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In the Age of Reconciliation: Persisting Settler Colonialism in Canada

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Volume V

5th Annual Graduate Student Conference
Keynote Speaker
Dr. Martin Papillon

Panel Discussants
Dr. Brooke Jeffrey
Dr. Mireille Paquet
Dr. Stéphanie Paterson

Concluding Remarks
Dr. Daniel Salée

In the Age of Reconciliation: Persisting Settler Colonialism in Canada

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Foreword

This journal began with the Department of Political Science 5th Annual Graduate Student Conference, entitled *"Because It's 2015": Minorities and Representation*. In light of the recent 2015 federal election, there seems to be a renewed commitment by the government to protect minorities, increase gender parity and renew the relationship with Indigenous peoples. The following questions arise from this context: Is this focus from the liberal government the new 'trend'? Will it persist? What is the current situation of minorities and underrepresented groups in a democracy like Canada?

The conference committee called for papers on multiculturalism, representation of women, intersectionality of minority identities, representation of people with disabilities, the social construction of immigrants or refugees, and Indigenous peoples in Canada.

Most of submissions were about the state and non-Indigenous people's relations with and perceptions of Indigenous peoples in Canada. The papers selected for the 5th Annual Graduate Student Journal are all within this topic. This is the why it was judged appropriate to change the name of the journal, as the Conference title "*Minorities and Representation*" does not represent well the papers selected.

Thank you to all contributors,

Editorial Team

Please Note: Andréanne Nadeau, although part of the Conference Committee, stepped up to present at the Conference to fill in for a student who could no longer present and filled in for the journal for another paper retracted last minute.

Foreword (Following)

Reconciliation has become a buzzword in government since the 2000s. The 2008 Statement of apology to former students of Indian Residential Schools, the unveiling of the "Remembering the Past: A Window to the Future" in Parliament in 2012 to Honor families and victims of residential schools, the consideration of the Calls to Action of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada (2015) and the establishment in 2016 of the National Inquiry on the Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women and Girls (see aadnc-aandc.gc.ca, 2016) are all example of actions taken by the government to advance reconciliation.

Following the 2015 elections, the Government of Canada states that it is working to "advance reconciliation and renew a nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, cooperation and partnership" (aadnc-aandc.gc.ca, 2016; Mandate Letters 2015).

However, despite these actions and discourse, what is the situation right now in Canada? There is still a long way to go and a lot of work to be done. The articles will demonstrate how settler colonialism is still alive and well. Hopefully, it will trigger critical self-reflection for the reader of this journal.

Andréanne Nadeau
Coordinating Editor

Acknowledgements

Organizing the conference and journal could not have been done without the support of the Political Science Graduate Student Association's (PSGSA) Conference committee, composed of Johanna Sturtewagen, Jennifer Barbato, Rubens Lima Moraes and Adam Zenobi. A special thanks to Johanna Sturtewagen who supported me during this learning experience.

Thank you to our academic advisor, Dr. Daniel Salée, who gave me precious advice in organizing my first academic conference. I would also like to thank the Conference's keynote speaker, Dr. Martin Papillon.

I would like to acknowledge the contribution of the discussants, who reviewed the papers presented at the conference, Dr. Brooke Jeffrey, Dr. Mireille Paquet, and Dr. Stéphanie Paterson. Their invaluable analysis allowed the participants to strengthen the quality of their papers.

Thank you to the editing team, Janet Akins, Fatima Hirji Tajdin, Johanna Sturtewagen, and Vindya Seneviratne. I would also like to thank the participants of the Conference.

The conference and journal would not have been possible without the generous contributions of the Department of Political Science, the Dean of Arts and Science, the Canadian Council on Student Life and the Concordia University Small Grants Program.

Behind the scenes, Julie Blumer, Joanne Downs and Sheila Anderson were always available to answer my questions. Finally, I would like to thank the Chair of the Department of Political Science, Dr. Marlene Sokolon, and the Graduate Program Director, Dr. Amy Poteete, whose support was greatly appreciated.

Thank you all,

Andréanne Nadeau
2015-2016 PSGSA VP Academic

SETTLER COLONIALISM AND THE PLAN NORD IN NUNAVIK

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Biography: She is a third year student in the PhD in Humanities program at the Centre for Interdisciplinary Studies in Culture and Society. Her research interests are in Indigenous-state relations, Inuit governance, and women. Her PhD research is on the politics of northern housing focusing on Nunavik and working with Inuit women to better understand the connections between the housing crisis and community development, governance, resistance, and community well-being. Her MA research at Queen's University in 2002 focused on Algonquin concepts of environmental responsibility, knowledge, jurisdiction and strategies of resistance.

Abstract: How can we better contextualize Quebec's *Plan Nord* in Nunavik? Can settler colonialism help us in any way? Settler colonial theory purports that colonialism in Canada is not an event of the past, but rather an ongoing structure that informs a settler mindset; it especially focuses on land as an object of continued territorial occupation. I argue that we might find new ways to understand how the ongoing settler colonial quest for land ultimately motivates state-driven economic development plans such as the *Plan Nord*. More and more Indigenous scholars call for the decolonization of research by critically engaging in historical and political contexts of Aboriginal-state relations. With the works of Glen Coulthard, Patrick Wolfe, Lorenzo Veracini, and others, I will explore the tenets of settler colonialism as a way of revealing the underlying narrative of the provincial government's development goals in Nunavik. I offer a contribution to settler colonial theory by dissecting how in the economic structure of capitalism, the duality of "value" in the commodity essentially requires the elimination of Indigenous politics connected to the land. I also offer an example of how the Quebec government's promotion of their northern development plan is a narrative that relies on the denial of Inuit politics to succeed in opening up the land for development and

continue to the process of ongoing accumulation by dispossession. The intention is to unveil the way structures of capitalism and ongoing settler colonialism continue to have profound effects on the way Inuit politics are included (or not) as part of the provincial development narrative.

Keywords: Settler colonialism, northern development plans, Nunavik

SETTLER COLONIALISM AND THE PLAN NORD IN NUNAVIK

Introduction

Settler colonial structures frame the Quebec government's economic and political vision for Northern Quebec, a region known as Nunavik. It is a place where the Inuit regularly negotiate with the provincial government for more autonomy and more control over decision-making, seen most recently in 2011 in their demand for a new, Inuit-led, regional government. To contextualize this encounter, I unearth some of the underlying, usually hidden, driving forces that buttress the structure of Quebec, which I refer to as a settler colonial government, to explain the particular government-driven strategies in the North. These development goals do not wholly counter Inuit visions or ambitions, but they are evidence of core ontological differences between what development means in western terms that cannot easily be reconciled with Inuit ways of understanding the land, and, ultimately, developing the land. I maintain that, one, the process of accumulation by dispossession is reinforced through Quebec's *Plan Nord* and, two, the *Plan Nord* dispossesses the Inuit of their land even further by dismissing (or hiding) their political investment in the land. The process of land accumulation is perpetuated by the particular way land is valued for *capital* (also, valued *as* capital); the settler colonial emphasis on the *economic* value of the land has political consequences for the Inuit in terms of how their own political and economic demands are understood and how their visions for development risk being (sub)merged into settler colonial society.

As a response to the calls by Indigenous scholars for research that contributes to decolonizing perspectives (Kovach 2009), the colonial relationship must be in the forefront to conduct "politically grounded and analytically charged form of Native Studies" (Simpson and Smith 2014, 1). I want to probe the theory of settler colonialism and see how the structures of settler colonial society play a role in hiding Indigenous politics, which is by definition bounded by cultural and sovereign conceptions

of the land. It is argued by Indigenous scholars that the settler approach has been to deny the politics of Indigenous people, to erase their political claims to the land and their claims to sovereignty, as part of an ongoing imperial process. Audra Simpson (2014) argues that anthropologists have almost exclusively dealt with Indigenous people in "an ahistorical and depoliticized sense, innocent or dismissive of the strains of colonization and then settler colonialism on their politics" (Simpson 2014, 11). She argues further that even highly reflexive disciplines such as political science have only recently begun to critically address Indigenous politics as something other than a variation or problem in Canadian governance. Glen Coulthard (2014) also makes an argument that I attempt to address in part here, that the Canadian state has systematically (and repeatedly) divorced the question of "Aboriginal 'cultural' rights" from the notions of "Aboriginal sovereignty or alternative political economies" (Coulthard 2014, 71). At a time when it appears that everything is about politics and the economy, the process of decolonization needs to address politics too. Only then can decolonization begin in meaningful ways for non-Indigenous people in Canada as well as for Indigenous people. Understanding how our society has established a form of political economy that maintains colonial tendencies by erasing or systematically hiding Indigenous politics is necessary for decolonization to begin.[1] One of the prominent structures of settler colonial society is capitalism, which I will address in this paper. The system of capitalism is the framework from which resource development goals can be understood.

I will map out three parts of my argument that will lead to better understanding how hiding Inuit politics is made possible through

[1] Here, I am influenced by Glen Coulthard's arguments in his 2014 *Red Skin White Masks* where he states that despite the more recent conciliatory tone of the government's intention to "recognize" and "accommodate" Indigenous people, he says that the state-Indigenous relationship remains colonial to the core with the state's main goal still centered on access to territory. His arguments inspired me to look more deeply into how capitalism drives the institutional forces and structures that he argues support hierarchical social relations and colonial domination in the quest for the accumulation of land (7-8).

some settler colonial structures, which in turn perpetuate settler colonial approaches to development. The first part will chart what is meant by the term "settler colonialism". I will explain how, as a theory, it provides us with the tools to understand the particular conditions, processes, and structures that are in place in a country such as Canada. This will help clarify why a process of decolonization requires us to question these said structures. The second part of my paper will offer a contribution to settler colonial theory itself by drawing on the concept of capitalism as described by Karl Marx in *Capital* Volume I and notably geographer David Harvey's clarification of the text. I focus on Marx's definitions of value, commodity, and primitive accumulation, and Harvey's extension, "accumulation by dispossession." The structure of capitalism is far-reaching in our society, but its actual effects and functions are often less well-understood and its forces often invisible. I will only point to a small feature of the structure of capitalism that succeeds in "hiding" Indigenous politics suggesting that this is but one of many ways, as has been argued, that the structures of settler colonialism undermine or "eliminate" Indigenous people and their politics.[2] I will connect this concept of "elimination" to the role of "value" in a commodity that is one of the core functions in the structure of capitalism itself. And in the third section of the paper, I will sketch out Quebec's current economic development course in the *Plan Nord* to pinpoint the ways in which structures of settler colonialism come to the fore in the text, a development plan that appears as an "apolitical" endeavour by the government, intended for the betterment of *all* Quebeckers. The point I make is that if seen as part of the general process of accumulation by dispossession, the *Plan Nord* eliminates the Inuit's political investment in the land and thereby reinforces the drive for capital accumulation by lowering the value or social significance of the land for the Inuit.

[2] The term "eliminate" borrows from Patrick Wolfe's 2007 article "Settler colonialism and the elimination of the Native."

Settler colonialism

The term "settler colonialism" has become a catch-all term in Indigenous studies in recent years to encompass the general approach of how the settler population understands the past and how settler governments perpetuate ongoing injustices and prejudices in Indigenous-state relations, in contradistinction to Indigenous people's understanding. However, with its increased colloquial use, the term can lose some of its bite. I take the time here to describe and explore parts of the concept to emphasize its utility in understanding settler colonial governments today.

The concept of settler colonialism describes a state in which colonizers and the colonized continue to be bound in a colonial relationship due to the simple fact that the colonizers have not left to return to the original metropole; they have in fact *settled*, as is the case for Canada, USA, Australia, New Zealand, and South Africa, to name a few. This central condition of settler colonial states is precisely the element that has effectively and curiously been overlooked in postcolonial studies. It is the difference that needs to be addressed in discussions about meaning of decolonization in settler states (Veracini 2011, 5). The terms "postcolonial" and "decolonized" in postcolonial studies describe conditions that do not apply to settler colonial states, for *postcolonial* could imply that the condition of colonialism has passed or exists in another form, and decolonization implies that something has been undone, however incompletely (i.e. neo-colonialism). Postcolonial literature and colonial studies do not provide interpretive categories that fully respond to the condition of settler colonial contexts (Veracini 2010, 2). It is here that settler colonial theory[3] fills that scholarly gap offering important tools for analysis and ultimately a better way of understanding the unique context of settler colonial states in general, and in Northern Quebec in this case study.

[3] Within the field of settler colonial studies there does not yet appear to be a consensus as to whether it constitutes a theory per se. However, I chose to refer to it as a theory that will form the basis of the theoretical framework to my analysis of development in Northern Quebec.

A key focus of the settler colonial condition is the *land* itself, in terms of territorial occupation. This argument is made by many academics who write on settler colonialism, Patrick Wolfe (1999, 2006), Lorenzo Veranici (2011), Glen Coulthard (2007, 2014), Nicholas Brown (2014), to name a few. They explain how capital accumulation in the context of colonialism in a settler colonial country such as Canada is about land, not about proletarianization. In other words, settler colonialism is different from colonialism because it is not about the exploitation of *labour*, which is a central focus in the *colonial* condition. Wolfe (1999) argued that accumulation of land is achieved through dispossession that requires the elimination of the Indigenous populations (Wolfe 1999, 163). Moreover, Wolfe explains his expression, "the elimination of the native," to describe the way Indigenous people were eliminated (driven away, assimilated, fenced in, etc.) from the land not as original *owners* of the land, but as "Indians," indicating an element of original racism that provides a logic to the process of elimination[4] (Wolfe 2006, 388). He also insists that this process is not something of the past, but continues as an ongoing structure. Indeed, Wolfe insists that elimination is an organizing principle of settler colonial society, not a one-off occasion (Wolfe 2006, 388). Wolfe established the foundation of settler colonial theory when he stated that "it is both as complex social formation and as continuity through time that I term settler colonization a structure rather than an event" (Wolfe 2006, 390).

