incongruous optimism:

> If race is indeed the new sex, the fact that we are getting better at discussing it openly—and even allowing ourselves to have a sense of humour about it—does indeed suggest that there is hope yet that, like sex before it, we might just be able to break out from one of our most constraining social taboos. We needn't always be embarrassed to talk about race in the future. (171-2)

What may be a conflation of racial humour with an openness to talk about race was also expressed in interviews, to be discussed below.

The desire to transgress boundaries manifest in the popularity of the Ali G character is central to the Freudian theory of humour explained by Billig (2002). According to Freud, "Jokes, like dreams and slips of the tongue, bear the traces of repressed desires" (452). Thus, in engaging in humour, Freud holds that we are sharing urges, feelings, desires, and ideas that are not acceptable to society; we are rebelling. However, we constantly deceive ourselves about the reasons for laughing: we want to believe that we laugh because of the "joke-work," that is, the way the joke is told, or its use of incongruity. In fact our laughter is a symptom of our relishing the outlet of repressed desire. However, Billig is careful to note that humour is not always responsible for transgressing boundaries: "Humour, far from being principally rebellious, also fulfils a deeply conservative function" (454). Through the constant fear of embarrassment, the boundaries of acceptable behaviour are maintained: "the sound of laughter has an aggressive cackle that

permits momentary pleasure in unfeeling cruelty" (2002: 453). In one person's pleasure dwells another's discipline.[3]

Humour, like all communication, has the capacity to be interpreted in multiple ways. Of course, this presents a problem for both the condemnation of disparagement humour that is overtly racist or sexist *and* the celebration of subversive humour that uses race, gender, or other markers of distinction. This ambivalence is most evident in characters such as Archie Bunker or Alf Garnett, a character from a 1960s and 1970s British sitcom who Lockyer and Pickering (2008) claim inspired the Bunker character. Here we are invited to laugh *at* the surly, racist curmudgeon. However, it is clear that we are also meant to harbour a certain sympathy towards the character; many audience members likely laughed *with* Bunker rather than *at* him.[4] This characteristic of disparagement humour makes answering the question of exactly *how* disparagement humour reproduces colonialism in Canada very difficult, since humour has such a great potential for both upsetting and reproducing colonialism.

Here I think it will be fruitful to introduce Deleuze's conception of humour as a limit-case definition of humour. Of course, the issue with defining humour is that such a goal is, frankly, impossible to achieve. Baruchello (2002, 464) quotes Luigi Pirandello: "there are as many definitions of humour as characteristics that have been found, and all of them naturally have an element of truth, and yet none is the

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[3] Billig extends this argument in his 2005 book, *Laughter and Ridicule*.

[4] These were precisely the findings from a 1974 study cited by Ford and Ferguson (2004: 86).

true definition." Berger (1995) includes a list of forty-five humour techniques. It is very likely that more than forty-five exist and equally likely, of course, that of these some are not always humorous. However, the latter element in Pirandello's observation bears on this study: many theories of humour have important things to say.

Deleuze introduces his conception of humour[5] primarily in two places: his commentary on Sacher Masoch's *Venus in Furs* (Deleuze 1991) and in a chapter of *The Logic of Sense* (Deleuze 1990). In these works, Deleuze demonstrates the link between humour, masochist techniques, and the law:

> By scrupulously applying the law we are able to demonstrate its absurdity and provoke the very disorder that it is intended to prevent or to conjure. By observing the very letter of the law, we refrain from questioning its ultimate or primary character; we then behave as if the supreme sovereignty of the law conferred upon it the enjoyment of all those pleasures that it denies us; hence, by the closest adherence to it, and by zealously embracing it, we may hope to partake of its pleasures. (88)

Deleuze's conception of humour, therefore, shares much with conceptions that emphasize the subversive capacity of what Weaver terms "reverse discourse." Following the law or social norms to their absolute conclusions unmasks these norms as absurd, prompting a descent towards the "groundless abyss" (Deleuze 1990, 139), or "chaos" (Deleuze and Guattari 1994), of the uninterpretable. As Baruchello (2002) explains in his excellent analysis of Deleuzian humour:

> Humour reminds us, in Deleuze's view, that a "groundless abyss" subtends to our cognitive and existential constructions, an abyss whose oneness, specificity, constitutive difference, cannot be mastered by any of those conceptual, perceptual, or even sensorial representations. As previously

[5] And irony, which I will not discuss here.

> mentioned, in fact, intellectual and perceptual representation imply [*sic*] the submission of experience under a categorical structure of understanding. This works as a process of collocation of experience under cognitive umbrella-terms, which eliminate by definition the singular *in lieu* of the particular, i.e., an occurrence of the general.
>
> Paradoxes, puns, nonsense, provide us with a refreshing hint then, by showing the limits of the mechanism of classification proper to perceptual and conceptual understanding. They *break down* the homogenization brought about by representation. (Baruchello 2002, 457-458 emphasis in original)

The direction here should be familiar from the discussion of the Body without Organs in chapter 2. Here, humour becomes another technique of desubjectivation, through the performed demonstration of the absurdity of social structures and strictures. And this is precisely how disparagement humour may work towards the disruption of the very concepts and terms that it uses. Even while Owusu-Bempah and Howitt have it right in claiming that the employment of race in humour is evidence of a racist society, this employment may not ultimately serve to reproduce the racist society through provoking the experience of groundlessness and absurdity in those enjoying themselves through the humour. For of course the experience of the abyss is momentary. There is a moment when this line of flight or rupture from the shared conception of reality is reterritorialized, but then we return to our habitual means of perception and affectation. There is always the possibility we will reflect on what we have heard, and thus the politics is not in the humour, but is a potential effect of it:

> Emotions and sensations can often generate the bodily movement of laughter before thinking takes place. This separation between thought and emotion creates room for self-reflection and can upset preconceived notions. It is here the "dangerous" power of humour lies. (Hirch 2005, 107)

All of this is to say that, in certain cases, the use of what I have been referring to as disparagement humour does not necessarily entail only the calcification of boundaries between flows; it can also manage to subvert these boundaries. However, as I discuss below, the subversion and conservation functions of disparagement humour used by white male anglophones in multicultural Canada are ambiguous and difficult to come to grips with.

> *What do you call a Hindu with a medical degree?*
>
> *A doctor. (July 19, 2007)*

5.2 Methodology

I carried out an analysis of the use of disparagement humour by the multicultural generation. I did this through interviews with individuals whose putative identity could be described as constituting the core of the whitestream (white, male, anglophone) in Canada. The goal of the interviews was to explore the nature of disparagement humour as used by members of this core group who had gone through a multicultural education. Thus, I targeted participants of roughly my own generation—that is, those born between 1975 and 1985. As explained in chapter 2, I took these dates as significant because they guaranteed that least five years of institutional education under the federal *Multiculturalism Act* of 1988. While this Act does not have direct bearing on education (which is a provincial mandate), both the Act and the general policy, in place since the early 1970s, have had significant impact on the direction that education takes in each of Canada's provinces (Joshee and Johnson 2005). Thus although multicultural education policies have been in

force in most provinces since the 1970s, I take the date of 1988 as significant in making multiculturalism law in Canada.

Due to the potentially sensitive nature of the interview topic, I used a snowball sampling procedure. I started with acquaintances, and worked outward from there, to include participants' own social networks. In using this sampling procedure, I took the *presence* of disparagement humour as axiomatic; the fact that I have no white male acquaintances who do *not* engage in disparagement humour may not be a scientific basis for this axiom, but I hold it as meaningful nonetheless.

I asked respondents questions about their self-identity, to ensure that my sample targeted only white, male anglophones. However, I did not ask respondents whether they self-identified as being gay or straight, or any other questions relating to sexuality. I felt that such questions could have been considered too intrusive for respondents, even though I would have liked to specifically target heterosexual interview subjects, given that the whitestream's implicit masculinity produces nonheterosexuality as marginal. However, it became clear through the interviews, all of which mentioned sexuality at least once, that all interview participants were at least publicly heterosexual.

The respondents came from a variety of backgrounds, and had a variety of levels of education. Two were PhD students in political science, two were bartenders (one of whom was pursuing a bachelor's degree part-time), one was a real estate agent, one a lawyer, one an energies trader, one worked designing and manufacturing tombstones, one was a metalworker who had recently gone back to

school, and one had recently finished a bachelor's degree in education and was seeking employment. I will not link these career paths to individual respondents (except where absolutely necessary). I believe that this would inadvertently lead the reader to conclusions regarding the content of specific respondent's statements based on his education and career. Suffice it to say that, particularly given the sample size, no such conclusions can be made, and that such conclusions are not in the interest of this thesis.

The interviews were centred on a series of four or five short video recordings of comedic broadcasts that utilized disparagement humour to a greater or lesser extent. Nearly all of the clips were of Canadian comics, though I did not limit myself to Canadian humour. Unlike the other two sites of interrogation in this thesis, the consumption of humour by Canadians is, like the consumption of many forms of media, dominated by the U.S. cultural industry. However, it is also the case that many Canadians have found work as writers and actors within this industry. Therefore I relaxed my tight (and perhaps contentious) focus on Canadian media in this chapter.

I began each interview with the same clip, containing what I considered to be a rather mild use of disparagement humour, a lampooning of Danny Williams, the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, on *This Hour Has 22 Minutes*. I set the remainder of the clips to gradually use terms and situations that utilized exclusion in more brazen ways. The interviews themselves were broken into two parts. In the first, after playing each recording, I asked about respondents' reactions: whether

they found the bit funny, and if so, could they point to aspects of the bit that they found the most humorous; if they could articulate what about the bit made it humorous; if there were other feelings or memories that they associated with the bit; if they found the bit to be offensive; and if so, why.

The second part focused on the use of humour, and particularly disparagement humour, in the respondents' daily lives. Here I asked how they would characterize the humour in which they personally participated (such as with friends and family, or at work), telling them that they could reference the recordings if they wished. Answers to these questions often veered away from the use of humour in daily life to the interview subjects' relations with nonwhite, nonheterosexual, or otherwise marginalized friends. From here I went on with specific questions about their use of racist, sexist, homophobic, or other disparagement humour, what their opinions were about the use of this humour, and how they determined what was acceptable to laugh at and what was not. Although most interviews touched on more than one disparagement category, it should be noted that the interviews focused mainly on the mobilization of race in humour. I also asked questions about the use of disparagement humour in their families, and if they believed that their use of such humour differed from their parents' or grandparents' generations. Finally I asked whether they could remember any disparagement humour from their childhood.

Analysis of the interviews entailed transcribing and manually coding them. My coding method focused on both specific words and general themes that recurred over the ten interviews. The analysis is discussed in more detail in the next section.

The Clips

Here I will briefly elaborate on the specific clips that I used during the interviews.[6] Although difficult to transmit via the written word, I think the reader will nevertheless get an idea of what exactly I mean by *disparagement humour.* All of the clips were of comedy routines performed by representatives of groups habitually marked off from the whitestream. Three bits were by Indo-Canadian comics, one was by a Newfoundlander, and one by a Jewish woman. In addition, many of the clips were about the comic's own ethnic group.