With the understanding that settler colonialism is about land, accumulation by dispossession, and that it continues today, the feature of Wolfe's concept of the "structure" is where my investigation here begins. I believe that what we call the structures of settler colonialism of today's society need to be brought more clearly into view in order to really understand how they continue to be supported (whether directly or unbeknownst to members of the society) and how they reinforce the

[4] It is worth noting here that when I refer to the "process of elimination" it must be understood in Wolfe's terms, as an *attempt* at total elimination and an underlying mindset embedded in settler society's structures, rather than as a final outcome of "elimination" since our present day is proof of the contrary.

elimination of Indigenous people. This may also point to where these structures can be challenged, and ultimately, decolonized. When I talk about structures, I refer to economic, political, and psycho-social structures, though more have been identified in the literature.[5] The structures are in place to maintain the belief that settlers have sovereignty and legitimacy on these lands. The idea that settlers carry their sovereignty with them is central in settler colonial theory (Veracini 2010, 3). With a settler colonial mindset, the justification for the dispossession of land comes in part from the belief that "we" could use the land better than "they" could (Wolfe 2006, 389). It is from this question of the *legitimate* use of land that I delve into the economic structure of settler colonialism, expressed in large part today through the all-consuming influence of global capitalism that powers the drive for ongoing natural resource development in Canada's North.

Capitalism as structure: "value" and "accumulation"

Two of the central features of the capitalist mode of production can be resumed in the meaning of "value" and "accumulation." These terms are particularly interesting in Karl Marx's writings in the late 19th century and they are still foundational aspects of capitalism that drive settler colonialism today.[6] Moreover, they point to a way of understanding the commodification of land that helps explain what is concretely different from Indigenous ways of understanding the value of the land.

Marx describes primitive accumulation as the point of departure for the capitalist mode of production. It is the commodification of the land that "makes the soil a medium through which capital starts to circulate" (Harvey 2012, "Class 12"). Marx used the

[5] I suggest that there are several "structures" in settler colonial society that can be somewhat separated out from each other. The list I provide here is not exhaustive (there are also legal structures, beliefs systems, historical narratives, etc). I see them as separable only for the sake of analysis, though they are clearly deeply intertwined into a larger whole, what I imagine Patrick Wolfe and others mean when they refer the settler colonialism as "a structure."

[6] I note the fact that capitalism has not always been the economic structure of settler colonialism, but as a discussion about the current structures in the Canadian North, it is the structure within which our economy functions today and, arguably, since Confederation.

term "primitive" to indicate a "first phase" of accumulation. Nicholas Brown (2014) contends that primitive accumulation, however, cannot be relegated to a pre-capitalist past because with the concept of settler colonialism we understand that accumulation is an ongoing process (Brown 2014, 3). Brown theorizes primitive accumulation as a structure, not an event (3).[7] He goes on to consider the specific ways that primitive accumulation functions in settler colonial contexts (4). Harvey argues that primitive accumulation has never gone away, indeed, taking on new forms today (Harvey 2012, "class 12"), that he calls "accumulation by dispossession." He insists that after colonialism, new methods of primitive accumulation entered into the picture – including "the forcible extraction of resources, the violent appropriation of rights to the land" (Harvey 2012, "Class 12").

The commodification of land is a principle and a process that Indigenous people and scholars have struggled against for decades, if not centuries. Land as a commodity is often discussed in terms of Marx's concept of primitive accumulation. Brown (2014) claims that Indigenous critical theory can help us understand "the *specific means* by which primitive accumulation functions within settler-colonial contexts." He draws on other claims that explain how expropriation, for example, destroys other economic and social relations "to make them productive for capital" (Brown 2014, 4). Glen Coulthard also discusses the effects of accumulation by dispossession in Indigenous people (Coulthard 2007, 2014). As many others, both draw on Harvey's concept of accumulation by dispossession that explains how Marx's concept of primitive accumulation can be understood in today's context as an ongoing process.

[7] Here I differ from Brown's understanding of "structure" for while he thinks in terms of plural "structures" (4) that I have also initiated my discussion with, discussing the idea that there are many settler colonial "structures," Brown sees primitive accumulation and settler colonialism as two separate structures possible for theorization (Brown 2014, 3). I base my argument, on the other hand, on the ideas that settler colonial theory explains the condition of settler colonialism which is supported and functions because of a variety of legal, economic, political, and psycho-social structures that fulfill settler colonial countries' need for sovereignty and legitimization.

However, Marx begins his lengthy discussion in *Capital* Volume 1 with an examination of the "commodity" (Marx 1976). Therefore, before looking further at the process of accumulation by dispossession in Canada, I would like to contribute a new perspective on the underlying concept of "value" embodied in the commodity, as Marx had explained. The goal is to better understand how the process of commodification hides, ignores, or denies Indigenous people from the land, the relations to the land, and their economic, social and political connections to the land. I will explore the way "value" as a mechanism of capitalism and a core element of the commodity, the land commodity, benefits from the erasure of Indigenous people on the land – which in turn supports the settler colonial structure and the settler's idea of their sovereignty in Canada.

Central to Marx's argument is that capital is a *social relation* (Harvey 2012, "Class 12"). If capital is indeed not a *thing*, but a relationship between persons that is mediated through things, then the value of things must also be understood in terms of social relations. Specifically, Marx posits that things have value, and the value is contained in the commodity in two ways, or Harvey calls the dual aspect of the commodity (Harvey 2010, 25): it has a *use-value* and an *exchange-value* (Marx 1976, 131). There is no causal analysis between the materiality of a thing and the exchange-value of it. Exchange-value is about relations (Harvey 2012, "Class 1"), not about the material use of the thing. In other words, one cannot look at a thing (or land) and *see* the exchange-value in it (Harvey 2010, 18). Understanding the exchange-value aspect of the commodification of things can lead us to recognize how the process of commodification might require the denial of certain social or political relations inherent between people and the thing (land) in order to arrive at a desired exchange-value of the commodity. In other words, through what is a social relation, some of the intangible features of the commodity are brought forward while others are not. In this social relation of commodification, a power relation emerges where the emphasis of value must be negotiated or enforced.

However, the thing *is* material; it has a material aspect as well as a process aspect. The process is *represented* in the thing but it is *expressed* in its exchange-value. And the exchange-value is a representation of value. Since Marx discusses the exchange-value in terms of the representation of labour, for the purpose of settler colonial conditions that are not based on a labour relationship, I suggest that other non-material aspects of the land are exchanged through commodification. The elements of the commodity are a social substance, and this is a hidden aspect of a commodity. This *hidden* element in a commodity makes all commodities in principal exchangeable (Harvey 2012; Marx 1976, 139).

Returning to the other part of value, the use-value of a commodity, I return to my example of Inuit politics. First, the use-value of the land for Inuit people fulfills the cultural practices of hunting, trapping, harvesting, and all the material aspects of sustaining their livelihood. But the use-value of the land could also be described as the thing that informs their worldview and their particular understanding of politics and relationships. This use-value of the land has no exchange-value; "a thing can be a use-value without being a value" (Marx 1976, 131) because the value of a *commodity* contains both the use-value *and* the exchange-value. The *duality* of "value" means that when one part is being expressed, the other part cannot be expressed (i.e. if it is in use, it cannot be exchanged, and vice versa; or, if you exchange it, you no longer have use of it). However, Marx argues that the exchange-value of a commodity is a social relation that is mediated through the thing. In terms of land, if the social relation established in the exchange-value ignores the use-value of Inuit uses of the land (that include worldview, politics and relationships), then that "thing"—Inuit land—no longer reveals the particular use-value the Inuit had in it. Therefore, for land to be commodified, it requires that the value of land (which includes the duality of use-value and exchange value) erase the particular use-value of land that Inuit people utilize. This is the way that the exchange-value "hides" the use-value in its commodification process in order to allow for the commodity to be exchangeable. The problem is that the "use-value" of the land for the Inuit is in part a non-material use:

it is about informing relationships and worldview, or, put another way, it is part of their ontology. Suddenly, the land (from which politics emerge for the Inuit) becomes part of the process of commodity exchange, or capitalism, with their use-values hidden in the process through a new social relation that has emerged from the idea that "we" will use the land better than "they" do.

This brings us back to settler colonialism, which is based on the idea that "we" (Westerners, Euro-Canadians) will use the land better (through extraction and development) than "they" will. It is an understanding based wholly on the material use-value of the land, and this fundamentally denies other conceptions of the land, and results in a commodification of the land that also denies the intangible teachings and relationships inherent in the use-value of the land for the Inuit. It is these denials, these hidden elements that Marx talks about, that create an unbalanced form of negotiation, understanding, and valuation when development plans are discussed and presented. Consultations, alternative development plans, and self-government negotiations are affected by the power imbalance in the commodification of land that allows for more accumulation by dispossession – the denial of political relationships in the exchange value of land. I will try to make this point again in the following examination of the Plan Nord by the Quebec government.

This might explain how the process of commodity exchange of land has an effect on the politics of the land for Indigenous people. Harvey says that we are not actually aware of the fact that value is socially determined by a *process* that we do not understand, and we must go back to the question of "by whom and how 'values' are established" (Harvey 2010, 21). The process of how a commodity's value is created, has social, environmental, and political consequences, and David Harvey insists that "we must understand what commodity values and the social necessities that determine them are all about" (Harvey 2010, 21). I believe that this is the foundational question to pinpointing the mechanism in the land commodity that relies on a certain (hidden) social relation for the commodification of land to occur and for its exchange-value to emerge. We need to

understand how the *process* determines the measure of value, and what the political consequences to this process are. This mechanism of "value" is a part of the structure of capitalism that I believe is central to understanding the conflict that happens at the point of settler colonialism's ongoing dispossession of Indigenous lands.

Accumulation in the North and the *Plan Nord*

This section examines Quebec's *Plan Nord* in light of the concepts of value, commodity, and accumulation by dispossession discussed so far. I contrast the *Plan Nord* in part to the *Plan Nunavik*, a sector by sector response to the *Plan Nord* by the Nunavimmiut (the Inuit of Nunavik) in 2010. As part of the ongoing process of accumulation by dispossession, I also show how the wording of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement (JBNQA) that the Inuit signed with the governments almost forty years earlier in 1975, is evidence of plans and agreements that demonstrate an unchanging approach by the provincial government to the North and an ongoing incommensurability of the value the land has for the Inuit. The *Plan Nord* did not arise in isolation from the larger northern resource development goals of the federal government in the last half a century, as well as the extensive development projects that occurred in Northern Quebec that included the sedentarisation, relocation, and formal education of Inuit families. Coulthard (2014), an activist and Dene scholar, who has written extensively on the effects of settler colonialism on Indigenous people across Canada, describes how modern land claims, such as the JBNQA, are a prime example of primitive accumulation in the Canadian North over the last forty years. He says, "[a]lthough the last century has witnessed numerous attempts by the state to coercively integrate our land and communities into the fold of capitalist modernity, it was not until the negotiation of land-claims settlements in the 1970s and 1980s that this process began to significantly take hold" (Coulthard 2014, 53). He explains that dispossession is a process whereby "non-capitalist social relations are transformed or integrated into market ones" (77), that I would argue are made possible by separating and erasing the social relations inherent in the land

that make up its use-value for the Inuit, from the exchange-value of the land that consists its market value, making the land ripe for development, ultimately the government's accumulation by dispossession. Just as Coulthard shows that in the Northwest Territories, the "government sought to tease apart the recognition of Indigenous cultural practices from any socioeconomic scheme that might potentially disrupt the further accumulation of capital" (Coulthard 2014, 72), by segregating cultural interests, the use-value and exchange-value balance of the land as commodity is not disrupted for its further accumulation.

In Nunavik, the trajectory has been similar over the last forty years since the Inuit (along with the Cree and the Naskapi) signed the JBNQA and the ensuing amendments, governance agreements, and development plans. The most recent incarnation of "primitive accumulation," the *Plan Nord*, continues to reinforce the settler colonial structure because its ideological apparatuses have not fundamentally changed since the JBNQA. It must be recognized, however, that the Inuit do not necessarily contest the arrival of resource and economic development. In fact, it is mostly welcomed and, from their perspective, often required. Economic development and maintaining a strong relationship with the federal and provincial government is important to the Inuit. However, the argument I am making is not about whether development is good or bad for Northern Quebec, but rather, how economic development is framed by the government and whether there are undesirable consequences to the settler structure it maintains, to the detriment of wider Inuit demands for self-government and autonomy. To elucidate this point, I turn to the text of the *Plan Nord* to better understand the government's intention of the development plan. The introductory wording of Premier Philippe Couillard and Minister Pierre Arcand is particularly revealing, especially in light of the preexisting *Plan Nunavik*, a 2010 development strategy devised by the Nunavimmiut (the Quebec Inuit) themselves. The *Plan Nord* directly clarifies the way the Quebec government views and values the land north of the 55th parallel. It also describes the way they see the relationship and their role in the Inuit-state relationship. By analyzing what is included in the text and what

is not included, how the land is discussed, divided, valued, and for whom the plans are meant to benefit, we can better understand how settler colonialism and accumulation by dispossession continues to occur despite consultations, [8] negotiations, existing agreements, and alternative Inuit development plans.

The *Plan Nord* was first launched in 2011 by the Charest government, and re-launched in 2015 by the new Couillard government.[9] It is a plan to develop the northern part of Quebec, both north and south of the 55th parallel (Nunavik is north of the 55th). In the text, it clearly describes the main goal as increasing the *overall* wealth of Quebec *first* and Couillard insists that "the *Plan Nord* will help us meet this challenge" (Quebec 2015a, 3). He states in his opening message that "[w]e have made the re-launching of the *Plan Nord* a priority, in order to optimize economic benefits for local and aboriginal communities in the North and for all regions of Québec." (Quebec 2015a, 3). He is showing us that *development* is the route for Aboriginal communities to take, and in fact, it is even the *priority*, and the benefits will be economic and indivisible from the prosperity of all Quebec. The kind of development the *Plan Nord* talks about in the North is the "exceptionally rich" form of energy and natural resources that leads to economic development and job creation. It is a very straight forward economic goal.