As mentioned, the first clip of each interview was an impersonation of Danny Williams from CBC's long-running news parody program, *This Hour has 22 Minutes.* It begins with an overdubbed voice declaring "a message from the Premier of Newfoundland and Labrador, the honourable Danny Williams." We see Mark Critch, impersonating a very agitated Danny Williams, sitting behind a desk. He begins to describe how the Prime Minister, Stephen Harper, has not been honouring the Atlantic Accord on oil and gas royalty sharing. After calling Harper's actions "disgusting, disgraceful, and shameful," Critch/Williams tells us: "What little oil money Newfoundland and Labrador does receive has been funnelled into a program to develop a nuclear weapon. . . . Yes, Newfoundland has the bomb." In

[6] Audio versions of the clips are appended to the thesis on an audio CD.

the remainder of the clip Critch/Williams continues to detail this program, then proclaims:

> I did not want it to come to this. I tried to meet with Stephen Harper in Gander. We even went to an out-of-the way restaurant there, and when I expressed my belief, which I felt at the time was accurate, that A&W stood for Amburgers and Woot Beer, he laughed at me. I wonder if Mr. Harper will still be laughing when even those lucky enough to survive the initial blast will be temporarily or permanently blinded. Hey, Stephen! How many Newfies does it take to destroy life as we know it? One. Me. Ha. Ha. Ha.

Many respondents did not find this opening clip overly humorous, expressing their dislike for the program itself.

The second clip was often a YouTube video of Shaun Majumder doing stand-up at the Rivoli in Toronto. His bit attempted to gauge whether or not the word *nigger*—which he makes clear is a very "bad word"—maintains its unacceptability when used out of context. In order to determine whether the word is still offensive, he invites a black male member of the audience up on stage with him. He then reads off a series of short phrases that use the word "nigger" out of context, such as:

> NASA suffered a great loss in the 1980s with the explosion of the spacenigger challenger. Seven astronauts were killed in the nigger disaster, but nigger flights resumed later that year with the launch of the spacenigger Atlantis.

The consensus, after several similar phrases peppered with the word, was that it remained offensive even when used out of its original context.

A third clip often included in the interviews was of the American comic Sarah Silverman being interviewed by Jay Leno. The famously controversial comedian begins her bit by saying, "When I do jokes that have racial topics, I'm hoping that people, from it, will glean simply that, deep down we're all the same." She goes on to discuss the similarities between "elderly Jewish people" and "young black men."

The list includes mutual appreciation of "very white shoes" and track suits. After a few more such mundane observations, she claims that both groups are "crazy about their grandchildren," then, with marked concern in her gestures, she says "all their friends are dying" to which the crowd responds with moans, and Silverman immediately says to the audience "I know, I feel the same way!" One observation near the end of her bit that I personally found particularly clever was "they say 'yo' a lot . . . well, of course, Jews say it right to left."

The fourth clip was a short section of Russell Peters' stand-up routine from his DVD, "Outsourced." The entire routine is a send-up of a number of cultures. During it, there are various cuts away to people in the crowd of a number of ethnicities, all laughing at Peters' jokes, demonstrating the wide appeal of his humour. He begins this particular clip by explaining that Mandarin uses the word "nèi ge" (which Peters pronounces as "nee-gah") as a "filler word" analogous to "uh" or "um" in English. Of course his delivery of this explanation is amusing itself, but the core of the bit comes from his recounting of a supposedly true experience with the word in a Beijing Kentucky Fried Chicken:

> I'm at KFC in Beijing, I'm standing in line, and standing in line in front of me is a black woman. I did not put her there. She was there, I swear you cannot make this shit up. . . . The only black woman in China and she found the chicken, that's all I'm saying alright, that's all I'm saying. I don't make the stereotypes, I just see them. So I'm in line with this black woman standing in front of me, and she's a Nigerian woman. I know she's Nigerian because she's having a tough time with the menu and she keeps looking at me. [In an exaggerated accent] "I don't know what to order." And I'm like [in the same accent] "Well look at the menu." Right? . . . I said you should try the popcorn !ken [imitating tongue-clicking sound]. So we're standing in line, and this little Chinese kid comes in with his mom, and he runs to the counter, and he's looking at the menu trying to figure out what he wants to eat. Now his mom

> is standing over here [behind Peters in line] and the Nigerian woman's standing right here [between the child and his mother] and he's trying to tell his mom what he wants to eat, but he's not really sure, so all you see happening is [high pitched imitation of Mandarin syllables] nee-ga [child looks towards mother]. [This goes on for a few seconds, the implication being that the child is referring to the Nigerian woman as nee-ga]. And the Nigerian woman looks at me like I'm supposed to beat the shit out of this kid, right? [In exaggerated accent] "Why don't you hit him?" I'm like "Here's a straw, get him yourself" [miming a blow-gun, Peters slaps his neck and stumbles]

The final clip comes from Sugar Sammy's routine broadcast on CTV's *Comedy Now*. His routine, like Peters', riffs on a number of cultures and stereotypes. The clip begins with a discussion of how Arabs are badly treated, particularly in the United States:

> Especially down south, like Texas, Alabama, Mississippi, like they'll mess you up if you're Arab. You don't even have to be Arab, you could just be like a Greek dude with a nice tan and they'll mess you up down there. They got messed up names for Arabs down there too. You know what they call Arabs down there? They call them "sand niggers." Yeah. Not to push the cause any further, but if you're going to be racist, at least put some work into it. Right? I went to visit some relatives down south with my parents, a couple of white dudes thought we were Arabs and they pull up in their pickup trucks and they're like [in exaggerated Southern accent] "Hey! Sand Niggers!" My dad looks at me and he's like [in Indian accent] "Are they talking to us?" And you know how passive Indian people are, right? He's like [in Indian accent] "OK! OK, thank you! Snow cracker!" The white dudes got all scared, like "Snow Cracker? Let's get the fuck out of here Bubba." Remember, in the States it was bad, remember after 9/11 they started shooting the Sikhs, cause, to the naked white eye, they look like Osama, right? Sikhs got on TV the next day and they're like [in Indian accent] "OK, OK, just to clarify, we are not them, and they are not us, so please stop shooting!" You can't even explain that to white dudes in the states, they'll shoot you before you're done. Right? It got to the point where they'd pull up to Sikhs and be like "Hey! Are you Arab?" [in exaggerated Mexican accent] "No man, I Latino man, I Latino. I don't work, I don't have my green card, I Latino." Right, that's bad when you gotta pretend to be Latino right? Any Latinos here? Are you Latino? You are Latino, I saw you laughing, thanks for coming man, you made it off the couch, it's cool.

As is clear, these bits all use ethnic and racial stereotypes. My analysis of them is found in the context of commentary by interview subjects, in the next section.

5.3 Disparagement Humour in the Whitestream

A number of common themes emerged from the interviews, even while responses to the videos, and attitudes about the use of disparagement humour, varied. In the following section I discuss a few interrelated themes prevalent in the interviews: the reflexivity of the respondents, the importance of identity in humour, the context of humour and the intent of the speaker, the use of shock humour, the impulse to "laugh along," and the capacity for humour to maintain open public discourse regarding social categories such as race. In this section, I present the respondents' views with as little commentary as possible, quoting from interviews extensively. In the next section, I analyze these trends in terms of the persistence of colonialism. Respondents and any individuals named by them, other than public personalities, have been given pseudonyms.

Reflexivity

Here I would like to emphasize that all respondents had given thought to issues related to race, multiculturalism, and equality in Canada, both in terms of humour and in broader social and political contexts. Respondents' awareness of political and social norms provided a backdrop for the interviews. Their responses thus generally reinforced the view that social hierarchies based on categories such as race, sex, class, gender, and sexual preference were unacceptable. The respondents did not believe that any one of these categories was inherently superior to any other. All interviewees acknowledged that, to a greater or lesser extent, they used humour in their daily lives that relied in some way on ethnic, racial, cultural, sexual, and

other differences. However, all participants were highly conscious of how they used such humour, making distinctions between their public and private use. Ron made this clear in discussing his use of terms targeting gay people:

> No, no, just by doing that and they turned out to be gay, I would feel really bad, where, and that's why, if I'm in an argument with somebody and they're a visible minority, I'm not going to pick on that . . . 'cause I don't want them to feel bad about themselves, or I don't want them to think that I actually believe that, because I don't.

This reflexivity, evident in each of the interviews, indicated a very strong norm against the public disparagement of an individual based on distinguishing factors, including race, gender, sexual preference, or disability. But, as my own experiences—confirmed by undertaking this project—have led me to believe, disparagement humour is very common among white, anglophone males in private. Henry was the only respondent who initially denied using any kind of disparagement humour himself, even though he would laugh at humour that used distinguishing categories:

> I would say that it responds directly from upbringing for me, um, and you know from my parents instilling values in me, you know, social values, whatever, um that racism is unacceptable, and so anytime you know I come across either a comedic racial situation or whatever you know automatically I . . . don't want to say defences, that's not quite the word I'm looking for, um, I guess my little courtroom inside my head is kind of debating over whether or not this is acceptable for me to find amusing. Um, yeah, it's just I think it's any racial humour is funnelled to this kind of um not censor, but uh you know, it's funnelled to a part of my brain I guess that's . . . like you said the pit of your stomach, that that decides whether or not this is acceptable material to find funny and if it comes out on the wrong end of that then I won't find it funny, I'll find it offensive, and if it comes out on the right side of it, it's fair game and it's strictly back to the material, and that being said, there's a lot of grey areas there too, so it's, that's the difficult part where it is kind of an in-between, where I'm unable to decide is this something that I shouldn't, you know that should be setting alarm bells off and should be

> making me go "this is not good" or you know, it's not always clear, or is it something that's totally fine, and if I'm battling over that then you know, you're probably going to get the nervous laughter out of me. . . . Yeah, it's almost like uh I kinda find this funny, but I think maybe I should be feeling guilty for finding this funny. And it's something that you've got to decide basically instantly when you're hearing something, so I think you know if your mind's trying to reserve judgment on it that's when the nervous laugh comes out because you're still debating in your head whether or not this is acceptable. And so that's where, you know, you're not fully committed to the laugh because you may you know a minute down the road go "oh, that was actually quite bad, I should not have been laughing at that" . . . it's not a conscious thought, it's definitely you know it just happens in me and I have a sense of, well like I said, sometimes there's grey areas where it's like there's, you know, I'm reserving judgement, but um but when it is black and white, so to speak [laughing] it's very much uh a decision that's made without a directed thought.

Commenting on the Sarah Silverman bit, specifically where she claims that in both elderly Jewish communities and young black male communities "all their friends are dying" Lenny claimed that the joke was "not something that I would want to laugh at." Certain respondents were more cognizant of the ambivalence of humour. Zach brought up the potentially problematic use of edgy humour in his discussion of the possible change in the use of disparagement humour between generations:

> Yeah, I mean Archie Bunker[7] was basically . . . well he was a bigot too, but they didn't exactly portray him as a person of wisdom and integrity. So in that way yes, but on the other hand I think there's a lot of American people who watched that show and might identify with his character, and say yeah, he's like a good ol' boy, kind of. And in that case they were trying to, I don't know, if that's the way you're looking at it then basically they were saying "he's that good ol' boy with a heart of gold" like, he was kind of racist, but you were like "aw shucks" you can kind of forgive him because he wasn't all that bad.

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[7] Interestingly enough, Archie Bunker seems to be the most common reference-point for the problematic nature of edgy humour, often referenced in the literature, and by more than one respondent.

This quote brings out the problematic nature of using disparagement humour; as Zach claims, even though Archie Bunker was not portrayed as "a person of wisdom and integrity," it is likely that many people enjoyed the character for his positions—that is, they laughed *with* the character, rather than taking enjoyment from the character qua buffoon, that is, laughing *at* him. Of course in the same interview, Zach makes an important distinction between the humour on the Redneck Comedy Tour[8] and the humour used by comics such as Russell Peters, David Cross, and Sarah Silverman. He claims that the use of disparagement categories by comedians on the Redneck Comedy Tour works to overtly reinforce categories such as racism and sexism while the other, "edgy," comics' usage of the same categories works, through irony and other techniques, to break down discriminatory practices.

Identity

The identity of the comic is very important for performed humour (i.e., the videos played during the interviews, and other examples mentioned by respondents) that crosses social boundaries relating to race, gender, and sexual preference. The comic's identity was often the most important factor in determining whether his or her breaking of social norms was acceptable as humour or deemed to be "real" racism or sexism. For instance, three of the videos used during the interviews were of Canadian comics of Indian descent (Russell Peters, Sugar

[8] A tour of comedians, including Larry the Cable Guy, who self-identify as rednecks. Both Zach and Mike brought Larry the Cable Guy up as examples of comics who use "real" racism to get their laughs.

Sammy, and Shawn Majumder). All respondents agreed that Sugar Sammy's use of Indian accents and stereotypes was unproblematic, and most agreed that Russell Peters' use of non-Indian stereotypes and accents (Nigerian and Chinese) was, if problematic or offensive at all, far less offensive than if a white comic had used the same stereotypes and accents. This is highlighted in comments made by Mike. After watching a clip of Russell Peters, Mike justified Peters' use of accents in the bit:

> Mike: "[Y]eah, it's funny, and he's good at the accents."
>
> Interviewer: "What's with the accents? Why is that funny?"
>
> Mike: "Like half his humour's about the accents, right?"
>
> Interviewer: "So why is that funny?"
>
> Mike: "He's skilled at it, right, he provides a recognizable caricature, and it's not, in his case, they're not mean. Like the uh, the what is it, Mickey Rooney in *Breakfast at Tiffany's*, a mean absolutely ignorant caricature, is not funny, whereas something that is recognizable and clearly, like, enjoying being this cosmopolitan and going and eating chicken in China and having that experience it's . . . it's . . . ah it's, you know, it's funnier. . . . And the fact that he's not white authorizes it, so . . . "

Mike goes on to elaborate the difference between Mickey Rooney's performance in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and Peters' use of stereotypes and accents:

> The context does matter. That's not a cheap cop-out, that's not to say, 'cause you know, he's not white and he's from Toronto he gets to say that and Mickey Rooney doesn't, the context really matters. 'Cause he has a whole different set of cultural knowledge than Mickey Rooney, and he's trying to achieve a different comic effect, the mere presence of the buck teeth and the bad accent is supposed to be funny in that movie whereas this has the funny premise, which is pretty funny, or should be funny for anyone, it doesn't rely on, it relies on some knowledge of race, but not participating in, you know, the actually invoking those feelings you know . . . Well OK, this guy lives in a city where he has to deal with "many and varied types of humans." And you know, if his experience is like mine, you know he's probably not actually a racist, he's not joining gangs, he's not, uh, in any acute way discriminating against people, he's not participating, he's a stand-up comic, he's not, you

> know, making hiring decisions, he's not [I laugh], you know structural racism, so that makes it OK. Mickey Rooney in, you know, Hollywood from the 1930s till now, you know, deeply, deeply racist culture and designed to exclude in an angry, mean way.

Mike qualified racist behaviour as "joining gangs" and participating in discriminatory hiring. He differentiated between the malicious intent of Rooney's yellowface performance on the one hand, and on the other the humorous anecdote related to us by Peters, whose credentials both as a member of a minority and a denizen of the multicultural city of Toronto meant that his humour, though relying on stereotypes of race and culture for its comic value, could not be deemed bigoted.

Nick, a respondent who had performed stand-up comedy in the past, and thus had many interesting and nuanced things to say about comedy in general, noted that it is standard practice for comics who fall outside the white, male, heterosexual norm, or are disabled or obese, to call attention to what are, most often, self-evident characteristics of their identity:

> Do you know Louie Anderson? He's an old standup comedian. . . . He's like a big fat guy, and he used to have this line about interviews with him, like, he does a lot of fat jokes is 'cause if I come out and don't do fat jokes, the audience starts going "do you think he knows he's fat?" Right? And he actually had to address it because it actually hurt his ability to make them laugh if he didn't talk about it because it was like it was weirdly like they would think about it, and that's sort of something I think comics and especially visible minorities, especially ones who aren't usually considered to be funny or like comedians. By the way it's the same thing with women, women comics always have to talk about being women, and I've talked to a lot of female comics in my time, and it's fucking miserable for them because like as soon as they come out there's this assumption that "oh, well women aren't funny" or it's something that's not funny about them and so I'm fairly certain that it would be the same with Indian comics or Arab comics that come out and immediately people are like "wait, are they funny? Do they tell jokes? I don't know if they tell jokes." And so the audience is off par and it's so tough to make an audience laugh that like anything that's going to get in

> the way of that has to be dealt with in some way and so I think part of it is just something again, if you're an Indian guy and you just come out and start telling jokes about like airplane food or whatever, the audience is going to be like "does he know he's Indian? Is he aware of that?" and so you kind of have to, that has to be the first set of material that you deal with just to make people feel at ease, or feel like they understand what's going on, like here's an Indian guy telling jokes.

Context and Intent

The previous excerpt also brings in another important aspect, namely, how the respondents determined whether the use of stereotypes in humour could be accepted as humour: the intent of the speaker. The perception of a statement could easily change from a joke to a nonhumorous statement of superiority, based on the intent of the speaker. The intent of a speaker also went much deeper than the immediate joke or statement: most respondents claimed to be able to discern someone's underlying beliefs; they thought that those who made disparagement statements with malicious intent believed in the superiority of their own subject position vis-à-vis the object of the statement.[9] All respondents thus discriminated between a statement that they would find acceptable as humour, and statements which would label their speaker a bigot.

Boundaries between the mobilizing of disparagement categories that remained ironic or sarcastic, and such mobilization that was perceived as sincere, were important to all respondents. These boundaries were determined through a combination of factors. As mentioned above, in performed humour, the identity of

[9] Note that this is a critical step in the psychological scholarship on disparagement humour: In order to determine whether disparagement humour reproduces negative stereotypes or not, psychologists must measure a participant's "level" of racism, which is something which the respondents here intuitively did in relation to their friends.

the comic was of primary importance. In daily interactions, however, the most important means of determining this boundary was the context of the situation in which the humour was being used. As long as people in a group were known and trusted, and deemed to not be "real racists"—that is, their use of disparagement humour did not indicate their true feelings about the humour's ostensible target—most respondents found it acceptable to engage in disparagement humour. If there were people present who were unknown to the group, or were nonwhite, nonheterosexual males, respondents deemed the use of disparagement humour generally unacceptable. However, once a certain level of comfort with the newcomer or nonwhite, nonheterosexual male was gained, respondents were more likely to engage in humour using stereotypes. Importantly, this humour was never viewed by the respondents as reflecting anything about their true beliefs: they often juxtaposed their own use of stereotypes and excluded categories with such usage by what they termed "real racists" or "rednecks." Additionally, when mentioning friends belonging to identities or backgrounds different from their own, respondents highlighted the fact of this difference with humour.

The views on where exactly the boundaries lay, however, differed considerably among the interviewees. For Henry, any statement that involved derogatory terms, particularly those most taboo, would be deemed inappropriate, and therefore not humorous; all other respondents, however, would use racial and other jokes with their minority friends.

Henry expressed his discomfort with the use of *nigger* by Shawn Majumder in one of the videos during the interview:

> Like I said, I'm uncomfortable with the word, so when I hear it I'm not really, I think I naturally just get my back up, as opposed to, you know, actually listening to you know the potential of the humour. . . . If it's a black person who's saying it I'm far more comfortable with it, which, you know, doesn't *really* make a whole lot of sense to me, 'cause I feel like, I don't know, maybe they're not even appreciating the full extent of the slight, the slur.

Nick, who displayed an exceptional understanding of the workings of humour and jokes, discussed his use of humour that ostensibly targeted his minority friends:

> There's an important difference there in terms of privacy and publicity I think, insofar as there are definitely jokes I would tell to friends of mine, like close friends of mine, and both Jewish and black friends of mine, that I wouldn't say in public. Because there's an element of, this is an obvious standard thing to say, but there are things that I will say to my Jewish friends like as a joke about them being Jewish because they know I'm not anti-Semitic, they know it's a joke and they know I'm saying it because it's shocking in the same way that I would tell a sex joke or tell a joke like that and I wouldn't tell it in public because people don't know that I'm not anti-Semitic and there's no way for them to know, I don't know, when I make a joke about Josh liking money because he's Jewish . . . and I can get away with that because A, they know I'm not anti-Semitic, B, we all know Josh doesn't exactly like money, C, we know that Josh doesn't exactly have much of an attachment to his Jewishness, there's all these things that we all know and therefore I can get the humour of the shockingness without having the content be an issue, or being able to trust that people will know that I'm just doing it for the form and there's no investment in the content for me. Whereas if I were to do those things in public, there's no way of divorcing the form from the content, like the form is the content, and that would be a different sort of like, and then it becomes much more complicated.

Nick claimed that his use of these jokes was an example of shock humour, and that their form corresponded to humour utilizing taboo subject matter, such as sex, bodily functions, or race (further discussed below, in "Shock Humour").

Every respondent who mentioned having nonwhite friends affirmed that they used racial humour with them. Mike claimed that

> . . . any friend I have who is of identifiable anything you know it'll end up being or humour will end up being broad cultural stereotypes making fun of each other for it. I have a friend in Ottawa who's black, or half black, and recently converted to Islam, and we'll make jokes about her flying airplanes into buildings and you know her community going nuts and you know ridiculous things, you know, she, you know calls me whitey, I'm her white friend she's my black friend.
>
> I had a friend named Mohammed Zahir, he's Bangladeshi [and] he calls himself, what does he say, "I'm a durka terrorist, I'm a towelhead, I'm a uh sand nigger," all those broad tropes of you know people that aren't black but aren't white and how Americans try to deal with that with all sorts of horrible, horrible epithets. . . . So yeah, I truck in horrible racist humour all the time.

Ron discussed using racist humour with a black coworker, and underscored the importance of context and boundaries when using racial humour with nonwhite acquaintances:

> Like I worked with a guy who was probably 40, black guy, Hank . . . I can't remember what I said . . . oh he was slacking off and I said "well I guess it's genetic," just kind of joking around with him, this was, it was the first stab at, uh, seeing where the boundary was.

Ron gave another example of using disparagement humour with nonwhite friends, demonstrating the importance of social context, boundaries to humour, and perceived intent in the use of disparagement humour. Ron has a childhood friend, Dan, who is of mixed race and whose nickname growing up was an obscure racial slur. Note the importance of the intent for Ron in his use of disparagement humour in his dealings with Dan:

> Ron: But here's the interesting thing, Dan shaves his head. Because Dan's bald, you don't make fun of Dan for being bald, Dan doesn't like that, that

> bugs Dan, and you don't want to bug him, you don't want to like hurt his feelings.
>
> Interviewer: What about someone else calling him [his nickname], or using other racial slurs?
>
> Ron: We were playing hockey and somebody called Dan something derogatory, nigger, whatever, something, and one of the guys who I consider to be racist levelled the guy, like blindsided him, like you don't call, you know, afterwards in the parking lot the joke was "you don't call my boy that, that's my boy!" [in Southern U.S. accent]

Here Ron mentioned another of his friends who he considered to be racist. Respondents often made mention of people they knew who they considered to be "real" racists, homophobes, or misogynists. Many used examples of these people as foils for their own use of disparagement humour. Ron gave an example of this:

> Exclusionary humour,[10] exactly, that's not racist humour, this is white supremacists who stand around, you know how we told dead baby jokes, they'd tell dead nigger jokes, they think it's hilarious, and I mean it was borderline bad taste with babies, but it wasn't like "hey, I hate this group of people," it was just, like, it was just absurd, it borders on absurdity, and whereas I mean if I was standing around people who were legitimate white supremacists, and they were telling, you know, like talking about, like, a natural disaster, New Orleans, Hurricane Katrina, I mean I guarantee there were people who thought that was hilarious, you know "good, just less niggers," I mean I would be offended at somebody who would say it seriously. I mean if you say it in jest mocking white supremacists I mean maybe a little bit too soon, but, I mean you get a pass.