We can read the text to see how Indigenous and Inuit people are to be involved in the rich development proposed. A paternalistic tone is evident from the start when Premier Couillard talks about "partnership", which is extended to the private sector but where

[8] It can be debated whether meetings held by the government prior to the launch of the *Plan Nord* consisted of any kind of true "consultation", but indeed, meetings were "organized in each zone covered by the *Plan Nord* with the Aboriginal nations concerned and with representatives from civil society, associations, and representative groups from the business and environmental communities..." and these meetings "helped identify specific concerns which will require a range of adapted actions for each zone, population group and sector of activity in the area covered by the *Plan Nord*" (Quebec 2015b, 94).

[9] When I use the term *Plan Nord* in this paper, I refer to the text from 2015.

Aboriginal communities are there for "support" (to give or to receive support, it is unclear) (Quebec 2015a, 3). There is a list of *Plan Nord* partners from 2011 that includes Nunavik's development corporation, Makivik (Quebec 2011), but there is no political or decision-making power extended to the Indigenous populations in relation to the development. Couillard writes in his introductory message: "The process is, in turn, based on partnership, the active involvement of the private sector, and support for local and aboriginal communities." In the next paragraph, he writes that "[t]o create the conditions conducive to the development of resources in the North, it is essential to focus on the living conditions of the local populations and to address their specific needs" because they "will be directly affected by its implementation" (Quebec 2015 a, 3). These are just the first few lines of his message; they set the tone and exhibit a paternalistic, protective, and hierarchical approach to the Indigenous-state relationship. Indigenous people are set apart from development. They are not as actively involved as the private sector. They will be "helped." While one might be reassured that there is a focus on the communities' wellbeing, the goal is to *create the conditions necessary* to draw in foreign investment. The repeated ways that these particular words are chosen establishes a hierarchy and denies any direct involvement of Indigenous people ("the local populations") in decision-making or partnership from the outset. When partnerships with Indigenous communities are mentioned, they are in the interest of maximizing economic benefits (Quebec 2015a, 14) or for the "successful development of mineral potential" (15). As a message from the Premier, it reassures potential investors that Indigenous politics, influence, or power are not a factor to be concerned with. All that is needed is to be "respectful of the local and aboriginal communities" (Quebec 2015a, 3). Despite ample opportunity and space, nowhere in the revised 2015 *Plan Nord* is the 2010 *Plan Nunavik* referenced, mentioned, or respected. The *Plan Nord* "will be harmonized with the priority actions of the Parnasimautik Consultation

Report"[10] (Quebec 2015b, 95), but not the *Plan Nunavik* which is the actual economic development plan of the Nunavimmiut.

Plan Nunavik is a development strategy that reframes the economic structure and, ultimately, the dispossession of land. Their version of development includes rebuilding their relationship with the Quebec government, *with Inuit politics* included. As a response to the proposed 2011 *Plan Nord* project, the *Plan Nunavik* begins with the JBNQA, contextualizing the *Plan Nord* in Inuit territory with its particular legal status and "the special regime of governance" that was established by the JBNQA agreement almost 40 years earlier. The *Plan Nunavik* covers the concerns of the Inuit and lists their development priorities framed within the context of their existing treaties and agreements. It concludes with a list of seven pre-conditions that need to be met before the Nunavimmiut will be willing to support the *Plan Nord*. The seventh condition is self-government for Nunavik Inuit "which involves certain legislative powers" (Kativik 2010, 465).

Indigenous self-government, a complex and disputed concept that consumes a large body of academic literature, nevertheless implies a change or challenge to the current political relationship.[11] For the state to acknowledge self-government in an economic plan would complicate the economic structure and challenge the condition of settler colonialism. These complex questions of Inuit-state relations, Indigenous politics, and self-government may be up for discussion within the political

[10] Parnasimautik was a 3-year process in Nunavik to conduct Inuit-led consultations regarding the future of Nunavik in terms of governance, quality of life, communities and development and to identify a comprehensive vision of development according to Inuit culture, identity, language and traditional way of life. In the 2014 Parnasimautik Report, the frustration with being ignored is palpable, stating that "Plan Nunavik also set pre-conditions for our support for the development of the north. Four years later, these pre-conditions have still not been met" (Makivik 2014, 1).

[11] For discussions of various models of Indigenous self-government and how they would change the Indigenous-state relationship, see Abele and Prince (2006), Coates and Morrison (2008), Henderson (2008), Belanger and Newhouse (2008), and Frideres (2008).

structure of settler colonial society, but the economic structure cannot accommodate demands for another kind of politics, alternate government systems, or new *social relations* because the purpose of a development plan is for capital accumulation. Here we see the utility in separating different settler colonial structures to better understand how an economic structure such as capitalism pushes out, excludes and ultimately hides politics and avoids the complicated political context of development, specifically when land put up for development must be made exchange-ready with its attendant market value composed of a clear use-value and a proposed exchange-value that is composed within the particular social relation between the government and the developers, investors, and market forces.

The wording of the *Plan Nunavik* reveals how the Inuit do not see themselves as necessarily separate from Quebec society, but that they have concerns about their visibility in light of development plan, that they are forgotten members of Quebec society and on the land under discussion. In the conclusion, we see reminders: "The *Plan Nord* must not forget that Nunavik Inuit are both an aboriginal people with treaty rights to the Nunavik region." (Kativik 2010, 463). With respect to the JBNQA, it writes: "The *Plan Nord* has to reinforce these guarantees and not ignore them." (461). They recognize that their Inuit-state relationship is tenuous under large intensive government-led development plans, and they do not want to be ignored. As members of Quebec society, they state in the conclusion:

> If Québec is to provide benefits from the future development of the north to all Québecers, it must accept as a fundamental principle of the *Plan Nord*, before anything else, that it has to invest much more to improve the standard of living of Nunavik Inuit taxpayers, the inhabitants of the territory which Québec wishes to exploit for the benefit of future generations (465).

Settler colonial theory refers to the concept of the elimination of Indigenous people, or how they are made "invisible." In the *Plan*

Nord, we see a normative view of development whereby cultural needs are being met, and by supporting the Plan Nord, the belief is that Quebeckers are collectively improving the living conditions of Indigenous communities by providing economic development and sustainable development. In fact, the government 20-year plan leading towards 2035 is to "help local and aboriginal communities plan and structure their development" and they will even "ensure the cultural development of northern communities" (Quebec 2015a, 22). We can acknowledge our settler understanding of the need to support Indigenous cultural practices and recognize them as part of the use-value of the land, and we can even acknowledge them in the exchange-value, but without actually reducing or risking the successful commodification of land for the purpose of accumulation. How is this possible? Through the mechanism of exchange-value in the commodification of land the politics of land are still hidden in process of the social relation that is the exchange-value. Inuit politics, Inuit demands for self-government, Inuit autonomy are words completely omitted in the text of the *Plan Nord*, successfully ignoring Inuit political demands, and rights and title connected to the land.

The *Plan Nord* is written for several audiences: Indigenous people in Northern Quebec, settler society to the south, the private business sector, and foreign investors. With this broad target, the market and the value of the land must remain appealing, open, unfettered with complex political claims, and feasible for investment: for stakeholders who will carefully consider the exchange-value of land and its resources that they plan on investing in. The exchange-value of the land cannot be securely calculated if unstable politics or counter claims are pending; whether the conflicts exist, they must be made invisible for the capitalist economic structure to succeed. The Premier's message in the *Plan Nord* reassures this, that Indigenous politics are not part of the value of the land commodity, indeed, all that is needed in the social relation of exchange is respect towards aboriginal communities, their cultural needs, and some financial investment to improve basic living conditions.

Marx argues that capital is a social relation where the relationship between persons are mediated through things. The relationship between Inuit people and the state or the investors is expressed through the land. By making invisible the relationship to the land that the Inuit have which informs their politics, and becomes their politics, by devaluing the more intangible use-value that the Inuit have of the land, it is made available to investors at a reduced exchange-rate which is key to engaging capitalism in the North. Counter narratives such as the *Plan Nunavik* that both welcome development on the land and claim the land for their politics through the demand for self-government, does not support the capitalist endeavour for accumulation. For the state to recognize and accommodate the Inuit use-value of their land, their particular political use-value *in and of* the land, would break down the part of the economic structure in settler colonialism in Canada's North that based on ongoing dispossession.

Conclusion

Seen in this way, we could imagine what might be the Inuit struggle for gaining (or regaining) more political control in Nunavik. Currently the Inuit of Northern Quebec demand the creation of an "Inuit-led" regional government (Papillon 2011). To accomplish this, it would require that the political connection to the land be understood by the Quebec government. The process of autonomy and a form of Inuit self-government cannot be accomplished solely within the political domain; they require a level of control over the economic sphere as well, because the various structures of settler colonial society have a direct effect on each other, reinforcing settler colonial sovereignty and accumulation of land.

We can see how a certain amount of accommodation and even inclusion of Indigenous people into the economic development of the region is evident, but the state decides which Inuit needs it will recognize and which it will not. It is a choice. The state decides to recognize cultural needs, traditional practices, and the need for community development and improvement, and it

chooses not to respond to Inuit demands for self-government, autonomy, governance, or politics on the land. This is akin to what Coulthard would call the depoliticized conception of Aboriginal "cultural" rights (Coulthard 2014, 71). Although this study of the face of the *Plan Nord*, the introductory, welcoming comments by the Quebec Premier and Minister, is only a small part of Quebec's settler colonial economic structure, we see how it can hide political demands, claims or other values that do not suit the requirements of the economic capitalist valuation system. In fact, they must be made invisible, for if recognized, the market system comes to halt because these are not "exchangeable" elements of the land commodity.

This paper contributes in part to the complex and layered ways that "the elimination of the Native" is enacted in Quebec's settler colonial society. Elimination can take on many different forms towards the same end goal. Veracini (2010) had used the terms "transfer" rather than elimination, and he listed twenty-six different strategies that the settler project employs to ultimately "cleanse" the setter body politic of its Indigenous alterities (Veracini 2010). This case study has suggested that the economic structure of settler colonialism has a hand in a "narrative transfer" (or elimination) "to deny legitimacy to ongoing indigenous presences and grievances" and where "their activism in the present is perceived as illegitimate" (Veracini 2010, 41). The narrative is the Premier's welcome that cleanses the North of any complicated claims, and the activism is the Inuit claims in the *Plan Nunavik*. This case could also be seen as a kind of "perception transfer: when indigenous people are disavowed in a variety of ways and their actual presence is not registered" which allows for "a systematic propensity to 'empty' the landscape of its original habitants" (Veracini 2010, 37). In this definition of transfer, Veracini argues that one of the results of perception transfer is that when Indigenous people do in fact enter into the field of settler perception, "they are deemed to have entered the settler space" (37), such as when they become just another "partner" or "stakeholder" part of the settler sovereign space, if that. Elimination processes of this kind are evident in the commodification of land; the narrative of the economic development plans only acknowledge partnerships

with Indigenous people if they have the same economic goals as the settler society: creating the conditions necessary for development and investment.

I have attempted to uncover more of what is meant by the structure, or *structures*, of settler colonialism, without reducing settler colonialism to a simple economic or political argument. There are a host of other dynamics at play in settler colonial societies that feed discrimination, such as racism, gender, class, bio-politics, etc., that all contribute to the ongoing separation of Inuit people from their land. I do not mean to oversimplify or undermine these other ongoing and sometimes subtle forces and power dynamics. Rather, I wanted to better understand how the commodification of land is not just a process about the material aspect of land. Since Marx's description of the commodity and the value in capitalism is actually a social process, my goal was to show how this allows for accumulation by dispossession to continue today, not only by physical force, but by a grand narrative of opening up the North for development and for the benefit of all. David Harvey has called for a modification of Marx's argument in order to find a way of explaining "the politics of the current moment." He also wants us to think about "*who* the dispossessed are and what kind of political possibilities come out of their mobilization" (Harvey 2012, class 12). Their mobilization around regional governance and resource development plans show us the way politics and economics are closely linked.

This is also a small contribution towards the process of decolonization. By uncovering a small part of the hidden economic and political forces that make up the settler colonial society we can gain a greater awareness of our structure and its consequences. It requires a more critical look at the wording of a government economic plan such as the *Plan Nord*. This new understanding lets us see more clearly that development is not only about "prosperity," "wealth," and "help"; it is yet another form of dispossession and ongoing settler colonialism in Northern Quebec.

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SETTLERS' RELATIONS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN RECONCILING WITH OUR PAST

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Biography: Only recently exposed to concepts such as Settler colonialism, the author wondered how she could be so unaware of how settlers such as herself contribute to the lived-realities Indigenous peoples face. Studying in political science, she argues that the educational component has often been overlooked, but is essential in explaining the persistence of the colonial mindset. Her work also stems from the shocking fact that one person can do his/her whole studies in political science without having any exposure to the concept of settler colonialism, or even worse, with prejudices re-enforced by high school history classes in Quebec.

Abstract: This paper looks at the role of education of non-Indigenous people concerning Canada's colonial past in advancing the process of reconciliation. Reconciliation is not easy due to persisting myths about Canadian history in the public's consciousness, and due to the prevailing stereotypes about Indigenous peoples. Decolonizing the history curriculum in high schools could be a first step towards building a new relationship. However, this has not occurred yet in Quebec, which will be the case-study in this paper. The debate on the reform of the history curriculum shows how the conceptions of nationalism and the nation make it more difficult to include Indigenous peoples in Quebec's account of history. The content of Quebec's high school history textbooks downplays Canada's colonial past and present. Unfortunately, textbooks make it unclear why Indigenous peoples matter. If this question cannot be answered, how can reconciliation even be achieved? Settler's society has a role in reconciling; the responsibility does not lie only with Indigenous peoples.