Tom said something similar. Here he also explicitly links the issue of boundaries to the intention of the speaker:

> And you know, and I kind of, same with the racist thing, there's being funny when you know you're not serious and then really saying it so it's almost so it looks like that's what you believe, and so that's why you think it's funny. And I think your own perception of your joke tells what you really, you know is this just a joke or do you think this is funny because you think all Latinos

[10] This was the term that I used during the interviews. Later, I replaced it with *disparagement humour*.

are lazy and that's why you think this is funny. . . . Like I've come across, you know, racists where their jokes are more along the lines of to make fun of uh of the actual race and, you know, again, how it's, again the ridiculous word comes up, it's ridiculous what's funny but they're actually making fun of it because they think it's stupid or whatnot.

> *Eating at an Ethiopian restaurant with friends, you break into an English accent and begin contriving a civilizational hierarchy based on use of utensils. "Obviously" you expound, "those peoples who have not developed some sort of tool use with which to consume their foodstuffs – what we shall term the "forkless peoples" – are the least civilized. Further along the scale, we have certain Asian peoples who have managed to pick up sticks to keep their fingers more or less clean. And, of course, the peoples of Europe, known the world over for their excellent manners and grace, sit at the pinnacle of civilization, having a multitude of specialized tools, each dedicated to the enjoyment of a particular dish." (July 29, 2010)*

Laughing Along

Only one respondent admitted to having some racist feelings, qualifying them as based on cultural characteristics.[11] However, even though respondents were highly aware of the social norm against discrimination, it became clear that the majority of interviewees stopped short of actually expressing disapproval of discriminatory statements in their daily lives. In fact, many admitted that even when they deemed the intent of the speaker to be malicious, and the speaker therefore to be a "real racist," they nevertheless found themselves laughing. Barry was the most consistent in admitting that the willingness of the crowd to laugh at something that he deemed inappropriate was a factor in whether he himself laughed or not:

> I don't really find racist humour that funny in general, so, I don't know, if people are making racist jokes I might laugh just to, you know, whatever, alright I'll throw a chuckle here and there, but I don't know, I don't really find it offensive but I don't really find it funny either, so I don't know.

[11] I.e., Asian people are bad drivers because they had no experience driving before immigrating to Canada. See Heron's comments at the end of "Racial Hierarchies" in chapter 2.

And again, later in the interview:

> A lot of racial humour is simple and basic and just not like, OK, maybe its worth chuckling at, but it's just more like, OK, I'm chuckling because I'm supposed to be laughing.

Eric recounted being in a situation at work where a client made an exceedingly racist comment about Chinese people over a speakerphone while a coworker of Chinese descent was in the room. Both he and his coworker found themselves laughing; Eric characterized this laughter as "almost a defence mechanism," underlining his discomfort with the context in which the comments were made.

There were some exceptions to this propensity to laugh even in situations deemed inappropriate, such as the following claim made by Nick:

> It's like, "what am I endorsing by laughing?" maybe. Like when one of my friends who is not racist tells a racist joke for the shock value, I'm happy to laugh because I know I'm not endorsing racism, whereas . . . when I have the weird racist cab driver who tells a racist joke, I don't want to laugh because I don't want to endorse that.

However, the majority of respondents were less concerned with whether their actions endorsed discriminatory behaviour. Zach claimed "Even if someone really is racist, it's not like I personally feel like 'oh fuck, I'd better do something about this' or I better write a letter to you know my MP." Stan gave an example of a friend who would make racist comments in situations that Stan deemed inappropriate; that is, with people that he didn't know, for instance:

> I [said to myself], dude, you don't even know who this person is, they could have a black or native girlfriend, boyfriend, husband, mom, dad, like you don't know and there's just things you don't say to people you don't know.

Despite the content of his friend's statements ("he used to say the most racist things I've ever heard in my life"), Stan "didn't want him to get judged by other people,

'cause . . . in the context he was using it in, I found no offence, or there was no hatred behind it, you know what I mean, like underlying hatred." Ron admitted to having friends that he deemed to be "really racist"; however, this didn't affect his friendship with them ("because they're good guys"). Nor did he feel the need to admonish them when they made discriminatory comments or jokes.

Eric mentioned that in some circumstances, he found himself unable to laugh along with a friend's racial joke. In the following example, this was directly related to the presence of "girls," who were viewed by Eric as less likely to view these statements as humorous:

> Interviewer: So you mentioned your friend making racial jokes with girls around, that also changes the dynamic it seems.
>
> Eric: Yeah, it did. Well it's also when you have someone there who isn't necessarily in your inner circle and maybe doesn't understand or doesn't understand how serious the person's being, like that definitely made it awkward, right? Like, some random girl that he met that night, and he's all of a sudden dropping racial stuff, it changed me from maybe I may or may not have laughed at it, I definitely was not going to laugh at it in that situation just because it was all of a sudden awkward.

Here, Eric withdrew his laughter to distance himself from his friend, and perhaps to demonstrate to the "girls" that he did not appreciate his friend's attempt at humour.

Only two respondents claimed that they had attempted to dissuade people from the use of taboo language in their humour. Interestingly, they were also the only interviewees to relate stories about being the brunt of jokes, one for his Jewish heritage (although he is now a self-professed Christian) and the other for a wandering eye. However, the reactions of these respondents to humour or comments that crossed boundaries were generally mild. For instance, Lenny used

the phrase "whoa, easy guys" a number of times in characterizing his response to his friends' use of the term *nigger* in the context of a joke or when they went too far in teasing him about his Jewish heritage. Tom related having stood up for himself in instances where people making fun of his disability had gone too far. And although he expressed disapproval of what he called real disparagement humour, terming it *offsides*, it was unclear whether he had actually confronted anyone on their use of any offsides statements.

Whitestream Humour

The one obvious lacuna in the interviews was the dearth of discussion on jokes targeting white, straight males. Although I did not include any clips of such humour, I did ask questions relating to its use in the daily life of participants. Not only did most respondents not use humour about their own group in their daily lives, but most seemed caught off guard by the question. Stan admitted to making fun of himself: "I have red hair, so I get made fun of all the time, and you know what, it doesn't bother me anymore . . . I think it's just funny that you can laugh at yourself and laugh kind of at the way people have portrayed you." And, as already mentioned, Lenny and Tom made mention of limits imposed on the way others laughed at *them*; however, humour targeting the whitestream was nearly totally absent. However, Stan did admit "making fun of . . . uneducated white people":

> For the simple fact that . . . when you do some of the things that they do. Like I was watching a video, I was at work one day, my buddy, his friends were rednecks, like, as redneck as they come. They got all lit up, and they were driving, they videotaped themselves driving in their quad, he tried driving his quad up the side of a shed, and the quad fell back on him, squished his head between the quad, and gave him a concussion. It's like, what the, 'cause

> he wasn't even wearing a helmet and he was drunk too, I was like what the fuck did you think was going to happen, like you're an idiot, but I laughed at him cause he's such an idiot. Like that's how stupid a lot of rednecks are. I don't know, rednecks are, like don't you ever go on YouTube and like Google, I don't know, I was googling some videos, I googled like 4x4 offroading and stuff like that, and those Americans love that shit, and they're the most white trash people you can see in your entire life, like fat white Americans, missing teeth, wearing mullets and NASCAR hats, it's like, I don't know, the combination makes me laugh like hell.

Lenny also made a very brief comment about white stereotypes: "I've never been remotely offended by a white man stereotype. Maybe it's because, I don't know, we're on top?" This sentiment of the safety of humour at the expense of white people given white dominance was common enough. However, whatever examples respondents were able to bring up were not in fact targeting white people in general, but, as Stan termed them, rednecks. For instance, referencing the Sugar Sammy bit, Zach discussed the capacity for what he termed *edgy* humour to target white people, and the reasons why he enjoyed laughing at such jokes:

> It's almost like he's reversing the racism, sometimes. . . . It's like, they're turning the racism on the other person. Like, they're making the white people look like idiots. So that was kind of funny, especially since, uh, I'm a white male. So that kind of comedy's not really going to hurt me . . . right? Because, we're in the position of power, what have you.

He went on to explain that there are white comedians who truck in disparagement humour, but that they cater mostly to uneducated Americans from the South:

> But there are definitely . . . white comedians that are racist and do get away with it, like I can think of Larry the Cable Guy, he's a fucking bigot, and like people, he fucking sells out like arenas. [And] like, you look at his audience, it's not like a comedy club in Toronto or New York, you're not seeing an audience full of like mixed race. . . . He plays like the Midwest, he plays like the southern states . . . so his audience is basically just like . . . almost exclusively white people. So it's not the same as you know if he was a white comic of intelligence that used racism in his routine, something like David Cross or Sarah Silverman, where they're basically you know, always terming

> it as like edgy humour, that's what they're calling it these days . . . where basically it's everyone knows its fucking a white person, probably, you know, upper middle class, like postsecondary education, like they have writers on staff that [are] intelligent people, and they're, I've heard lots of times David Cross be panned in the same way that Larry the Cable Guy is panned, but really if you examine the humour a bit closer he's basically doing the same thing that black people are doing to white people when they're talking about humour, but he's almost acting as a bigoted person, and showing how stupid they are, but like from his, from a white person's perspective.

This distinction between *edgy* and *redneck* humour mirrors the distinctions that respondents made between their own use of disparagement humour and the use of such humour by friends or acquaintances, discussed above, whom they viewed as "real racists."

Social Value of Humour

When asked whether humour that used racial, gendered, or other distinguishing categories was inherently racist, sexist, or misogynist, all respondents answered in the negative. Some argued that, given the importance of social categories such as race, their inclusion in humour was not only inevitable, but essential for humour's capacity to foster public discussion. After viewing Shaun Majumder's *nigger* bit, Zach commented on the social importance of disparagement humour, arguing that in order to use taboo terms such as *nigger* the comic must be extremely funny:

> I felt something like, like, you know when you hear someone speak and you're kind of embarrassed for them 'cause they're fucking terrible at whatever they're doing, in a public arena. It's not that I was feeling that for him, I was worried that if this routine wasn't funny, that if he wasn't doing like, if you're going to use that word, you'd better be fucking funny, you better be "niggerfaggot" funny,[12] you know what I mean? . . . It better be that

[12] A reference to a comedy sketch in which (to simplify considerably) a spelling bee participant is asked by a black judge to spell the word *niggerfaggot*; the participant is extremely

> funny if you're going to use *nigger*, and I was worried that if it wasn't going to be funny he was just going to be an ass for using the word for no reason. Like I said, it's provocative . . . so it can at least get you to think about it in an analytical way. It has some value to it.

Stan echoed Zach's comments:

> I like the fact that they bring it up for discussion, 'cause that's basically what you have to do nowadays, you have to talk about this, and figure out if . . . everyone's going to stop using it, or how it's going to work, but you need to figure out something. So I like the way it brings it in a public forum.