Keywords: Indigenous peoples, Reconciliation, Settler colonialism, Education

SETTLERS' RELATIONS WITH INDIGENOUS PEOPLES: THE ROLE OF EDUCATION IN RECONCILING WITH OUR PAST

Introduction

The purpose of this paper is to look at a potential avenue to improve the process of reconciliation between Indigenous peoples[1] and non-Indigenous Canadians. I will argue that education of non-Indigenous people concerning Canada's colonial past can play an important role in the process of reconciliation. While I consider reconciliation as encompassing both the relationship between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous people, and the relationship between Indigenous peoples and the state, this essay will concentrate on the former. Nonetheless, the state has a role to play to help rebuild a new relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. For instance, it is the state that can enact curriculum reforms. The changes in the education of non-Indigenous peoples can alter their possible negative perceptions of Indigenous peoples and foster new grounds for reconciliation.

Reconciliation between Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous Canadians is challenging due to the persistence of stereotypes among the general population concerning Indigenous peoples, preconceptions often exacerbated by news media (Francis 2012, 235). While large sums of money are being injected into governmental programs, Indigenous peoples continue to face what seems to be an "endless circle of disadvantage" (Adelson 2005, S58). There are numerous federal programs (aadnc-aandc.g.ca, 2015), but Indigenous peoples are perceived by non-Indigenous people as being trapped in violent environments and facing poor housing, high rates of suicide, and lower life expectancy (Adelson 2005, S47-S57).

[1] 'Indigenous peoples' encompasses First Nations People, Métis and Inuit. It is written with an 's' as it can help to demonstrate my acknowledgement that there are differences among Indigenous Nations (Smith 1999, 6-7).

However, this explanation is insufficient. Rather than considering the issue as an endless circle with no end, but also no beginning, one has to consider the root of those poor socio-economic conditions of some Indigenous peoples. In fact, disparities in living conditions and claims to self-government are a legacy of colonialism in Canada. Academic research carried by researchers such as Naomi Adelson (2005, S38-S59), Katherine L. Frohlich, Nancy Ross and Chantelle Richmond (2006, 139), and Keira Ladner and Michael Orsini (2004) support the view that the role of the legacy of colonialism cannot be denied in the creation and the endurance of those issues.

I will thus examine the importance of educating non-Indigenous peoples, especially through the teaching of Canada's colonial history in schools, to build a new relationship. In the following sections, I will provide some context surrounding the definition of reconciliation and present my arguments on the importance of education in achieving this reconciliation. In the subsequent section, the case of Quebec will be studied more specifically. I will argue that de-colonization of non-Indigenous peoples' account of history has not occurred yet in Quebec. I will demonstrate this by looking at the debate on history reform in Quebec which started in 2006, and at the content of the textbooks which resulted from this reform.

I. Reconciliation and the Role of Education

1.1 What is Reconciliation?

Reconciliation is a concept that was once associated with transitional countries establishing new democracies, such as in South Africa in the 1990s. It is now also applied in the context of Western democracies, especially those with Indigenous peoples such as Canada and Australia (Kymlicka and Bashir 2008, 1-4). Generally, it is defined as: "a way of dealing with difficult historical legacies of violence, oppression, and human rights violations" (Kymlicka and Bashir 2008, 2). Reconciliation encompasses different components. Kymlicka and Bashir identify

several elements, such as reparations or apologies. However, they focus mostly on the "politics of reconciliation" (2008, 1-4).

This study employs a broader definition of reconciliation that extends beyond these political aspects. The definition that will be used is in line with Johnson's criticism that focusing on repairing injustices gives the state the sole responsibility of reconciling, while inter-personal responsibility is put aside (Johnson 2011, 187). Another criticism towards the concept of reconciliation is pointed out by Verdeja, as *re*conciliation implies that there was a state previous to colonization where the two peoples lived in a harmonious relationship, which is not the case. Still, the concept is useful and cannot be avoided in a discussion seeking to address current and past injustices. This is why Verdeja argues that using the concept is still necessary (2013, 65). Verdeja offers a broad definition of reconciliation: "*a critical reflection on the past; symbolic and material recognition; and securing the means for political participation*" (2013, 66). Thus, there are several aspects of reconciliation, such as symbolic and material recognition, which are within the politics of reconciliation. However, this essay will concentrate on the key addition point from Verdeja's definition, the '*critical*' reflection on the past.

1.2 Why is It Important to Educate the Public?

While a significant amount of research has been done on the politics of reconciliation (Bashir 2012, 141), more attention still needs to be given to the role of the general population in reconciliation. This role can be promoted through education of the general public, for instance with the acknowledgement that the Canadian state is a "settler state" (Barker 2009, 327) and that non-Indigenous Canadians are "settlers" (Harding 2005, 206). Settlers encompass non-Indigenous peoples, whether born in Canada or immigrants, without distinction, because they all voluntarily occupy a territory that belonged to Indigenous peoples. It is not a moral judgement, rather a description of a situation (Barker 2009, 329).

Barker argues that confronting our settler's mentality at an individual level is an important element to break away from the dominant colonial values in society in general (2009, 347). The importance of educating the general population about those issues is also highlighted by Godlewska et al., who studied how the Ontario high school curriculum contributes to the ignorance of Canadians concerning Indigenous peoples (Goldlewska et al. 2010, 417-40). Thomas McCarthy also gives an example of the implications of the lack of education. He argues that an incorrect historical account of the history of slavery contributes to the fact that American people do not take responsibility for its legacy, and do not link present injustices to past discrimination (Bashir 2012, 132).

While McCarthy uses the example of African Americans in the United States, the point he makes can be paralleled to the Canadian case with Indigenous peoples. The central problem is that Canadians also fail to make the link from the legacy of colonialism to the injustices that Indigenous peoples face today (Ponting 2000, 44). This will be illustrated by presenting the widely-held myths among Canadians and a descriptive statistical analysis of respondents' view on Indigenous peoples in the 2011 Canadian Election Study.

a) Persisting Myths

First, there are two main myths that persist in Canadians' consciousness: the myth of *terra nullius* and the peacemaker myth. The first myth refers to the conception that the country was *terra nullius*, meaning the territory that is now Canada was unoccupied land. This argument rests on the premise that those who were living here were not doing so according to European standards and were ignorant, and thus could not count as legitimate prior to occupation. The territory was 'free' to be taken and appropriated by European settlers (RCAP 1996, vol.2, 1).

An illustration of this myth is the famous sayings "*Canada has a lot of geography, but little history*," and it is "*a big country with a brief past*" (Seixas 2008, vii). As Seixas reminds us, the history of

Canada is relatively short only when we consider its existence according to the European understanding of a state. For thousands of years, others have been living there with their own customs and institutions (2008, vii). The conception of *terra nullius* is therefore factually incorrect.

The second myth is linked to the first: the 'peacemaker myth' or the myth that Canada has been benevolent with Indigenous peoples, especially compared to the United States. As with the first myth, this depiction of peaceful relations between the Canadian state and Indigenous peoples is simply inaccurate. It refers to the belief that the Royal Canadian Mounted Police acted in the interest of Indigenous peoples and protected them. It gives the false idea that settling the West was done peacefully and respectfully (Lévesque 2008, vii).

Even among those who accept that this myth does not match the historical realities, most non-Indigenous Canadians would still think they are now superior to their ancestors who treated Indigenous peoples badly in the past. This is what Regan calls a "*twist on the peacemaker myth*" (2010, 108). It illustrates how this myth is flexible over time, but with the same underlying refusal to acknowledge the occurrence of genocide, racism and theft of land (2010, 107-111). Presenting past wrongdoing as being something to the past, therefore as something that has no relevance today, is dangerous. It perpetuates the idea of moral superiority of Canadians, which mitigates any past misconduct (2010, 108-09). It also implies that what is done now is fine and that no changes in policies towards Indigenous peoples are necessary.

b) Canadians' Perceptions of Indigenous Peoples

Secondly, to illustrate how McCarthy's point concerning present discrimination and lack of historical knowledge can be applied to the Canadian context, we can look at some descriptive statistics. While the most comprehensive data we have on the Canadian population is the Census Program, it does not ask the opinion of Canadians on diverse topics (StatisticsCanada.ca, 2015). The most recent Canadian Election Studies (CES) of 2011 provide some

insights. It was chosen since it is a recognized academic database and one of its goal is to provide information about "Canadian's attitudes and opinions on a wide variety of social, economic, and political issues" (CES 2011). A question captures the idea that some Canadians are not aware of the colonial legacy that created injustices towards Indigenous peoples. The question asked: "*Which statement comes closest to your own view?: 'If Aboriginal peoples tried harder, they could be as well off as other Canadians' or 'Social and Economic Conditions Make It Almost Impossible for most Aboriginal Peoples to Overcome Poverty' or 'Not Sure'*" (CES 2011, Question MBS11_B5). The unawareness of difficult socio-economic conditions that Indigenous peoples face underlies the response: *'If Aboriginal peoples tried harder, they could be as well off as other Canadians.*'[2]

Table 1: Cross Tabulation of View on Aboriginal Peoples' Conditions

Cross tabulation: 'View on Aboriginal Peoples' Conditions BY 'Highest level of Education Completed?' BY Quebec							
				Highest level of Education Completed?			Total
				Primary/ Secondary	CEGEP/ professional training	University studies	
Rest of Canada Chi-square 39.951a** Cramer's V .123** Df=4 n = 1184	View on Aboriginal Peoples' Conditions	Not sure	%	20	19	15	18
		They should try harder	%	41	38	27	33
		Due to socioeconomic conditions	%	39	43	58	49
TOTAL				100	100	100	100
Quebec Chi-square 13.690a** Cramer's V .138** Df= 4 n = 362	View on Aboriginal Peoples' Conditions	Not sure	%	26	21	19	21
		They should try harder	%	45	44	31	38
		Due to socioeconomic conditions	%	29	35	50	41
TOTAL				100	100	100	100
Canada Chi-square 49.106a** Cramer's V .126** Df= 4 N = 1544	View on Aboriginal Peoples' Conditions	Not sure	%	21	20	16	18
		They should try harder	%	42	39	28	35
		Due to socioeconomic conditions	%	37	41	56	47
TOTAL				100	100	TOTAL	%

Source: Canadian Election Studies 2011, Questions MBS11_B5; PES11_15; PROVINCE11
a0 cells have expected count less than 5.
** p ‹ 0.01
Percentages have been rounded up

[2] See Annex 1 for the syntax used in SPSS to compute the cross tabulation.

The results of the chi-square test for Canada as a whole, for the Rest of Canada (RoC), and Quebec, demonstrate that the 'level of education' and 'the view on the reasons for Indigenous peoples' conditions are associated at a ninety-nine confidence level. However, the sample size for those in Quebec is small and the strength of this relationship is relatively weak. Inferences about the general population are difficult to make, but what can be said about respondents in this specific survey is that there is a large proportion of those who only completed primary or secondary school in Canada in general (forty-two percent), in Quebec (forty-five percent) and in the RoC (forty-one percent) who answered that Indigenous peoples should 'try harder.' The presence of this belief is also hinted by Margot Francis, who refers to other statistics gathered from Canadian high school students responding to a survey by the Coalition for the Advancement of Aboriginal Studies. The results pointed to the fact that the information they were given was insufficient to understand contemporary conflicts between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples (Francis 2011, 11). However, more empirical studies and surveys need to be conducted to establish that high school education does not seem adequate to raise awareness of past and present implications of colonialism in Canada. It is important that already at the elementary and high school level, students are exposed to the history of colonialism in Canada. Therefore, the link between this colonial legacy and the present situation of Indigenous peoples could be made in people's mind.

Also telling is that even in the CES questionnaire, the reasons behind the socio-economic conditions are not mentioned. There are no answer choices that include the acknowledgement of the role of the state in creating poor living conditions for Indigenous peoples compared to the rest of Canadians. Even when attempting to measure the views of Canadians towards Indigenous peoples, the questions are framed within a colonial discourse. The second response: 'Social and Economic Conditions Make It Almost *Impossible* for most Indigenous Peoples to Overcome Poverty', although less uninformed than the first response ('*If Aboriginal peoples tried harder…')*, still presents the 'Indian' problem as solely an 'Indian' one, or as the "endless circle of disadvantage,"

(Adelson 2005, S58) whereas it is really the "settler problem" (Regan 2010, 16).

These examples of persisting myths and Canadians' misperceptions highlight the need to educate the public about the colonization of Indigenous peoples by the Canadian state. According to Cairns, it is important to "shake the majority society's belief in its own' virtue" (2000, 118). In other words, it is necessary to show Canadians that the peacemaker myth is what it is, a myth. The implications of the endurance of these falsely held beliefs are important. As Regan phrases it: "we comfort ourselves with the peacemaker myth, which precludes us from examining our own legacy as colonizers" (2010, 106). The myth informs what we think today of Indigenous peoples, with preconceptions and intolerance (Francis 2011, 22). This is how reconciliation and de-colonization are linked. In order to de-colonize non-Indigenous peoples' account of history and to reconcile Indigenous peoples and other Canadians, addressing and defeating the peacemaker myth is key (Regan 2010, 107). How can we address the persistence of those myths? There are two main ways to educate the public, *public* education and curriculum content in schools.

1.3 How to Educate the Public?

Less focus has been given to educating the public when people are in schools while *public* education has received more attention. For instance, Regan invites the individual adult reader to question the myth and become educated by reading books and by attending conferences (Regan 2010, 237). Another example is the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples Report (RCAP), which recommended that all institutions in society, such as the media, the justice system, and the bureaucracy, should contribute to the development of a stronger relationship (Cairns 2000, 119). This is an illustration of a focus on *public* education with the public getting informed through the media, conferences or events organized outside a formal educational setting.