Zach also argued in favour of keeping an open mind regarding the content of the comedy when taboo terms are used:

> Like, those people who hear the word and are just immediately shut off like there's nothing else valuable to be said after that, those people aren't really thinking about, you know, well, things in society if they have one way of thinking about stuff like that.

As mentioned, certain respondents did take offence at Majumder's use of the N-word corresponding to the objects of Zach's disdain. One respondent who was offended by Majumder's bit was Henry. However, he did not agree that any use of race in humour was necessarily reproducing racism:

> I would disagree with that 'cause I think avoiding the issue altogether is probably worse, if you can shed light on it . . . not that stand-up comedy is the maybe the best place to do it, um, but it's actually not a bad place to shed light on the idiocy of racism if you can do it properly. And I think that that's a great feat if someone can accomplish that, if someone can, through comedy, can say "Look at how *ridiculous* this is." I mean that's what any comedian does, whether it's Seinfeld with his observational humour or whatever, it's pointing out ridiculous things in our lives and you know if someone's showing how ridiculous racism is that's just another form, whereas if they're being racist that's a completely different thing.

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reticent, but once pressed, spells the word. The judge immediately jumps to his feet and screams, "I heard what you said!" See Derrik Comedy, 2006.

Henry went on to specify that he found comedy that resonated with his own opinions to be the most amusing for him.

Shock Humour

Some respondents claimed that they would use disparagement humour in certain circumstances in order to break taboos, and therefore provoke shocked responses from those listening. As already mentioned, Nick claimed that his use of Jewish stereotypes when joking with a Jewish friend was an instance of shock humour. Zach demonstrated both an understanding of boundaries, as well as a willingness to cross them for shock value. In this example, Zach made racist jokes in order to provoke laugher from someone he deemed to be a "real racist," thus shocking his wife:

> I can't remember exactly what I said, but [my wife] and I have a mutual friend who really is, I think she, well, I don't know it's tough to say, but I think she's definitely got some feelings against Aboriginal people, which is pretty common for a lot of people I think in Manitoba, for sure in Winnipeg, but anyway, so, and I know [my wife] is very defensive when people use slurs against Aboriginals and things like that, and so if we get around these people, this couple, and especially this girl, I try to throw out a comment or two that will get a laugh out of her, but [that] aggravates [my wife], just for my own amusement.

Mike also discussed his use of shock humour in teasing his girlfriend about her own self-identification:

> The impulse to call things gay comes from, uh, uh, my girlfriend who called herself queer, and I'd constantly refer to things as gay, like really vehemently in front of her, to get a rise out of her. She'd be really seriously describing something bad that happened to her, and I'd be like wow, that's really gay. She didn't like that and we're not together anymore [laughter].

5.4 Discussion of the Interview Trends

Having given an indication of the general trends that emerged from the interviews, I will now set out to answer the three related questions I introduced at the beginning of this chapter:

1. How do white, anglophone males who have grown up with antidiscrimination norms (i.e., with multicultural education and other important political developments, including the rise of feminism and the official abandonment of Aboriginal assimilation policies) use disparagement humour in their daily lives?
2. How does their use of this humour reproduce colonialism through whitestream subjectivity?
3. Can disparagement humour be used as a technique for overcoming aspects of colonialism?

The first question has been substantially answered through the discussion of interview trends. Generally, this humour is used only in private and in very specific contexts. The second and third questions, focusing on the reproduction of colonialism and techniques that push it to its limits, are more difficult to answer, particularly since it seems quite clear that the respondents did not, by and large, view their use of disparagement humour as problematic. The majority were of the opinion that in using this humour, they were not participating in racism, sexism or homophobia; nor were they just joking—the most reflexive of respondents echoed my initial intuition regarding the use of such humour, that is, that it in fact worked

against the reproduction of colonialism. This section will explore these complex issues in reference to the interview trends discussed above.

Identity, Intent, and Context

In performed humour, the perceived identity of the comic was an important aspect of the humour for many respondents. Watching Indo-Canadians make jokes about their own ethnicity, or even other ethnicities, seemed to authorize the humour.

Here I would like to discuss Mike's assertion that drawing a resemblance between Mickey Rooney's yellowface performance in *Breakfast at Tiffany's* and Russell Peters' mimicking the clicking of certain African languages and miming a blowgun when referring to a Nigerian woman, was disingenuous. His reasoning extended from a perception of Peters' personal experiences and views. Peters is a very well-known Canadian comedian, and Mike knew that he had grown up in Toronto, and thus had experiences with "many and varied types of humans." In Mike's view, this fact endorsed the humour (to use Nick's term), allowing him to laugh at something that, had it been performed in a different context by a different actor, he would not have allowed himself to laugh at.

This issue of identity, which we could also characterize as an issue of authenticity, is important in all kinds of performance. It is no longer acceptable to audiences that Aboriginal people be portrayed by white actors (Diamond 2009), for instance. However, whether the roles available to them are substantially different from the roles that were written for whites playing Aboriginal people is an open

question. The implications of this for the Rooney/Peters distinction is that, in many cases, the whitestream audience may be enjoying Peters' lampooning of his own culture, something he is well known for, as well as of other cultures, for the same reasons that audiences enjoyed Rooney's performance. Thus it is possible that the public norm against white performers making racist jokes[13] has opened a space for nonwhite performers to fill. If we follow Freud here, we could argue that nonwhites are now breaking the taboos against discrimination *for* the whitestream itself, unleashing Billig's aggressive cackle at both the content of the humour, and the medium of delivery, that is, the comic himself.[14] The Spike Lee movie *Bamboozled* (2000) demonstrates this possibility very well. In it, a black television producer, under pressure from network executives, creates a modern-day minstrel show. However, rather than have white actors dress in blackface, his actors are all black (still in blackface), and play a variety of archetypal black characters—the minstrels, of course, as well as a Mammy character, and a savage dressed in leopard skins. The point of the satire is that black people are still performing stereotypes for white audiences.

Furthermore, since most respondents admitted to engaging in disparagement humour in *private*, and in particular when only white males were present, it would seem that the desire to laugh *at* disparagement humour is always present. It is only the medium through which it is expressed that changes. In private, white males can

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[13] There seems to be no such norm against performers of any stripe targeting women.

[14] Zach brought up an interesting theory about the performance of stand-up comedy: namely, that comedians are so full of self-loathing that their motivation for performance is to be laughed *at*.

afford to breach social taboos without their intentions being misconstrued, and in so doing they reinforce their own white-maleness—they retreat to a comfortable space where individuals are *like themselves*, and they reproduce this likeness through their retreat. However, they also work to absorb their non-white friends[15] through what they perceive as good-natured use of disparaging statements, such as Nick's use of the miserly Jew stereotype in reference to, and in the company of, his Jewish friend Josh. Of course such absorption must also distinguish—absorption of Josh into the discourse was performed precisely through his difference.

The point made by Nick, concerning the importance for comics who fall outside the white, male, heterosexual norm to immediately draw attention to the obvious fact of their difference, is consonant here. This aspect of a marginalized comic's material performatively reinforces the centrality of whiteness, maleness, and hypermasculinity as the core flow in the whitestream, and the markers of identity through which the whitestream is defined; absorption into it is limited.

Mike attributes certain intentions and contexts to Russell Peters; all respondents made similar attributions regarding their friends and acquaintances, making judgments as to whether their humour came from a place of hatred or from somewhere else (such as a sarcastic or ironic intent to lampoon disparagement humour or the disparagers themselves). By extension, respondents did not characterize their own use of disparagement humour as coming from a place of hatred, that is, as having malicious intent.

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[15] Though, interestingly enough, not their female friends/wives/girlfriends; see the quotes from Zach and Mike at the end of "Shock Humour," above.

In their research on the role of insulting humour in the construction of groups, Terrion and Ashforth (2002) noted that while there were wide variations in the reasons that participants gave for laughing at a given joke, they all believed that their particular rationale was shared by the other members of the group. Thus, each individual laugher planted himself in the mind of all other laughers, imagining there to be a single motivation fuelling each individual's enjoyment. This has ramifications for the attribution of intent to others, as well as how one imagines perceptions others have of oneself. What seemed a very common-sense capacity for respondents—picking out "real racists," for instance, among their friends and acquaintances—becomes instead a very difficult proposition. The "real racist's" intent might not be that attributed by the respondent—in fact, they might not be "really" racist at all.

The labelling of others as "real racists" while disavowing the potential for one's own words and actions to be determined as reproducing racial hierarchies demonstrates the importance that the whitestream places on constructing its own identity as progressive and antidiscriminatory. For example, all of the respondents had friends who they deemed to be "really racist," but respondents did not deem *themselves* "really racist" in using disparagement humour. This observation, combined with Terrion and Ashforth's research, made me wonder whether, in a group engaging in disparagement humour, each would deem the other to be "really racist." That is, would the attribution of racism be different for each individual, thereby undermining the respondent's claims about others being "really" racist so as

to escape from "real" racism themselves? Such an eventuality would mean that the very capacity to judge another as "really" racist in such a situation becomes impossible.

And, of course, the Archie Bunker issue is very relevant here as well. Even if Peters' inspiration and intent is postrace, and his humour simply observational of human difference, the basis for the laughter of members of a crowd is ambiguous. That respondents most often gave the would-be humorist a "sympathy laugh" (Barry's term) *even if the respondent deemed the humour to be genuinely hateful,* produces the conditions under which the psychological literature concludes that a "real racist" will become more comfortable in expressing and acting on their racism (or sexism, or homophobia) (see Ford and Ferguson 2004; Ferguson and Ford 2008; Ford et al. 2008). The fact of humour's ambivalence means that even those with progressive intentions who laugh along with their friends effectively reproduce colonialism in their laughter. They allow those whom they deem "real racists" to feel comfortable; these "real racists" ostensibly come to believe that their audience is laughing for the same reasons that they themselves find the particular joke or situation humorous. Thus the intersection between intent and context undermines the authority of what is effectively an individualist account of racism emergent from the interviews (and the psychological literature). The psychological literature misses a crucial point: the actions of their subjects who do not score high on the "Modern Racism Scale" (or whatever other device they use) may still allow for the comfort of those who do

score high on a racism measurement. Social processes such as racism are irreducible to the intent or perspective of individual actors.

At one point, Mike seemed to attempt a merging between this individualist perspective and one that takes social hierarchies and structures into account. Again, in reference to Russell Peters, Mike claimed that he was not joining gangs or participating in hiring decisions. These facts about Peters, combined with Mike's opinions about Peters' upbringing, absolved Peters' commentary and endorsed it as humorous rather than offensive, from Mike's perspective. But the fact that Peters was not making hiring decisions could be given as a *consequence* of structural racism within Canada—perhaps Peters was not making hiring decisions because of discrimination. That is, perhaps he does not have access to the upper echelons of management because of the colour of his skin. But that does not seem to be Mike's main point. Rather, it seems that Mike was reiterating the age-old justification for humour that an audience might otherwise find offensive: it's only a joke. But this justification could also be given for Rooney's performance, making identity and context difficult determinants of whether humour is "really racist" or not.

Thus respondents reinforced the popular conception of racism as an individual attribute, in a variety of ways. Peters' humour—or, more specifically, respondents' enjoyment of it—could not be construed as reproducing racist discourse, because of Peters' own identity and context. However, when in the company of their white, male friends, this justification did not hold. Thus, other justifications need to be given: they are not "really racist" because they have

nonwhite friends, for instance. As mentioned above, Nick commented that he was unlikely to laugh at jokes made by a "racist cab driver"[16] because he was afraid to endorse disparagement humour in a context where the racist or progressive intentions of the would-be humorist cannot be gauged. Respondents could deny that their actions reproduced racism, because they were unwilling to give a sympathy laugh to strangers. However, for the most part they were willing to humour their friends whom they had deemed to be "really racist," something which arguably has more profound significance in the social realm than the snubbing of a stranger who is providing a service to you.