As Cairns criticizes the "*relative neglect of the urban dimension*" in the RCAP report (2000, 123), I criticize the relative neglect of

the content of educational material for non-Indigenous peoples in the Commission's conception of *public* education. Cairns' criticism relates to the RCAP's constitutional conception, which is a nation-to-nation conception. The setting to achieve Indigenous peoples' self-determination goals is in a land base, not in an urban setting (Cairns 2000, 123). Similar to his point, my criticism relates to how the vision of two separate nations led the Commission to concentrate only on education for Indigenous peoples in a land-base or Indigenous-dominated communities. For the RCAP, reforming the curriculum content is thus only an endeavour for schools for Indigenous with a land base, as it is considered an essential step for Indigenous self-government (RCAP 1996, vol.3, 404-29). The whole chapter on 'Education' is actually dedicated to educational reform for Indigenous peoples on reserves. What about reforming the curriculum for non-Indigenous students? This illustrates how the words 'education issues' and 'Indigenous peoples' are automatically associated to refer to the issues only Indigenous peoples face. However, it does also concern non-Indigenous people. This is well summarized in a sentence by Goldlewska et al.: "*the principal problem in Aboriginal education in Canada is the education of Canadians*" (2010, 417).

RCAP does have a conception of how to build awareness among non-Indigenous people which is framed within a *public* education discourse (RCAP 1996, vol.5, 83). This means that recommendations put forward to educate the general public are solutions outside the classroom. While educational institutions such as high school, community colleges (CEGEPS in Quebec) and universities are considered, their role in increasing public awareness is not in classroom teachings. It is rather in the creation of extra events, workshops and activities (RCAP 1996, vol.5, 89).

This neglect is unfortunate. The Commission acknowledges that *public education* represents challenges such as limited budgets and attention of the general public. It proposes solutions, such as greater media coverage, conferences and awareness activities, which would be expected to have high costs and have only a limited impact on a small audience (RCAP 1996, vol.5, 83). Indeed, if those proposals are not compulsory, the outreach of such

solutions might not be enough to change mentalities. I argue that the goal of the RCAP to educate the public to counter the damaging effects of bias among non-Indigenous Canadians cannot be met simply by addressing general *public* education. This is why I see an important role for the improvement of high school curricula. As high school is in most cases compulsory (StatisticsCanada.ca, 2015), it would have a greater outreach, since the changes would occur in content that is viewed in class. One would not have to worry about the lack of time or attention of adults when they look at media content.

However, the purpose of this paper is not to diminish the importance of *public* education. Education of non-Indigenous population in schools can help complement *public* education to attain a renewed relationship. Indeed, advocating for both *public* education and formal education in schools for non-Indigenous peoples has the underlying assumption that non-Indigenous Canadians have a role to play in building the relationship. As *public* education searches to tackle the two myths held by the majority of the Canadian population, changes in school curricula can also help address the false images that continue to be present in school textbooks (Barker 2009, 327). It is necessary, and as Nadia Ferrara argues, history textbooks have been a tool to promote Eurocentrism (Ferrara 2015, 5). Ralston also highlights that education needs to be changed in Canada. Some provinces started to include Indigenous issues in their history classes for non-Indigenous students (Saul 2011, 287). I will demonstrate that this is not the case in Quebec's history textbooks.

II. A Lost Opportunity: Quebec's Debate on Reforming the History Curriculum

The debate about the reform of the history curriculum in high school, from 2006 to 2010, was a lost opportunity to engage in a discussion of how to decolonize our account of our history, or what Donald refers to the "*deconstruction of our shared past*" (Donald 2009, 5) with Indigenous peoples. Despite a promising start, there was a backlash against the promised reform, both among the academia and the general public, and an absence of

debate concerning the depiction of Indigenous peoples in history curriculum.

2.1 A promising Start

Interestingly, the root of the reform dates back before 2006 and some proposals demonstrated a promising effort to include other groups into the history curriculum. Until the reform in 2007, the basics of the history curriculum dated back from 1982. In 1995, a long overdue Task Force on History Teaching was established, and a report was published in 1996. A recommendation was made to include the study of non-Western societies, such as Indigenous peoples. While there were several critics at that time, those recommendations were implemented by the government (Létourneau 2011, 82-3). This was an important first step towards decolonizing our account of our history, as Delâge reminds us, history has been influenced and shaped through colonialism and its legacy (2000, 521).

This promising start seems to fit into Russell's view, who wrote during this time period that Indigenous peoples were in a relatively more favorable situation in Quebec compared to the rest of Canada. Indeed, he claimed that they actually benefited from Quebec nationalism. This was explained by the fact that Quebeckers see themselves as forming a nation, and so they should be able to deal with a multi-national society better than the rest of Canada or even compared to other countries (Russell 1997, 117).

However, there is reason for skepticism with the argument that Indigenous peoples' claims are made more visible in Quebec compared to the rest of Canada. Russell acknowledges the limitations of his own view, as he states that Quebec's conception of federalism in Canada, which is based on the two-nation compact conception, excludes Indigenous peoples (1997, 117). Adding to this point, it is the same view of 'Quebec as a nation within' (to which Russell refers to) that fostered the strong opposition to the curriculum's reform. Instead of making non-Indigenous people in Quebec more open to claims from other 'nations within', this

strong nationalist sentiment fostered a huge opposition against the proposal of making the history more 'plural'.

2.2 A Lost Opportunity: Implications of the Strong Opposition to the Reform

Strong opposition towards the reform has been voiced among some teachers, but also within the general public and media. It is significant because it represents a lost opportunity to re-imagine the Quebec nation and the place of Indigenous peoples in our account of history. There was an outright rejection coming mainly from academic to the proposal for more inclusiveness and diversity in historical accounts. For instance, the high school history teachers' group, the *Société des professeurs d'histoire du Québec* (SPHQ) opposed the reform. Létourneau surveyed the literature on the debate surrounding the reform of the history curriculum, and identified three main criticisms advanced by the 'conservatists', or those against the reform.

The first criticism dealt mostly with pedagogical concerns, but the last two are quite relevant: the fact that history was presented as less political, not national, and more plural, and the fear that revisiting the past would damage the unity of the Quebec nation (Létourneau 2011, 86-90). The inclusion of other groups in historical accounts was unfortunately viewed as a zero-sum game, if Indigenous peoples or minorities were to have more place, it was seen as detrimental to Quebeckers of French Canadian descent (see Bouvier 2006, ledevoir.ca, 2015). Not only was opposition voiced among academics, but also among the general public after Antoine Robitaille, a journalist in *Le Devoir*, revealed the content of the new history program (Bouvier 2008, 2). Unfortunately, criticisms in the media were made mostly by columnists and writers who were not curriculum experts or history teachers. This was rightly pointed out by Létourneau and Éthier et al. (2013, 92). The failure to engage in a discussion on how to de-colonize the history curriculum illustrates how certain Quebeckers are not ready to move beyond a certain nationalist narrative. The main criticisms gravitated towards one primary concern, identified by Létourneau: "*the history of Quebec is no longer presented on the basis of the*

canon of a francophone nation struggling for political recognition and resisting outside domination" (Létourneau 2011, 87). This touches the heart of the matter. The conception of a Quebec nation who has been colonized and has always been struggling is deemed essential for some to foster unity among the Quebec nation.

Presenting other narratives from other groups, and acknowledging that other nations, such as First Nations, are also struggling, seemed for 'conservatists' to threaten the foundation on which the collective identity is built. Jacques Rouillard, a historian, expressed that presenting diverse groups and cultures would endanger the unifying force that the narrative of oppressed Quebeckers by English colonizers provided until now (Rouillard 2007, 85-88). Félix Bouvier, a historian and didactician, also exemplifies this nationalist view, when he wrote in *Le Devoir* the famous article "*When History is used as a Tool for Propaganda.*"[3] He argues that 'federalists' won against Quebec nationalists, since they succeeded to implement what is according to him a biased history curriculum (Bouvier 2006). Envisaging a new conception of the nation is made difficult when such discourse is advanced. There seems to be no place for other groups in the account of Quebec's history. Therefore, the basis on which Quebec nationalism rests does not allow for the acknowledgement of the existence of other nations.

Adding to this, as mentioned earlier, Quebec's vision of Canadian federalism is an obstacle to Indigenous claims, because it does not consider them as founding nations. Including diverse groups in the history of Quebec is at odds with the two-nation compact view of federalism (with only the English and French as founding nations) which predominates in Quebec. This underlies the thinking of authors such as Bouvier, who sees the relationship between English and French Canadians as the most important one in the history of Canada. Some 'conservatists' even argued that the new program was centered *too much* on Indigenous peoples and cultural diversity (Éthier et al. 2013, 95).

[3] All translations were made by the author. Original title: "Quand l'histoire se fait outil de propagande."

Now that the debate surrounding the reform has been examined, the actual result is worth looking at. While there were many criticisms, the reform was implemented and new textbooks were approved by the ministry of education (MELS). What is the actual content of those textbooks and what is the place of Indigenous peoples?

III. History in Quebec's High School Textbooks: Methodology

Does Quebec's history curriculum include Canada and Quebec's colonial history? Before answering this question, I will examine the methods chosen to carry my analysis. There are two major strands in textbook research. The first one is research on the use and reception of textbooks by teachers and students, and the second one is content (Nicholls 2003, 13). This essay will concentrate on the second: what is included but also not included in the texts.

3.1 Sample

The sample consists of the four series of high school history textbooks approved by the ministry of education (MELS) for both secondary three and secondary four. Secondary three would be the equivalent of Grade 9 and secondary 4 would be Grade 10 outside Quebec. These years were chosen because after the implementation of the reform, the history of Quebec and Canada has been extended to be taught during those two years (Létourneau 2011, 87). The textbooks are: *Fresques, Le Québec, une histoire à construire…, Présences,* and *Repères* (mels.gouv.qc.ca, 2015). Secondary three textbooks are a chronological presentation of events, while secondary four textbooks present themes in a non-chronological order.

The sample of textbooks has limitations. The first one is that only textbooks were analyzed, and not exercise books. The second limitation is that while there are only four books approved by the MELS, others can be used in high schools. The third limitation is that no English textbooks were analyzed. The final constraint is

that not all textbooks were available at the *Bibliothèque et Archives Nationales du Québec*.

3.2 Method

As proposed by Pingel, this essay will combine quantitative and qualitative methods, allowing for breadth and depth in the analysis (2010, 5-67). The quantitative method chosen for this paper is analysis of frequency. Although textbooks follow the same curriculum, the number of times a topic is addressed can differ (Pingel 2010, 5-67). This analysis was done after computing two tables (Table 2, Table 3). The tables were constructed to give an overview of the frequency of Indigenous peoples being mentioned in a textbook, but with no regard to the way they are depicted. To count as referring to Indigenous peoples, a page needs to have a minimum of one reference to: Aboriginal peoples, Indigenous peoples, Métis, Inuit, their culture, their tradition, their rights, their claims, their relations with Canadians, etc. This reference can be textual or by means of a picture or a map. A percentage was calculated from this number of pages compared to the total number of pages.

However, quantity is far from capturing the whole picture. Complementing the analysis with qualitative methods is essential, as it allows for richer understanding of the way the information is presented in the text. For this study, critical analysis is the most relevant. Critical analysis is defined by Nicholls as "*identify[ing] and expos[ing] textbook portrayals that perpetuate unequal social relations in society*" (Nicholls 2003, 14).

IV. Analysis of Textbooks: The limited place of Indigenous Peoples

The implementation of the reform did result in more consideration for Indigenous peoples. However, it has not yet led to decolonizing the curriculum. This is an important obstacle to reconciliation, as myths are still persisting in textbooks. This moderate effort of including Indigenous peoples is a double-edge sword. While more space for Indigenous peoples is welcome, the way it is done is still within the narrative of colonialism. Firstly, the 'tipis and costumes

approach' is still present when it comes to presenting Indigenous peoples in history. It has been used in the past in history textbooks, which gives the impression that First Nations have done nothing since "*the buffalos were killed off and the West was settled*" (Donald 2009, 5). Secondly, the myth of the peacemaker is still persisting. Thirdly, the way Indigenous peoples are presented in the textbooks makes the importance of studying them unclear.

4.1 Passed the 'Tipis and Costumes Approach'?

I argue that the textbooks post-reform still use what Donald refers to the 'tipis and costumes approach.' Concerning secondary three textbooks, they present a chronological account of events, with Volume A concentrating from 1500 to late 1700, and Volume B looking at late 1700 to today. To be able to assess the hypothesis that Indigenous peoples are still portrayed as having done little since the fur trade, a division has been made between 'past' and 'contemporary period'. Therefore, if the passage refers to Indigenous peoples up to the Confederation, it belongs to a referral of Indigenous peoples 'in the past,' and if it refers to a period post-1867, then it is categorized as a referral to 'contemporary' period. Christophe Horguelin et al., authors of *Fresques, 2e année du 2e cycle,* define the contemporary period as being post-1867(2009, 61). Following my hypothesis, it would be expected that numerous pages would be dedicated to Indigenous peoples in the past in Volume A, and few pages in Volume B. On the contrary, if a high proportion of pages are dedicated also to contemporary issues dealing with Indigenous peoples in Volume B (which deals with contemporary period), this would present evidence against my hypothesis.

Looking at secondary four textbooks, they do not present history in a chronological way, but in a thematic fashion. The themes are: population and settlement, economy and development (Volume A), culture and thinking movements, power and powers, and contemporary social issues (Volume B). Therefore, from this different organization, following my hypothesis that states the presence of a 'tipis and costumes' approach in the textbooks, one would expect more mention of Indigenous peoples in the chapter

'population and settlement,' which deals with the period 1700, than in any other chapter, such as 'contemporary social issues.' On the contrary, if Indigenous peoples would be considered in both volumes and in all themes, including the theme of 'contemporary social issues,' it would present support against the hypothesis.

Table 2- Secondary three: Consideration of Indigenous Peoples in Quebec History Textbooks

Textbooks	Indigenous Peoples Pre-1867	Indigenous Peoples Post 1867
Freques (Vol.A)	31%	3%
Fresques (Vol.B)	2%	2%
Le Québec, une histoire à construire		
Présences		
Repères (Vol.A)	28%	3%
Repères (Vol.B)	0%	14%

Looking at the results in Table 2 for secondary three, the conclusions that can be made are limited, as only two of the four textbooks were available. The general trend in *Fresques* and *Repères* is that while space is made for Indigenous peoples, this space is given only when dealing with earlier years (1500 to 1867). As expected, a significant thirty-one percent of Volume A of *Fresques* and twenty-eight per cent of Volume A of *Repères* deal with Indigenous peoples pre-1867. They are disregarded from the 1867 to the present, except for a few pages. Only two percent of Volume B of *Fresques*, which deals with history from late 1700 speak about Indigenous peoples after Confederation. It is true that Volume B of *Repères* has a better record with fourteen percent of the volume dealing with Indigenous peoples in the contemporary period. This demonstrates how Indigenous peoples are still relegated to the past, and have a limited place in Quebec's contemporary history.

Table 3- Secondary four: Consideration of Indigenous Peoples in Quebec History

Textbooks	Indigenous Peoples Pre-1867	Indigenous Peoples Post 1867
Freques (Vol.A)	***Population***	
	9%	~0%
	Economy	
	5%	0%
Freques (Vol.B)	***Culture***	
	7%	1%
	Power	
	2%	2%
	Contemporary	
	~0%	0%
Le Québec, une histoire à construire (Vol.1)	***Population***	
	0%	10%
Le Québec, une histoire à construire (Vol.2)		
Présences (Vol.1)	***Population***	
	5%	0%
	Economy	
	4%	0%
Présences (Vol.2)		
Repères (Vol. A)	***Population***	
	2%	1%
	Economy	
	1%	0%
Repères (Vol.B)	***Culture***	
	1%	~0%
	Power	
	1%	1%
	Contemporary	
	0%	1%

Regarding secondary four textbooks, the results are in Table 3. The results are in accordance with the expectations set in my hypothesis. Although the proportions dealing with Indigenous peoples are all relatively low, the highest proportion are within the 'Population and settlement' theme that deals mostly with the period from 1500 to 1700. The fact that Indigenous peoples are mentioned mainly in the 'population and settlement' chapter is significant. It demonstrates how almost no consideration is given for the role of Indigenous peoples in contemporary society. Another example is the 'contemporary social issues' chapter in *Fresques, Volume B*, which identifies the following contemporary challenges: ageing population, water management, equality for women and immigrants, and federal-provincial relations. Nowhere is to be found the challenges of reconciliation with Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous Quebeckers. Textbooks contribute to a perception that Indigenous peoples were only 'relevant' in a distant past.

Concentrating on *how* Indigenous peoples are actually presented when they are mentioned, the discourse used when describing Indigenous traditions and culture definitely fits the 'tipis and costumes approach.' For instance, in *Fresques* vol. 2 of secondary four, the third chapter, 'culture and thinking movements,' presents the culture of the 'first occupants' with an Indigenous tattoo and a Shaman sculpture. Then, the culture under the French Regime, British Regime and contemporary period is presented, without mention of Indigenous culture. The contemporary culture only refers to elements that are 'French Quebeckers', giving the impression that Indigenous culture has not evolved and is not relevant in the present.

4.2 Persisting Presence of Myths: Denial of Settler Colonialism

While the myth of *terra nullius* has been altered, the peacemaker myth is still present in those textbooks. Of course, it would be difficult today to sustain the myth that no occupants were present before the arrival of Europeans, or that those occupants would be so inferior that no consideration should be given to them. The appellation of 'first occupants' in the textbooks addresses this.

Nonetheless, the peacemaker myth is still alive. This can be demonstrated by the language used. Firstly, there is a strong denial of settler colonialism, and Indigenous peoples seem to have certainly not been colonized. Words such as 'a territory to share'[4] (see *Repères* vol. 1, secondary four) and 'a territory to be acquired'[5] (see *Présences*, vol. 1, secondary four) are used instead. There is no mention of forced appropriation of land. Rather, positive words such as the 'arrival,' 'exploration' and 'discovery' are used (Thibeault et al. 2007, 49). In *Fresques*, vol. 2, secondary four, Indigenous peoples 'meet' Europeans (Horguelin et al. 2009, 90). The Europeans colonizing Indigenous peoples is framed within a positive discourse of 'discovery' and of societal advancement.

4 'Un territoire à partager'

5 'Un territoire à s'approprier'

Furthermore, the concept of 'colonie de peuplement' (settlement colony) is present in all textbooks, and the use of the term 'colonization' poses problems. 'Colonie de peuplement' refers to the French who come to settle in New France. The 'colonization' of New France simply refers to the '*installation'* of French people in New France, not to the fact that Indigenous peoples were colonized to achieve such 'installation.' In that way, colonization is taught to students as referring only to foreign powers (such as France) 'installing' inhabitants, which gives no space to the conception of settler colonialism. How can the legacy of colonialism and the injustices that Indigenous peoples face today be linked in peoples' mind, if such existence of settler colonialism is not even acknowledged?

The absence of recognition of the responsibility of the white settler society is illustrated in the way textbooks frame the impact of the arrival of Europeans on Indigenous peoples, such as bringing epidemics in the 17th century. For instance, in *Le Québec, une histoire à construire… vol.1*, the choice of words is telling. Thus, it is because "*Aboriginal peoples, isolated on their continent since several centuries, have not been able to immunize themselves against diseases that Europeans transmit to them*,"[6] (Brodeur-Girard et al. 2008, 17) that they suffer population losses. The composition of this sentence is interesting, as the main subject is Indigenous peoples, and not Europeans, who are placed in the complement of the sentence. The fault lies on Indigenous peoples who, after all, have not been able to immunize against diseases. The text goes on: "*it is certain that the epidemics have a devastating effect on Aboriginal societies*"[7] (Brodeur-Girard et al. 2008, 17) giving the impression that the responsible are not the Europeans, but the diseases themselves.

Furthermore, the 'difficult social situations' of Indigenous peoples today are presented in the textbooks as being partly due to "*economic and political problems*" (Fortin et al. 2007, 6). It is

[6] "Isolées sur leur continent depuis plusieurs siècles, les Amérindiens n'ont pas pu s'immuniser contre les maladies que les Européens leur transmettent"

[7] "… il est certain que les épidémies ont un effet dévastateur sur les sociétés amérindiennes"

mentioned that to remedy the situation, Indigenous peoples are seeking more autonomy. Problematic is the fact that there is no explicit mention of the responsibilities of the Quebec province and the Canadian state in creating and perpetuating those 'difficult situations.' Another legacy of colonialism is certainly the *Indian Act*. The *Indian Act* is defined in *Repères vol. B,* secondary three as a "*law which defines the particular status of Aboriginal peoples and the territorial rules for those living on reserves*" (Thibeault et al. 2007, 424). The fact that the *Indian Act* is presented briefly in such a way parallels the presentation of the *Indian Act* in Ontario's high school textbooks. Godlewaska et al. argued that Ontario's textbooks contributed to the public's unawareness of the relevance of the Indian Act and its consequences (Goldlewska et al. 2010, 419-420).

Secondly, western settlement is also presented as rather peaceful, apart from a 'glitch' with the Riel rebellions. In *Fresques vol.1*, secondary four, in the chapter 'population and settlement', (a chapter where one would expect discussion of settler colonialism and the violence perpetrated against Indigenous peoples), the Riel rebellions are only mentioned briefly (Horguelin et al. 2009, 175). Adding to this, the fact that the Metis claiming rights for the territory they inhabit is framed as a 'difficulty' to Western settlement shows how this discourse used today is not far from a the colonial discourse at that time. In *Repères vol. B,* secondary three, western settlement is framed into these terms: "*the integration of the prairies into Canada is not done without difficulties*"[8] (Thibeault et al. 2007, 320). This fits within the argument of Daniel Francis, that in the "*White version of history, Indians stood in the way of Canada realizing its true potential*" (2011, 235).

Regan's "*twist on the peacemaker myth*," mentioned earlier is also present in the textbooks. As a reminder, the twist is that while there is a refusal to name past wrongdoings as colonialism, they are recognized, but only as something belonging to a distant past. In the textbooks, if the expression 'settler colonialism' is not used,

[8] "L'intégration des Prairies au Canada ne se fait pas sans difficulté."

there is the acknowledgement that some wrongs were done. There is some recognition in *Le Québec, une histoire à construire…*, secondary four, that during the 1850s some assimilationist policies were put in place by the British regime (Brodeur-Girard et al. 2008, 58). Nonetheless, these past wrongdoings do not amount to *colonialism*, and are distinguishable from present policies. Present policies are even framed as being favorable to Indigenous peoples. Problematic is the fact Indigenous peoples signing treaties is depicted as Indigenous peoples 'receiving sizeable benefits.' For instance, in *Fresques vol.2*, secondary four, a student can read: "*Certain Aboriginal nations in Quebec occupy rich zones in natural resources. They can thus obtain advantages when they give the right to exploit them*"[9] (Horguelin et al. 2009, 160). This phrasing tends to put aside the legal and political battles Indigenous peoples had to carry to make their rights respected or at least considered.

4.3 Why Are Indigenous Peoples Important in Canada?

Another major flaw in the textbooks is that it is far from being clear why Indigenous peoples are important in Canada, and why we should be 'bothered' to study them. As Russell reminds us, unfortunately, there are still numerous Canadians who believe that Indigenous peoples' cultures do not deserve to be preserved (Russell 1997, 112). The presence of the 'tipis and costumes approach' is in fact not so much problematic in itself. If it is not a caricature, presenting the traditions of Indigenous peoples can allow students to understand how Indigenous peoples have different cultures that they want to and have the right to protect. The problem arises when students cannot understand why such culture is presented, and why it is relevant.

For instance, although generally Volumes A of secondary three textbooks start with a couple of pages on Indigenous peoples today, there is no chapter that comes back to those contemporary issues at the end of Volumes B. These few pages at the beginning

[9] "Certaines nations autochtones du Québec occupent des zones riches en mines ou en ressources forestières ou hydrauliques. Elles peuvent donc obtenir des avantages lorsqu'elles accordent à d'autres le droit de les exploiter."

of Volumes A are presented without the context. At the end of Volumes B, no reference is made on those issues presented at the beginning of Volumes A, in light of what was learned. Adding to this, secondary four textbooks start again with Indigenous peoples in the 1500 with the chapter on 'population and settlement'. This repetition of content, without being justified, could even frustrate students as the explanation for this new thematic approach is not given.

Furthermore, the way Indigenous peoples are presented, as mentioned earlier, as actors of the past, with no contemporary voice or relevance does not help the student understand the importance of studying Indigenous peoples' culture. There is a huge gap that needs to be filled. Daniel Francis illustrates this when he explains how non-Indigenous people still treat Indigenous peoples as historic figures, and not as citizens of a modern Canada (Francis 2011, 240). Indigenous peoples are portrayed as having played a role in helping French settlers to adapt to the climate and territory, and then they re-appear briefly when they start opposing the James Bay hydro electrical project. What happened in between? Why do Indigenous peoples make those claims? This is linked to the second criticism, that of the denial of settler colonialism. If there was no such thing as the colonization of Indigenous people, why would there be a need to de-colonize and reconcile?

Conclusion

In this paper, I argued that education in high schools is as important as *public* education outside schools for reconciliation and renewing the relationship between Indigenous and non-Indigenous peoples. Unfortunately, the debate on the reform of the history curriculum shows how the conception of nationalism and the Quebec nation makes it more difficult, and not easier (as Russell argued) to include Indigenous peoples in Quebec's account of history. Also, the textbooks resulting from the reform are still within the colonial framework.

My work could be continued with research on the second strand in textbook research: the actual use and reception of textbooks by

teachers and students. Also interesting would be an investigation of what students actually remember from those two years of history education. Do they only remember that Indigenous peoples have dream catchers or that the Durham report was an attempt to assimilate French Canadians? While these are caricatures, they give an example of the importance of also studying how teachers emphasize certain elements and present the material.

In sum, Canada's colonial past and present is downplayed in the textbooks. The peacemaker myth persists and the link between the colonial past and the current disenfranchisement of Indigenous peoples is missing. Unfortunately, students are most likely to wonder, even after two full years of reviewing Canada and Quebec's history: why does studying Indigenous peoples matter at all today? If this cannot be answered, how can reconciliation be achieved? This is not a solid ground to build a new relationship. Settlers definitely have a role in reconciling; the responsibility does not lie only with Indigenous peoples.

ANNEX 1: Syntax Used for CES 2011 Cross Tabulation

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USING SPSS
*DV

FREQUENCIES MBS11_B5.

RECODE MBS11_B5 (1=1) (2=2) (8=0) into AboView2.

VARIABLE LABELS AboView2 "View on Aboriginal Peoples' Conditions".

VALUE LABELS AboView2 1 "They should try harder" 2 "Due to
socioeconomic conditions" 0 "Not sure".

FREQUENCIES AboView2.

*IV

RECODE CPS11_79 (1 thru 5=1) (6 thru 7=2) (8 thru 11=3) into EduLevel2.

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VARIABLE LABELS EduLevel2 "Highest level of Education Completed?".

FREQUENCIES EduLevel2.

*CONTROL: QUEBEC

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CROSSTABS TABLES AboView2 by EduLevel2 by quebec

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CANADA'S MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN: THE TROUBLE WITH MEDIA REPRESENTATION

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Biography: Chantell Morais is an Indigenous feminist scholar, with a specialized honours BA in Sociology, from York University, and is currently undertaking her Masters at McMaster University in the Gender Studies and Feminist Research department. Chantell has focused her education largely on the experiences of Indigenous women and the ongoing effects of colonization. Her main interests are in the effects of current policies and procedures in the Canadian criminal justice system as forms of ongoing colonial practices that serve to oppress Indigenous women.