There is the possibility that the private use of disparagement humour with nonwhite friends may not reproduce racist distinctions, but may simply be a technique of dealing with the social fact of racism in a nonserious way. In his study of racism among urban British youth, Hewitt (1986) notes that racism is "able to intervene in friendships not only as a set of linked ideas, practices and symbolic forms but as a fact about society, which overshadows adolescent interracial friendships as it overshadows all black/white social interaction" (236). The youth in his study often resorted to using racist epithets in interactions with friends of a different race:

> This practice . . . seems to enact the experience of contradiction and attempts to consume it in a dramatic inversion which finally drains all possible meaning from the language of racial hostility, robbing even the play abuse vocabularies of their imbalance. It turns racism into a kind of effigy, to be

[16] That Nick made his public racist into a cab driver is interesting, partly because in my experience, most cab drivers in Canada's cities are not white.

> burned up in an interactive ritual which seeks to acknowledge and deal with its undeniable presence whilst acting out the negation of its effects. (238)

In Deleuze's language, the youth in Hewitt's study pushed the institutional norm to its absurd limit, revelling in the process through which racist norms become meaningless, playing in the space between rigid segmentarity and the groundless abyss. It seems that this was the significance for my interview respondents' own use of disparagement humour with friends whose identities fell outside the whitestream's core.

However, as with all uses of humour, ambivalence rules. Ron, for example, consistently described his hometown as overwhelmingly uniform in its whiteness. In this markedly white environment, it seems clear that, in his comments regarding his friend Dan—who he, his friends, and neighbours all referred to by a racial slur—the boundaries between rendering racist language meaningless and delighting in discursive violence against the only black kid on the block are porous at best.

Whitestream Humour

As mentioned, humour that targeted the whitestream (i.e., the identity and social mores held by the respondents themselves) was rarely discussed in the interviews. The closest that respondents came to admitting to laughing at white people was in fact laughter that served to distinguish them from "rednecks" or uneducated whites (often associated with Americans). Zach's commentary on the humour of edgy comics underlined this: we laugh at their caricature of an ignorant, racist, misogynist person, not at the racism or misogyny itself. The respondents did not characterize their friends whom they deemed to be "real racists" as rednecks;

they used this latter term to distinguish certain white people from the whitestream, based on class and education, reinforcing the whitestream's middle-class ethos. Some respondents claimed that they did not have a problem laughing at themselves in particular, or at white people in general, because of the dominant position of white people in Canada. However, they could not bring up any examples of such humour—while so much ethnic humour delivered by nonwhite comedians targeted their own ethnicity and/or other nonwhite ethnicities.

Examples of comic routines targeting whites include Richard Pryor's routine from his well-known film *Richard Pryor Live in Concert 1979*, or, more recently, certain of Dave Chappelle's bits, where he performs in whiteface on *Chappelle Show*. Pryor's bits are classics of observational humour. In one, he mimics the differences between the way white and black Americans walk, with the white gait being stiff, nearly robotic, and the black gait taking on an exaggerated fluidity. To bring out a potential reason for the dearth of humour targeting whites in the quotidian whitestream experience, I would like to discuss another of his bits and my own reaction to it.

In undertaking preliminary research for this chapter, I immersed myself in disparagement humour, and in particular racial humour. Richard Pryor's comedy was obviously canonical, and so I watched some of his routines, including the above-mentioned film. In one bit he describes the difference between white people in their own neighbourhoods, and their behaviour when they find themselves in a black neighbourhood. In a white neighbourhood, white people walk the streets in

silence, making no contact with other passersby; as with Pryor's imitation of white ways of walking, here white people are portrayed as stiff. He then imitates the way white people act once in a black neighbourhood: his eyes light up, he grins ear to ear, and says, "Hi, nice to meet you! Have you met my wife Nancy?" This bit was true to my own experience—both living in Baltimore (what Cornel West terms one of the East Coast's "chocolate cities") and socializing with First Nations people through work and family—but I didn't find myself laughing. Rather, I found myself feeling uncomfortable at the truth of my own exaggerated friendliness towards nonwhites in public, something that obviously pointed to both a fear of being perceived as racist, and my own attempt to overcome the discomfort that I felt in certain of these circumstances.

Paul Mooney's recent book on race and comedy in the United States (2009) explains how in the early 1970s he would gauge a white audience's reaction to his humour, and eventually began to determine his success by the number of white audience members who walked out of his act:

> I start to study white audiences. I see their reactions. I get my first walkouts. A lot of white people remind me of scared rabbits. When the wolf comes out, they run. They twitch their little pink noses and haul ass out of there.
>
> When I imitate middle-class white speech, I see a flicker of unease cross the faces of the white people in the audience. Then, when I go into ghetto riff, the smiles return. They're fine as long as I am making fun of the same kind of people they make fun of, chinks and spics and niggers. But as soon as I start talking about them, I can clear a room. (115)

Obviously contemporary Canada is not the United States of forty years ago; however, I think that Mooney's observations may explain the dearth of whitestream humour in the interviews. Despite claiming that they felt comfortable laughing at

humour targeting whites, the lack of examples of such humour may point to precisely the opposite fact—namely, that the respondents, like myself, have a hard time laughing at humour that targets their own racism. Furthermore, Mooney's claim that (most) white audience members were comfortable so long as he was mocking "chinks and spics and niggers" resonates with my observations above, regarding the appeal of disparagement humour used by nonwhite comics.

This reticence to laugh at humour targeting whites may in fact point to the fragility of the whitestream distinctions that are foundational of racial hierarchies in contemporary Canada. If Mooney's, Pryor's, and Chappelle's humour demonstrates the absurdity of institutional structures that reinforce the dominance of white males, it is no wonder that those whose dominance is being threatened with the absurd are unlikely to laugh—this humour has the capacity to undermine their privilege and dominance, to poke holes in their self-conception as nondiscriminatory and progressive, and to rupture their identity.

I should note here that I did not react to the humour of Dave Chappelle in the same way that I reacted to the bit by Richard Pryor mentioned above. This may be because Chappelle's humour is more inclusionary—he often co-opts celebrities representing the different groups that he is lampooning. For instance, in Chappelle's sketch discussing the stereotype that white people can't dance, he invites the guitarist John Mayer along to test the stereotype's veracity. They test the hypothesis that white people do love to dance, but specifically to electric guitar music. They find that white people will spontaneously dance when they hear the electric guitar,

even in the middle of a boardroom meeting or an upscale restaurant. Later, as a control, Mayer plays his psychedelic guitar in a Harlem barbershop where everyone is either black or Latino; he is not greeted with appreciation. As a control to the experiment, Chappelle invites Questlove, drummer for The Roots, to play some beats, and observes a positive response from the black patrons who spontaneously commence rapping; Chappelle then adds electric piano to include the Latinos present, who dance enthusiastically to the conga. The final scene upsets this essentialism, when a black police officer is mesmerized by Mayer's playing. When Chappelle asks him why he is responding this way, he claims, "I'm from the suburbs man, I can't help it."[17]

Social Value of Humour

The social importance of humour using race was brought up by some of the respondents as an argument against the categorical exclusion of such categories from humour. Even Henry, who found himself offended by Majumder's use of the N-word in his bit, defended Majumder's use of it in these terms. However, without some serious elaboration, such claims to the social value of disparaging categories rings hollow. Zach and Stan, who brought up the social value argument, linked it to the importance of demonstrating the idiocy of rednecks and others who use these categories in their humour unself-consciously, reproducing techniques more akin to the hate speech humour of the mid-twentieth century (Nilsen and Nilsen 2006). This

[17] See the conclusion to this chapter for more on the importance of inclusion in humour.

link itself may be a technique of misdirection away from the potential for their enjoyment of bits like Majumder's to reflect their own racism.

However, Henry's account of his own actions in this regard reinforced the potential for disparagement humour to have a social value. The joke from my field notes above ("What do you call a Hindu with a medical degree? A doctor") was in fact one that Henry related to me outside the interview process. He discussed the way this joke goes over at his work. He was a bartender in BC's Fraser Valley, where the term *Hindu* was most often used as a racial slur, referring to Indo-Canadians, most of whom in that region are Sikh, not Hindu:

> Henry: That's why I love that joke, cause everyone thinks you're going one way with it, the obvious way, but yeah.
>
> Interviewer: Have you told that joke to people at work?
>
> Henry: Yeah.
>
> Interviewer: How does it play?
>
> Henry: Honestly, quite often it falls flat. Because people are waiting for the typical punch line that they all think is coming and so when they don't get it they're like "what? uh, well *yeah.*" you know, and sometimes . . . people get a good laugh out of it, appreciate it, but for the most part it just kind of confuses people. . . . They're expecting a racist joke and they don't get one, so they're confused.

Of course, as with disparagement humour being used between friends, this joke only works in a social context marked by racism. Additionally, in order for the joke to work, the audience must *expect* a racist joke. The joke-work or contradiction

from which the amusement is derived is not within the joke itself, but between these expectations and the punchline, which is delivered matter-of-factly.[18]

That the joke falls flat because it disappoints its audience's expectations and does not provoke amusement may be a result of the same fear of identity rupture that explains the dearth of jokes targeting the whitestream. Henry's patrons and coworkers expect to be amused by a joke that in some way targets Hindus; they have heard, and presumably enjoyed, such jokes before. But in being delivered a punchline that performatively demonstrates the racism inherent in their own expectations, they do not laugh. Henry claims this is because they are "confused" – perhaps, however, they understand the implications of the joke and literally *cannot* laugh, since doing so would undermine their own implicit self-conception as racially superior.

Shock Humour

Some respondents claimed that in mobilizing disparagement humour, they were attempting to shock their audience. With their friends, they would break taboos regarding the use of stereotypes in humour; in Nick's case, the breaking of the taboo, and the inconsistency between the stereotype and the target of the stereotype, as well as between Nick's use of shock humour and his faith that his friends knew him not to hold such views, provided the grounds for amusement. In other cases, Zach and Mike broke taboos in order to tease or bother people they were close to (Zach's wife, Mike's ex-girlfriend). Here I would like to discuss the

[18] I have since heard similar jokes, some of which append "you racist!" to the punchline, which, in my opinion, undermines the reflexivity required of the audience for the joke to work.

potential ramifications for breaking of a taboo in reference to Freud's theory of humour, which focuses on the release of repressed desire, as well as in terms of the Deleuzian concept of habit (elaborated in chapter 2).

Moving beyond the initial impetus for the amusement, I would like to explore the social implications of breaking of taboos, especially (as game theorists would say) over multiple iterations. A number of respondents claimed not to find certain bits funny. Precisely which bits differed between respondents, but the Critch/Williams bit and Majumder's bit were cited more than once because respondents had heard similar humour before, and no longer found it humorous. What this implied for the use of taboos is that at some point an audience is no longer titillated by the breaking of a taboo; effectively, the persistent breaking of a taboo permanently breaks it, and it is no longer a taboo. In this case, it seems that the result is consonant with moves to reclaim language among numerous marginalized communities—think of terms such as *queer*, *gay*, and, to a certain extent even *nigger*.