Abstract: With the Canadian government's commitment to a public inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, media coverage of these women has increased. This article will look at the underlying madonna/whore dichotomy in Canadian newspapers as a restructuring of a modern day squaw narrative. This juxtaposing of the 'good girl' 'bad girl' binary results in accountability and responsibility of violence perpetrated against these women off of the underlying colonial policies, practices, laws, and the men who engage in such violence and onto the women themselves. By arguing that the violence experienced by these women is experienced in localized places and behaviours this paper seeks to determine how the madonna/whore dichotomy suggests less public outcry for the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

Keywords: Indigenous women, Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, violence

CANADA'S MISSING AND MURDERED INDIGENOUS WOMEN: THE TROUBLE WITH MEDIA REPRESENTATION

I write this paper with an awareness of the privilege I carry as a woman in graduate school with Mohawk nation and European ancestral bloodlines. The oppression and marginalization that I have experienced may not be the same as many other Indigenous women. The ongoing marginalization of Indigenous women and girls in Canada is nothing new, colonial policies and laws have sought to maintain the oppression of Indigenous communities for hundreds of years. Governmental policies and laws that resulted in the residential school system, the sixties scoop, and loss of status due to marriage, are only a few practices that have oppressed Indigenous communities and families in the country. It is only recently that the Canadian government, police departments, and media have taken notice of the violence perpetrated against Indigenous women. The lack of news coverage and police involvement in cases of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women went largely unnoticed by the greater Canadian public. While the Canadian public is just now beginning to be made aware of the overwhelming amount of missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls, their family members, activists, and communities have been calling for action and accountability for years. I am reluctant to identify a specific number of missing or murdered cases when it comes to Indigenous women and girls because there is no uniform missing persons protocol in Canada. This lack of protocol leaves police departments to determine whether a person is deemed to be missing or not. Many families and loved ones have spoken out against the lack of support in missing persons cases by the police. Those who have reported a friend or family member as missing may have been ignored as they were told that their loved one voluntarily disappeared, and did not want to be found, or will return when they are ready. This strategy in dealing with missing persons cases was usually used when the missing person was a sex worker, had a drug or alcohol dependency, or lived a 'transient' lifestyle.

In 2004 Amnesty International released their *Stolen Sisters Report* which focuses on violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls. This report recognizes that there is no way to track how many Indigenous women or girls are missing or murdered. "No one knows how many Indigenous women have been murdered or gone missing in Canada over the past three decades. The information that would make it possible to answer that question is simply not available" (Amnesty International, 2004, p.21). Amnesty International recognized more than 500 Indigenous women missing in 2004. This number was based on the Native Women's Association of Canada's investigation. Recently the Royal Canadian Mounted Police force has recognized 1,181 cases of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women.

Although many newspaper articles' representations of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women are localized to certain "at risk' locations or behaviours, the reality is that violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls takes place in areas other than the chosen few that have been highlighted. It seems that when the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women are localized in the media it is to the Vancouver Downtown Eastside, Highway 16 in British Columbia, also known as the Highway of Tears, or remote areas of the Prairies. 'At risk' behaviours are usually mentioned in newspaper articles as involvement in sex work, transient lifestyles, street involvement, or drug and alcohol dependency. It is with this notion of 'at risk' behaviours and locations that I became interested in the media representation of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada.

By situating the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women cases in stories of drug addiction, sex-work, and family violence, there is a representation of these women being partly responsible for the violence they experienced. The superior tone of these articles that suggest if only these women had stayed off the streets, or did not work in the sex industry, relegates these women to a category of violence experienced by the 'other.' This classification of the 'other' allows the violence to be understood as part of the wider Canadian public. Use of this narrative tells the reader that this violence is far from their own backyard as it is the result of the

woman's 'poor' life choices. When the media uses these women as cautionary tales for their readers, it neglects to expose the reality of such violence being perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls. This paper intends to argue that the Canadian media's representation of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women is nothing more than a modern day squaw narrative that results in the violence perpetrated being widely ignored.

Method and findings

During his 2015 federal election campaign, Prime Minister Justin Trudeau promised a complete public inquiry into Canada's Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. This promise created widespread media attention and has led to more newspaper coverage of these cases. Prior to 2015 newspaper coverage regarding Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women usually surrounded media coverage of the Robert Pickton case[10]. The Pickton case was partially responsible for the localization of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women media coverage to the Vancouver Downtown Eastside. The upcoming federal election and Justin Trudeau's promise for an inquiry, newspaper coverage started to include reports of the necessity of an inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada. It was this media coverage that resulted in the 2016 Canadian Hillman prize in journalism being shared between the *Globe and Mail*, *CBC*, and *radio-Canada* for their ongoing investigations into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. This paper will focus on the newspaper articles from one of the Canadian Hillman prize winners, the *Globe and Mail*. Fifteen newspaper articles, coverage starting from 2014 to 2016 have been selected from the *Globe and Mail*. Of the fifteen articles; two were published in 2014, nine in 2015, and four in 2016. The newspaper reports are scattered throughout the year, sometimes with five month gaps in coverage. However, it is important to emphasize that June and December of 2015 had the largest amount of articles published with three each

[10] Robert Pickton was charged with the murder of 26 women from Vancouver's Downtown Eastside. He was convicted of six of these murders in 2007. It is reported that while incarcerated Pickton confessed to killing 49 women to an under cover police officer posing as an inmate.

month. These time lines are consistent with the RCMP releasing an update to their Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women National Operational Overview in June, and the first stage of the public inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women taking place in December. The underlying messages in the majority of these articles suggest that Indigenous women are partly to blame for the violence that is committed against them. There is also significant coverage on whether or not the Canadian government should be concerned with gendered violence while completing the inquiry.

The media coverage within the fifteen articles included underlying messages of responsibility, not of the men who perpetrate violence against Indigenous women, but of the women themselves. Within these articles, five make reference to drug or alcohol dependency, three to sex work, and four to experiences with family violence. This reliance on the stories of what the wider public may deem risky behaviour, situates these women in roles of responsibility for the violence they experienced. This message is problematic because it shifts blame away from the perpetrators of violence and onto the women who experience it. In mentioning some of these women's involvement with alcohol or drugs, it suggests that their impaired state placed them in a situation where they were more vulnerable to violence or unaware of the danger they were in. One article suggests that a 'drug addicted prostitute' (Rossmo, 2015) is less likely to report violence inflicted on them and more likely to engage in a dangerous situation. When identifying some of the women's involvement in sex work, there seems to be an underlying tone that these women were responsible to keep themselves out of danger. The 'bad girl' image of the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women as alcohol and drug dependent sex workers justifies and removes the violence from the larger Canadian society. Finally the constant mentioning of Indigenous women being victims of familial violence, suggest that they chose to place themselves within roles of victimization by staying in a violent situation.

However, what this fails to address is that passing the blame of violence against Indigenous women from the perpetrator and on to

the victim results in a lack of accountability and responsibility. Instead of condemning the men who are violent with these women the newspaper articles seem to suggest that should these women not engage in certain behaviours they would not experience such violence. The idea that somehow the choices these women made bore responsibility in the violence they experienced, does not speak to the full story of what happens. This does not hold the perpetrator accountable for the action nor does it hold the Canadian government and legal system accountable for the underlying obligation to put an end to this violence. This message fails to get to the root of the problem, which really lies in the colonial policies and practices that oppress and marginalize Indigenous women and girls. None of the articles make reference to the damage colonial policies such as loss of status rights and residential schooling has had on Indigenous communities. The loss of language, abuses and traumas suffered by Indigenous people, as well as poorer living conditions on reserves, result in the oppression of Indigenous peoples across the country. These storylines leave out the racism Indigenous women experience in the law that contributes to the violence they experience. Refusal to turn to police departments and report violence due to fear of the police, and perpetrators receiving light sentences for their violent acts, all play a part in these women's experiences of violence whether directly or indirectly.

The other main theme in the newspaper articles questions whether or not the inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women should have a gendered focus. The articles claim that more Indigenous men are murdered in Canada than Indigenous women. In a November 2015 article, Rossmo notes that about 35 Indigenous women, and 60 Indigenous men die of homicide each year (Rossmo, 2015). The journalist suggests that the inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women may require a focus on Indigenous people as a whole instead of having a gendered focus. By shifting the inquiry's focus away from the women and girls the inquiry will lack a response to the unique experiences of oppression and marginalization that Indigenous women and girls experience. Of the fifteen articles six mentioned that Indigenous men were more likely to be murdered than Indigenous women in

Canada. While the disproportionate rates of violence inflicted on Indigenous men should be addressed, by mentioning this in relation to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women seems to downplay the importance of the current violence many Indigenous women and girls experience. As the *Stolen Sisters Report* notes "Indigenous women between the ages of 25 and 44 with status under the federal *Indian Act*, are five times more likely than other women of the same age to die as the result of violence" (Amnesty International, 2004, p.14). It is for this reason that the inquiry must not take up violence perpetrated against Indigenous men at this time. Because of the overwhelmingly disproportionate experiences of violence against Indigenous women in comparison to other women the same age, the inquiry should maintain its gendered focus. This does not mean that the Canadian government should not be addressing the violence perpetrated against Indigenous men, but rather that at this time there is a valid need for the inquiry on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women to maintain its focus.

The squaw narrative

By projecting messages of responsibility onto Indigenous women who experience violence the Canadian media does little to address the colonial policies and practices that have resulted in the oppression of Indigenous women. In reality, very few other groups of women could have such a high case count without wide spread public outrage. I am sure that I am not the only one who has wondered if 1,181 middle class women or university undergraduates went missing, would there be the same response? Why is it that 1,181 missing or murdered Indigenous women and girls are only now being taken up as a problem by the wider public? I argue that the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada have been neglected for so long because of Canadian policies, laws, and stereotypes have regulated them to the margins of societal importance. This has happened through ongoing squaw narratives, which replay stereotypes of Indigenous women as sexually available to White men. This idea that Indigenous women and girls bodies have been culturally stereotyped as less valuable, results in a diminished outrage of the violence they experience by

the greater public. How can one become publicly outraged when this violence is perpetrated if stereotypes of Indigenous women suggest that they can be violated?

The term squaw has been used for hundreds of years to degrade Indigenous women. King (2003) notes that the squaw is an Indigenous woman who has "been sexualized, doing 'what White men want for money and lust,' not love" (King, 2003, p.3). This narrative of the squaw as Indigenous women who are valued as nothing more than an immoral sexual convenience, readily available to any man interested creates the problem of violence perpetrated against them as acceptable. These narratives suggest that violence against certain women is less deplorable than violence against others. The current narrative of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women being drug addicted sex workers takes on a modern day squaw narrative that shifts blame from the perpetrators of violence onto the women themselves. This is evident in the juxtaposing narratives of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women being represented within familial roles in the media. The media's use of the mother, daughter, or sister trope when speaking of the missing and murdered women or girls suggests that mothers, sisters, and daughters are people who violence should not be committed against. This narrative determines that women are only deemed grievable if they can be placed within idealized familial roles that conform to acceptable modes of femininity (Dean 2015; Hugill, 2010).

In her book *Remembering Vancouver's disappeared women: Settler colonialism and the difficulty of inheritance* Amber Dean looks at the connection between a grievable death and the spaces one occupy's. She argues that the missing or murdered women from the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver needed to be situated in roles of mothers, daughters, or sisters to justify a public outcry of grief. It is the mother, sister, daughter narrative that is responsible for the public becoming angry about the violence these women have experienced. This narrative usually speaks to a madonna/whore dichotomy that I believe is related to a larger squaw narrative in which the 'bad girl' deserves less of a public outcry than the 'good girl.' This madonna/whore dichotomy that

rests on the ‘good girl’ ‘bad girl’ binary is quite similar to the squaw narrative used throughout history. Traditional stereotypes of Indigenous women are based in the Indian princess and squaw binary.

Where the princess was beautiful, the squaw was ugly, even deformed. Where the

princess was virtuous, the squaw was debased, immoral, a sexual convenience.

Where the princess was proud, the squaw lived a squalid life of servile toil, mistreated

by her men—and openly available to non-Native men (Merskin, 2010, p.353).

Newsprint representation of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women as retaining responsibility for the violence inflicted on them because of ‘poor’ location or behaviours situates these women in the traditional stereotype of the squaw. “Because the disappeared women have been so widely associated with the whore - ‘bad girl’ half of this dichotomy, a counter discourse far works to recuperate the women by publicly associating them with the Madonna- ‘good girl’ side serves a number of strategic purposes” (Dean, 2015, p. 107). These purposes include removing sections of some of the women’s lives in an attempt to ‘humanize’ them as someone’s mother, sister, or daughter. What this madonna/whore dichotomy does not question is why these women need to be situated in a familial role in order to be deemed valuable for a public outcry of grief or anger.

David Hugill claims that “”traditionally virtuous women (mothers, daughters, wives) are set up in sharp contrast to the ‘runaways’ and ‘throwaways’ mired in the corruption of street- level commercial sex. As we shall see, this contrast is powerfully reproduced in journalist attempts to restore a certain dignity to the missing and murdered women by celebrating their status as family members and contrasting that against the immoral practices of sex work and

narcotic use" (Hugill, 2010, p.58). One of the fifteen articles from the *Globe and Mail* is entitled "Mother reflects on Fontaine's death" This article focuses on an interview with Tina Fontaine's mother, who recounts the murder of her daughter. After briefly covering the details of Fontaine's murder and the recent arrest of her killer the journalist goes into a timeline of Fontaine's life. The article addresses Tina being placed in children services by her aunt after the beating death of her father, in order to seek access to a support system to help the grieving teen. The reporter then mention's Fontaine's mother's experiences with alcoholism and that she left her children at a young age to be raised by their father. The article uses Fontaine's life as a storyline of ongoing victimization. The violent loss of a father, being raised by multiple family members before being placed in children services, and then her mother's alcoholism the reader is left to wonder how Fontaine ever stood a chance. What is extremely problematic is the article starts out with Fontaine's death resulting to changes in the province's child-welfare system, however it does not go on to address what these changes are. The use of Fontaine's murder to divulge deeper into the problematics of the child-welfare system would be understandable and would probably lead to a positive impact on an understanding of Indigenous girls experiences in the child-welfare system. This article fails to address the underlying problems of Indigenous children in the child-welfare system and instead situates a tale of woe when it comes to Tina Fontaine. Even when situating these women and girls in familial roles the media still responds with the use of the 'poor' life choices dialogue, resulting in a lack of accountability for policies and practices that place Indigenous women and girls in danger.