There are definite boundaries as to who can reclaim this term. Lenny Bruce, a legendary American comedian who was constantly being charged under obscenity laws, made this point explicitly in one of his routines that is reproduced in the 1974 biopic *Lenny*. In it, he begins by asking the stage manager to turn off the spotlight and bring up the house lights; "Any niggers in the audience tonight?" he asks. "I see one nigger working in the back. Oh, and here's another. How 'bout Wops? Any

Wops? Guineas? There's a few. Chinks? Spics?" He continues with a litany of ethnic slurs, and concludes that these words hold only as much power as we allow them.[19]

It therefore seems that the use of shock humour may, in a number of ways, have the capacity to overcome its own terms. Once the terms are no longer titillating, they either lose their power, or else they are exposed as the problematic terms that they are. There are two questions here: first, does the use of shock humour by the respondents effect this overcoming; and second, what is the political significance of the opposite position, taken by two respondents, that terms such as *nigger* are never acceptable as comedy? To answer the first, it does not seem that Zach's use of shock humour can be seen as working against the reproduction of the very racial categories he uses. He did in fact feign agreement with a friend that he characterizes as a "real racist," in order to get his wife's goat. Mike used his shock humour in a similar fashion, though in his case he targeted his girlfriend (now ex-girlfriend) directly.

However, Nick's use of such humour (characterizing his Jewish friend as stingy) may in fact be such that his audience, and he, will grow weary of it. His use also corresponds to the one Hewitt (1986) outlines, where friends will negotiate the social fact of racism through humour. Therefore, with shock humour as with other trends in the interviews, while there exists a theoretical potential for its use to overcome the process of distinction and the production of racial and gendered

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[19] In Hewitt's 1986 study, mentioned above, he describes how one white youth with black friends uses the word *nigger* in a way that subtly undermined one of his white friends' racist aggression, until at some point the overtly racist youth questioned the seemingly nonderogatory use of the word, in an apparent attempt to guard its use as a slur (230–233).

hierarchies constitutive to colonialism, the way in which such humour was performed by the respondents points instead to a reproduction of colonialism under the guise of a political consciousness that identifies itself with nondiscrimination and multiculturalism. This means that categorically denouncing the use of shocking terms in humour may in fact guard their derogatory meaning, reinforcing their utility in maintaining colonial hierarchies and boundaries.

However, even this slim potential for shock humour to amplify a line of flight from colonialism is undermined by significant problems with Freud's cathartic theory of humour. As we saw in chapter 4, the catharsis theory of violence does not correspond with contemporary psychological scholarship. Rather, this scholarship demonstrates that the opposite is true—in acting on our aggressive desires, we become habituated to violent action, and reinforce violence as a preferred means of dealing with adversity. This same critique, consonant with Deleuze's conception of habit, is also likely to apply to disparagement humour. In Nick's case, he seemed to be working through his relationships within a racialized society through disparagement humour; in Zach's case, he presented his friend with an opportunity to air her racist sentiments; and in Mike's case, he directly denigrated his (now ex-) girlfriend. Given the difficulty in determining the logic of sarcasm, I do not want to conclude that shock humour is either reproductive of habit or overturning of taboos; it is likely both. Here I only wish to demonstrate the incapacity of one theory (Freud's) to cover all eventualities.

5.5 Conclusion

I began this chapter with a personal intuition about my own use of what I have been terming disparagement humour, specifically that the fact of my own reflexivity meant that in using disparagement humour, I could not be reproducing colonialism. I then went on to illustrate a dichotomy in the literature on disparagement humour, with one side (the psychological literature and Owusu-Bempah and Howitt) taking a categorical stand against the use of disparagement humour, and the other taking a more nuanced approach, arguing that there are instances of disparagement humour being used against the racial and other hierarchies which it ostensibly relies upon for its joke-work. However, in examining the use and enjoyment of disparagement humour by white, male anglophones of the multicultural generation, it became clear to me that the persistence of disparagement humour in private, and the justifications given for the use of such humour, performatively effects a colonial distinction of white/nonwhite, male/nonmale, masculine/nonmasculine. This segmenting is performed and reproduced through humour, marking the white male off from subjects imagined/produced as outside the whitestream, as well as from his own friends and acquaintances, who are marked as nonwhite or nonmale. In many cases, it simultaneously absorbs nonwhites (in particular) into the whitestream, encouraging them to performatively self-denigrate—in the case of Russell Peters, for instance—or drawing them into the whitestream exactly through their distinction, marking them by it and encouraging them to self-identify with this mark, as in the respondents' use of disparagement

humour with nonwhite friends. Importantly, women were consistently distinguished by the respondents; none mentioned drawing them into the whitestream through a shared enjoyment of disparagement humour. Rather, respondents often used the presence of women to mark contexts where disparagement humour was, in Tom's terms, "offsides."

The persistent use of humour that utilizes distinction to effect amusement indicates the persistence of colonialism. While respondents were very reflexive of nondiscrimination norms, they used this knowledge to skirt the public sphere and enjoy their disparagement humour either in private or through the absorption of nonwhite performers into the discursive and affective reproduction of colonialism. That is, they enjoyed the breaking of taboos and of crude stereotypes so long as these were performed by nonwhites. What the use and enjoyment of disparagement humour entails is the perpetuation of the whitestream's control over the production of distinction and the limits of absorption—of white entitlement to define the terms of discourse.

I would like to end this chapter with an observation made by Thomas King regarding humour. In the context of a collection of essays exploring First Nations humour, King claims that "humour is only truly funny when it is inclusive, [but] humour that excludes is, in the end, a weapon" (King 2005, 180). This bit of wisdom came from Thomas Bianca, a Hopi Elder whom King had invited to give a keynote address during Indian Awareness Days at a University in Utah where King was counsellor to native students. After having been taken to dinner by King and some

of King's colleagues, during which they told Bianca their best jokes, Bianca remarked that "it was too bad there weren't more people who could laugh at them" (178). The importance of inclusion here was evident: if humour targets a group to which you do not belong, then, King claims, it becomes a weapon. Although this smacks of the categorical that I have been attempting to repel, it may relate to the importance of inclusion in the Deleuzian conception of humour, which I take as central to the upsetting of colonialism through the use of humour.

As I argued above, the reticence of the core of the whitestream to laugh at itself may be linked to a fear of a rupturing identity. If we laugh at Richard Pryor's humour, or at the joke about the Hindu with a medical degree, then we are laughing at our own discomfort when surrounded by nonwhites, or our own racist expectations. But as I intimated when I discussed my reaction to Dave Chappelle, it may be that Pryor was using his humour as a weapon, turning the white gaze back on itself, ridiculing the white colonial society of the United States.

While Chappelle does his fair share of straight-out ridiculing, his humour has something more inclusionary about it. It remarks on the differences between the various groups that make up the United States. In this sense, he invites Americans of all backgrounds to laugh at themselves, to be inclusive in their humour, even if it also trucks in certain stereotypes or generalizations. If disparagement humour followed this kind of sensibility, its use would provoke changes in colonialism's reproduction. An inclusionary humour invites the audience to laugh at themselves,

to push the boundaries of their identity, to open up to the absurdity of the groundless abyss that underlies our social institutions.

So far Canadian efforts in this regard have been rather weak. Russell Peters may be working in this direction, but however famous *Little Mosque on the Prairie* becomes, it fails on a number of grounds: first, in my opinion it is rarely funny, relying on tired sitcom clichés; second, it reproduces colonialism through its effacement of Aboriginal people (the show is set in a small town in Saskatchewan, but there are no First Nations characters in the show); and third, its political motivations are overly apparent. The whitestream must be invited to laugh at itself; with *Little Mosque* it isn't even invited to laugh, but instead it must sit through turgid lessons in tolerance and the politics of recognition.

CBC Radio's *The Debaters* is a very funny show that seems to have some success in this regard. The program often broaches socially sensitive topics relating to race (Afrocentric schools on January 2, 2010; gender and sexuality—all men being "a bit gay"—on October 3, 2009; the Barbie doll's impact on the way women perceive themselves on September 19, 2009), and multiculturalism (Canada becoming a country of visible minorities, on September 23, 2009). On one occasion it broached the issue of white guilt and cultural appropriation in relation to Canada's Aboriginal peoples and the 2010 Winter Olympics (February 27, 2010). Colonial distinctions are brought to light through humour, and while the program does not attempt serious analysis of the issues it ostensibly addresses, this is perhaps its greatest strength from a micropolitical perspective: here, humour makes good on its

potential to unsettle what we perceive of as stable and fundamental, and does so through an inclusionary method.

CONCLUSION

Over the course of this thesis, I have attempted to demonstrate the means through which colonial subjectivity is produced in Canada. I have specifically targeted the *whitestream*, or assemblage of dominant subjectivities. I began by interrogating the approach of Canadian political science to the problem of colonialism, and noted that, as part of the Canadian sociopolitical landscape, the discipline itself reproduces colonialism, through:

- maintaining a self-prescribed prerogative over defining difference and setting out the limits to its accommodation;
- consistently ignoring, and in some cases (Cairns, 2000) denigrating, nonwhite, nonanglophone political perspectives, positions, and demands;
- reinforcing the view that the past is homogeneous, through the casting of difference (and political demands stemming from difference) as somehow novel; and
- adhering to a state philosophy that uses supposedly universal rationality to demand submission.

From here I introduced a conceptual and methodological framework that drew together work on colonialism from diverse sources and the process-oriented philosophy of Deleuze and Guattari. With this framework I sought to understand the subject as composed of flows, themselves produced and amplified through affective and discursive techniques. Through autoethnography, media analysis, and interviews, I attempted to tease out the specific processes through which colonialism

produces itself in the daily thoughts and actions of the putative majority—the whitestream—in Canada. In subsequent chapters I examined three specific sites in which colonial subjectivity is produced and reproduced in contemporary Canada. I examined absorption and distinction, and what brings these processes together: micropolitics and colonialism.

The first such site, dealt with in chapter 3, was talk radio. Through analysis of two prima facie very different talk radio programs, *Sounds Like Canada* and *Adler Online*, I drew out suppositions and techniques that amplified white, masculine privilege and dominance within the Canadian sociopolitical landscape. Each program mobilized a specific affective position among its listeners—sympathy in the case of *Sounds Like Canada* and outrage in the case of *Adler Online*—to effect a distinction between the dominant, whitestream subjectivity and the nonwhite (and in the case of *Adler Online*, nonmale) subjectivity. While *Sounds Like Canada* displayed a concern for the plight of Aboriginal people and certain marginalized groups, this concern ultimately constructed an image of them as incapable of agency, and Aboriginal people were intrinsically linked to alcohol abuse and ineffective governance. In contrast, *Adler Online*'s primary concern was the perceived affront to civil liberties that a variety of groups and forces presented, including Muslims, women, environmentalists, and the CBC. Through provoking outrage and a sense of righteous victimization, Adler worked to reinforce the violent hegemony of white masculinity in Canada.

In chapter 4, I examined the means through which the ubiquitous Canadian institution of hockey amplified certain colonial flows, including hypermasculinity, racial hierarchies, land as recreation, and the production of white male entitlement to national space and memory. The privileged place occupied by hockey within mainstream Canadian culture was seen as transferring into privilege for the boys who played the game: a sense of entitlement to public space has been inculcated in them, and boys who play in the junior leagues can become entitled to sexual violence. Violence on the ice produces our conception of masculinity; nonwhite players veering from the prescribed outlets for violence confirms their savagery and produces the white masculine subject itself. The space of Canada becomes a rugged winter wonderland, with grizzled men springing directly from the landscape, sticks in hand; the Canadian hinterland becomes a space for recreation, remaining devoid of either resource exploitation or an Aboriginal presence. And national memory is constructed through the affective techniques of coffee commercials, absorbing nonwhite ethnicities into the dominant, nostalgic narratives of the baby boomers.

The last substantive chapter dealt with the use of disparagement humour among white anglophone males. Here, more than in any other chapter, I dealt with the potential of micropolitical technique to trace a line of flight from colonialism, to expose cracks in its foundations through which the groundless abyss can be encountered. However, even after demonstrating the potential for disparagement humour to push towards the overcoming of colonialism (through the troubling of its own categories), I found that the way the whitestream mobilized such humour, for

the most part reproduced white male entitlement to defining the terms of political discourse, reaffirmed the racial hierarchy constitutive of colonialism, and worked within the distinction/absorption logic inherent to colonialism.

But the work that I performed in this chapter (and the thesis as a whole) was more than just academic. Through examining some of the central means and techniques through which my own subjectivity has been produced, those flows were altered, and thus the presumptive "I" doing this work itself was reformulated. Studying micropolitics in this way also serves to perform micropolitics.

Constitutional Encounters: Micropolitics and Macropolitics

I would like to conclude the thesis by examining James Tully's (1995) democratic constitutionalism in terms of Deleuze's (Deleuze 1994) concept of the encounter. This discussion proceeds from issues that began to come through with more force in the final chapter on humour. Specifically, I am concerned with techniques that can be reflexively performed in the service of a line of flight whose own gravity alters the aggregate trajectory of colonialism, however slightly. Tully's work, while ostensibly concerned with state politics, in fact works in the service of producing an open sensibility, and placing this sensibility at the heart of a democratic constitutionalism. Here I hope to demonstrate the links between micropolitics and state-level politics, as well as the importance of an ethic of forbearance in the study and practice of politics in Canada, arguing that Tully's work is exemplary in this regard.

In his now classic *Strange Multiplicity* (1995), and in more recent articles collected in the two volumes of *Public Philosophy in a New Key* (Tully 2008a; Tully 2008b), Tully aims at challenging the dominant view of the state in Western political theory. His methods are archival, unearthing a rich countertradition to the rigid imperial constitutionalism of Locke, Kant, and other thinkers who have had profound influence on the way we conceive of political systems. Taken together, these latter democratic constitutionalists have constructed an "empire of uniformity" (1995: 83) [1] that homogenizes the people prior to their being constituted as a polity. Tully's democratic constitutionalism, however, takes the diversity of both individuals and cultures as a starting point for reconceiving the constitution, linked through history to a countertradition that includes Gottfried Leibniz, Hugo Grotius, Mary Wollstonecraft, and Mary Shelley.

The central narrative device of *Strange Multiplicity* is Haida artist Bill Reid's famous sculpture, *The Spirit of Haida Gwaii*.[2] This fantastic work depicts a variety of creatures from Haida mythology, all aboard a canoe, struggling with one another. Tully's interest is not in determining the basis for recognizing difference and the limits to its accommodation. Rather, he uses Reid's sculpture, and Reid's words about it, to theorize a different way of constituting the polity that takes the diversity

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[1] C.f. Massumi's use of the "empire of like" (in Massumi, 1992:97); Deleuze on analogy (Deleuze, 1994: 33-35, 137-138).

[2] Given its increasing visibility, the sculpture has evidently inspired many people: the original casting stands in the courtyard of the Canadian Embassy in Washington, DC; a plaster copy is in the Museum of Civilization in Ottawa; and another bronze casting, this time with green patina, is in the international terminal at the Vancouver airport. The sculpture is also represented on the current Canadian twenty-dollar bill.

contained within the polity as foundational rather than a "problem to be solved" (Gallant 2010). Tully gives each of the canoe's denizens an identity, a story, and a cultural background:

> Imagine the large father grizzly bear at the bow of the canoe addressing the other passengers. He describes his vision of the constitutional association in his terms and traditions, explaining how bears exercise their rights, govern themselves, care for each other and relate to others. (203)

The bear goes on to demand adherence to his clan's specific way of doing things based on their universality, or perhaps on their being the product of a more developed culture. Thus the bear symbolizes imperial techniques of governance that maintain their shape in contemporary Canadian state- and micropolitics.

But the bear cannot have his way—his neighbours in the boat disagree, and ultimately their dialogue moves towards "reflective disequilibrium" (203).[3] But even as the other passengers subvert the bear's imperialistic claims to superiority, Tully makes them recognize the indispensability of the bear "to the beauty of the canoe"—"they would become monstrous if they were to gain hegemony and efface the living cultures of the other members" (204). In the canoe, at least, there is no hegemony; the process of dialogue is aspectival—there is no single, overarching determinant of right and wrong, or the direction in which the boat should be going. All of these very important decisions are decided through the participation of the passengers in a never-ending dialogue. One inspiration that passengers derive from this

[3] An obvious jab at Rawlsian neo-Kantian constitutionalism, of which Kymlicka is a prominent Canadian practitioner.

negotiation is a new kind of civic patriotism whose "coalescent power" obtains, through

> . . . not only the public recognition of one's culture, but also because one's culture is respected among others and woven into the public fabric of the association, gaining its strength and splendour from its accommodation among, and interrelation with, the others. . . . One's own identity as citizen is inseparable from a shared history with other citizens who are irreducibly different; whose cultures have interacted with and enriched one's own and made their mark on the basic institutions of society. (205)

The difference between the civic patriotism enjoined by the dominant strands of Canadian political science should be clear here. They take the bear's perspective, demanding that subordinate political demands fit within narrowly defined terms that reproduce the political hegemony of the whitestream.[4] But immediately after making this argument regarding solidarity (no doubt aimed at assuaging the concerns over *anomie* of certain curmudgeonly political scientists), Tully subverts it, claiming:

> At the same time, the black canoe evokes a sense of estrangement from one's own cultural outlook by seeing it juxtaposed to a multiplicity of others. . . . Now, the ability to free ourselves from what is most familiar and to wonder again at the sheer diversity of things is just as highly valued in contemporary, non-Aboriginal civilizations. However, as George Marcus and Michael Fisher submit in *Anthropology as Cultural Critique*, it is thought to require an exotic experience: atonal music, cubist or surreal painting, *Waiting for Godot* or, especially, an encounter with a primitive culture. The juxtaposition of the myth creatures reveals that this invaluable attitude of world reversal and wonder can be awakened just by doing what Wittgenstein does in the *Philosophical Investigations* and what they do aboard the canoe: exchange and juxtapose their myths, narratives and further descriptions of their interrelated histories together. The wonderfulness of *The Spirit of Haida*

[4] Tully's ethic of forbearance skirts an outright denigration of the bear's perspective. As he mentions, the bear belongs too. Tully's work communicates with political science on its own terms, and in so doing manages to subvert foundational disciplinary truths such as the rational basis for state-philosophy, universal rights, or a constitution as a founding moment/document.

> *Gwaii* thus ushers in the other public good of contemporary constitutionalism: the ability to see one's own ways as strange and unfamiliar, to stray from and take up a critical attitude towards them and so open cultures to question, reinterpretation, negotiation, transformation and nonidentity. (Tully 1995, 205-206)

Here, links emerge between Tully's democratic constitutionalism—that is, the process through which citizens engage in the dialogue that constitutes the polity—and Deleuze's concept of the encounter. For Deleuze, an encounter is what "forces us to think" (Deleuze 1994, 139) and is *opposed* to recognition. Recognition slots its object into habitual social categories, reproducing a politics of representation whereby an individual becomes simply an instance of a generality. *Encounter* breaks down the barriers between our sensory and analytical faculties, "perplexes" the soul (140), and ultimately troubles the basis of our received opinions and our more "reactive" affects.[5] The encounter, a familiar concept by now, links to the Body without Organs (explored in chapter 2) and humour's capacity to reveal the groundless abyss of what we perceive of as our most solid institutions and preconceptions.

The links between Deleuze, Tully, and the arguments made in this thesis demonstrate the relationship between micropolitics and state-level (macrolevel) politics. Tully's democratic constitutionalism depends upon the inculcation of an openness, a forbearance, in a polity's citizenry, and reflection of these sensibilities in democratic institutions. This inculcation itself depends upon the practising of micropolitical techniques of the self that cast our own preconceptions into a critical

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[5] *Reactive* here relating to Nietzsche's use of the term, which relates to the habitual reproduction of *ressentiment* (Deleuze 2006).

light, and constantly unsettle our most sacred of notions. This unsettling must be the basis for institutional democracy; the constitution is itself the process through which political actors negotiate their aims and ideas.[6]

Tully's work neither absorbs nor distinguishes; not only does it (for the most part) abstain from the judgments and perspectives that contribute to the entrenchment of colonialism in Canadian political science, it actually amplifies forces that are pulling Canada away from the habitual reproduction of colonialism. Democratic constitutionalism requires a keen ear, one that does not merely *recognize* what it hears, but knows that in some cases the words being spoken are communicating ideas that are incapable of being understood given one's own life experience. This is precisely the sensibility that must be inculcated in those studying Canadian politics. In attempting to understand our own motivations, the bases for our preconscious decisions, and the role that affect plays in politics, we can perhaps begin to embrace the Body without Organs, the groundless abyss of the absurd, the crisis of faith (Connolly 2005), or Deleuze's encounter.

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[6] Furthermore, as is clear through the way the Harper government "manages the message," micropolitical techniques may be utilized by state-level actors. For instance, as I write this concluding chapter, hundreds of Tamil refugees have landed on the shores of British Columbia. Harper and his responsible cabinet ministers managed to fold this event into their well-publicized, and apparently popular, tough-on-crime discourse, claiming that legislation against human smuggling will be toughened if need be, and painting the asylum-seekers as terrorists prior to their even disembarking. These techniques have amplified fear and xenophobia amongst the whitestream. Alternative techniques, such as painting Canada's acceptance of refugees as a noble act, may have amplified other reactions by the Canadian public.

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SOCIAL SCIENCES AND HUMANITIES RESEARCH ETHICS BOARD

CERTIFICATION OF ETHICAL APPROVAL

This is to certify that the University of Ottawa Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board (REB) has examined the application for extension of ethics approval for the research project **Colonialism and the Psychic Life of the Canadian Citizen Subject (File # 06-07-05)** submitted by Andreas Krebs and supervised by Claude Denis of the Department of Political Studies of the University of Ottawa. The Social Sciences and Humanities REB found that the project met appropriate ethical standards set out in the Tri-Council Policy Statement and in the Procedures of the University of Ottawa Research Ethics Boards, and granted initial ethics approval to the project on August 9, 2007.

This ethics renewal certification is valid for one year from the date indicated below.

August 9, 2008
Date

Catherine Paquet
Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research
For Peter Beyer, Chair of the Social
Sciences and Humanities REB

Université d'Ottawa | University of Ottawa

August 5, 2008

Claude Denis
Department of Political Studies
University of Ottawa
1 Stewart Street, Room 101
INTRA

Andreas Krebs

RE: Colonialism and the Psychic Life of the Canadian Citizen Subject (File #06-07-05)

Dear Professor Denis and Mr. Krebs,

The Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Committee has accepted your request for extension of ethics approval of the above-mentioned project. You will therefore find enclosed the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Ethics Board Certification extension for your research project.

During the course of the study, any modifications to the protocol or forms may not be initiated without prior written approval from the REB. You must also promptly notify the REB of any adverse events that may occur.

This extension is **valid from August 9, 2008 until August 8, 2009**. Please submit an Annual Status Report to the Protocol Officer in August 2009 to either close the file or request a renewal of ethics approval. This document can be found at: http://web9.uottawa.ca/services/rgessrd/ethics/application_dwn.asp.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at extension 1787.

Sincerely yours,

Catherine Paquet
Protocol Officer for Ethics in Research
For Dr. Peter Beyer, Chair of the Social
Sciences and Humanities REB