Determining the grievable

The use of the squaw narrative in the media's representation of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women sets out to determine the public grievability of one's life and the violence they suffered. Butler (2004) determines a grievable life as a life that is a highly protected life, one that the public can identify its suffering with. Situating the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women to 'at risk' locations and behaviours in the media has resulted in their lives

being determined as less grievable than others. This has been achieved through the use of relegating these women to certain spaces like the Vancouver Downtown Eastside and labelling some of their actions as behaviours that take place outside of normal society. The use of the cautionary tale, where the reporter outlines the Missing or Murdered Indigenous Women as a woman who engages in sex work, experiences familial violence, or has a drug or alcohol dependency, works towards telling the reader that this violence is outside of normal Canadian life. This creates a false sense of security for the reader where they do not need to recognize the violence being perpetrated against these women and girls because it is a problem that takes place 'over there.' Another criteria of a grievable life, is the public obituary which is used as a tool to display ones grievable death (Butler, 2004). The lack of media coverage of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, including the lack of naming the women, and writing about them within a madonna/whore dichotomy serves as ways the newspaper articles do not engage in a public obituary for these women.

In David Hugill's *Missing women, missing news: Covering crisis in Vancouver's downtown eastside* he notes that the production of the prostitute is a convenient narrative that "produces her as a 'distinguishable social type' (Cohen 2002:1): a drugged, dazed, deviant, dissolute and corrupted 'other' whose affiliation with a notorious underworld places her in constant threat of danger and predation" (Hugill, 2010, p.55). It is the producing of the prostitute in the news that is so closely connected with the squaw narrative discussed above. If violence is expected upon the prostitute, then the reader is not shocked when this violence happens. This response does nothing to look at how to prevent the violence from happening. In a newspaper article "Political activism on behalf of Indigenous women rooted in chief's frightening personal experience" The Grand Chief Sheila North Wilson recounts some of her experiences. The article takes on a 'good girl' 'bad girl' narrative in a different way, one that is close related to the conditions of reserve life in Canada. While the journalist does not confront the conditions of life on a reservation, it is noted that North Wilson grew up as a star pupil until moving to Winnipeg to attend a city school where she "did not know how to write an

essay. She knew nothing of algebra" (Blaze Baum, 2016). The journalist suggests that children living on reserves have an educational level two grades lower than those living in cities.

The article goes on to describe how North Wilson teetered the margins between the 'good girl' and 'bad girl.' She made friends with a girl who dated a drug dealer, but she also asked to redo some of her classes and improved her grades. In between grades 10 and 11, North Wilson met a man, entered into a violent relationship with him and became pregnant. As a result of this North Wilson dropped out of high school and completed her GED, later in life. She tells the reporter that she could have easily been caught up in a life of violence and crime if she did not get out of the situation she was in. The article never addresses how North Wilson is able to remove herself from the violent situation; rather it jumps from her being in a 'domestic violence situation' to graduating from Red River College with a degree in creative communications. This storyline speaks to the underlying assumption that Indigenous women and girls will not be subjected to violence as long as they engage in 'good girl' behaviour. The idea that all one needs to do to save themselves from a life of violence is to stay in school, and stay home where she can complete her duties as a mother, sister, or daughter, does nothing to address the situations many Indigenous women and girls have to overcome.

The reliance on the madonna/whore dichotomy in newspaper articles of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women asks the readers to imagine the 'good girls' as studious and responsible to their families in their roles as mothers, sisters, and daughters. In contrast the 'bad girl' is the one that has left school, involved in the street, and dependent on drugs and alcohol. Her behaviour must be partially responsible for the violence she experiences. In her book, Butler describes that people who are forced to the margins of acceptable behaviour are considered not quite living. The suggestion in the media that the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women engage in dangerous behaviours seeks to establish them as not quite living within the larger Canadian society. "Violence against those who are already not quite living,

that is, living in a state of suspension between life and death, leaves a mark that is no mark" (Butler, 2004, p.36). So this violence that they experience becomes not as dangerous to those who are living within normative circles of society, and requires little public outrage from the greater Canadian public. This speaks to the larger idea that these women bear some responsibility for the violence that is perpetrated against them.

Implications of these narratives

The biggest problem with the madonna/whore dichotomy in the newspaper articles about the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women is that it leaves out so many of the women and girls who have gone missing or experienced violence. While the cautionary tale of sex work, drug dependency, and family violence makes for a good news story this is not the narrative of all of the 1,181 women or girls that have disappeared. This narrative serves a purpose far beyond providing the reader with information. By localizing this violence to certain behaviours and locations the reader sits comfortably at home being told that there is nothing to fear. These acts of violence are experienced by the 'other' and while we should feel compassion for these women there is no need to fear for our daughters, sisters, and mothers unless they are involved in these spaces and actions. In the article "Why Indigenous women are a prime target" the journalist states that prostitution strolls provide serial killers a perfect hunting ground. There, a predator can find a drug-influenced prostitute who will willingly climb into his car and drive to a dark underground parking lot for sex. If she is attacked, she will be reluctant to report the crime to the police. If she is killed, the media will pay little attention (Rossmo, 2015).

The article goes on to note how many women, who work in the sex trade, have been murdered between 1991-1995 in Canada and the homicide rates for Indigenous women and men. When it finally notes that a public inquiry has been called on the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada the reporter claims that perhaps the actual problem has yet to be determined. This article lacks the ability to address why Indigenous women are a target of

violence in Canada despite what its title may suggest. The newspaper article "Why Indigenous women are a prime target" is problematic towards the end where it claims that "available research points to the need for programs to help aboriginal youth adapt to urban life and avoid the perils of street life" (Rossmo, 2015). At no point does the reporter suggest that what we actually need to do is address the reasons why the violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls goes largely unnoticed. Instead, placing responsibility on Indigenous women and girls to learn how to 'adapt to urban life' perhaps some of the reasons Indigenous women are a prime target of violence is because they have been regulated to the margins of society. What would have been helpful in an article that is supposed to address why Indigenous women are a prime target for violence would have been mentioning some of the underlying societal problems that Indigenous women experience in their everyday lives that expose them to violent situations. Perhaps mentioning easily accessible statistics such as, the unemployment rate for Aboriginal people was 13.9% in 2009 in comparison to an employment rate of 8.1% for non-Indigenous people in Canada (Stats Canada). Or noting that the 2005 median income for Aboriginal women was $15,654 which is approximately $5,000 less than the figure for non-Indigenous women (Stats Canada). If we start addressing some of the experiences of marginalization Indigenous women experience, we may then be able to address why they are targets of violence.

Income and employment rates are just one of the forms of marginalization experienced by Indigenous women and girls. "Colonialism, which has had a profoundly negative impact on Indigenous communities as a whole, has also affected the relations between Indigenous women and Indigenous men, and pushed many Indigenous women to the margins of their own cultures and Canadian society as a whole" (Amnesty International, 2004, p. 8). Colonial practices such as residential schools, the sixties scoop, and the loss of status when marrying a non-Indigenous man have resulted in the ongoing ramifications of oppression for Indigenous women and their families. By ignoring these experiences in narratives of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women the full story of the violence they have experienced is not told.

One of the main problems with underlying tones of a modern squaw narrative in media representations of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, is that it denotes a lack of responsibility on the Canadian government to resolve the colonial policies and practices that result in violence being perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls in the first place. The newspaper articles suggestions that Indigenous women experience violence because of their involvement in sex work, alcohol or drug dependency, and family violence glosses over the realities of lack of employment opportunities, lower educational rates, and higher poverty rates in Indigenous communities across the country. It is important to recognize the underlying issues in Canada that contribute to the marginalization and oppression of Indigenous women and girls, especially as the Canadian government begins the public inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women. If the inquiry neglects to unearth the colonial policies that have led to the marginalization of Indigenous women, it's significance will be limited.

An inquiry that does not seek to eliminate the oppression of Indigenous women will not support an ongoing change that will decrease the number of missing or murdered women. The *Stolen Sisters Report* addresses violence against Indigenous women and girls as a human rights concern. The report points to colonial policies being responsible for the violence and oppression experienced by Indigenous women. "Indigenous people's organizations have pointed out that the erosion of cultural identity and the accompanying loss of self-worth brought about, in part, through assimilationist policies like residential schools and the arbitrary denial of some women's Indigenous status, have played a central role in the social strife now faced by many Indigenous families and communities" (Amnesty International, 2004, p.9). In order to bring about a change, the public inquiry would need to address these colonial policies in their relation to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada.

Conclusion

The squaw narrative that is found in the underlying messages of the newspaper articles has sought to justify and shift accountability of violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls. The use of the madonna/whore dichotomy in the Canadian media to juxtapose the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women as mothers, sisters, and daughters against that of sex work and drug dependency tells the reader when violence is and is not worthy of public outcries. By using a 'good girl' image of the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women as mothers, sisters, and daughters they are regulated to acceptable modes of femininity that demands acknowledgement of the violence perpetrated against them. By reminding the reader of the 'bad girl' status in which these women are localized to spaces and behaviours where violence is common place the media suggests that the violence is contained to marginalized places. The reality of these narratives is that creating a 'good girl''bad girl' binary neglects to call attention to the underlying ramifications of colonial practices and policies that oppress Indigenous women and girls across the country.

I ask readers to question the purposes of the madonna/whore dichotomy and squaw narratives that are read in newspaper articles pertaining to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women in Canada. These stories suggest responsibility and accountability be placed on the choices and behaviours of the women themselves and away from the men who perpetrate violence and the historical narratives that condone this violence. With the upcoming public inquiry into the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women now is the time to stop repeating these narratives and start focusing on the root of the problem. Colonial policies, practices, and the treatment of Indigenous women and girls that seek to marginalize them in Canadian society need to be at the forefront of our minds as they will result in the best practices to start eliminating violence against our women.

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PERSISTING IMPACTS OF COLONIAL CONSTRUCTS:
Social Construction, Settler Colonialism, and the Canadian State's (In)Action to the Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women of Canada

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Abstract: This paper argues that the Harper government's refusal to have an inquiry into the missing and murdered Indigenous women is rooted in persisting impacts of colonial and social constructs of Indigenous peoples, and specifically Indigenous women. Theories of social construction and settler colonialism are used to support this argument in the Canadian context. Future research looks to take a comparative approach to the Harper conservative government relationship with Indigenous peoples and communities and that of the newly elected Trudeau liberal government.

Keywords: Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women, Social Construction, Settler Colonialism

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Introduction

Statistics Canada provides a report on the violent victimization of Indigenous women in Canada in comparison with non-Aboriginal women. This report indicates that Indigenous women are more likely to experience violent victimization than non-Indigenous women. It not only discusses the issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada, but also points to the fact that surveys like the Homicide Survey can provide insufficient information, indicating that numbers may be higher than actually recorded (Brennan 2011). Statistics Canada, a department within the Canadian federal government, conducted this research using 2009 statistics and provided this report on violence experienced by Indigenous women. If these studies are being commissioned by the Canadian Government, why then did Prime Minister Stephen Harper refuse an inquiry into the missing and murdered Indigenous women of Canada? Why has the Canadian state refused to take steps in addressing this persisting problem? This paper argues that the Harper government's refusal to have an inquiry into the missing and murdered Indigenous women is because of persisting impacts of colonial and social constructs of Indigenous peoples, and specifically Indigenous women. While at times it seems the state has taken action, whether through adjusting legislations or conducting studies, they have truly remained inactive in this situation that threatens the lives of Indigenous women.

I first want to disclose my position as researcher. This research paper will explore a situation experienced by a subset of the Canadian population – Indigenous women. I am approaching this topic as a white, Anglophone woman who has not experienced the forms of violence the women under discussion have experienced or any similar form of violence. I do not claim to be a part of any Indigenous community, nor do I claim to speak for them. By

putting this information forward I hope to divulge my position of researcher, a position that holds a certain form of power by examining others' lived experiences that are not my own. I come forward as a settler ally, in hopes to accumulate and contribute to this area of research. Additionally, while preparation for this research paper entailed reading Indigenous women's personal experiences or the experiences of their loved ones, I will not be sharing any of these personal stories as data or evidence. The reasoning behind this decision stems not only because of the standpoint I take, but also due to my limited knowledge of and unwillingness to potentially exploit this information. Furthermore, Indigenous resistance and their contributions to this research are evidence of rejection and resistance to this violence and social constructions. Discussion here of state inaction is not meant to dismiss or neglect the existence of Indigenous resistance. The purpose of this paper is to draw attention to potential reasons of state inaction towards the missing and murdered Indigenous women within Canada, and I believe this can in part be achieved through theoretical means, as well as use of statistical information to support the claim there is presence of violence. Indirect references will be made to acts of violence, particularly in the city of Vancouver and a more recent report from the Province of Quebec.

This research paper will first address the colonial situation in Canada. The reason for this is to set the context for the argument that current state inaction is predicated on colonial and social constructs of Indigenous women. The second section outlines the theory of social construction, and briefly intersectionality, to support the argument of potential detriments of socially constructed identities and stereotypes. The third section, the research will specifically address the situation of Indigenous women in Canada. This section will provide a clear outline as to why Indigenous women can have very different experiences in the same political and justice system as the rest of the population. Finally, the conclusion will pull together all three sections to illustrate the argument that the state has taken a position of large inaction in the case of missing and murdered Indigenous women.

I. Settler Colonialism in Canada

Canada has a history of settler colonialism. Veracini (2011) explains settler colonialism involves colonists remain and possibly displace a region's original inhabitants. Settlers bring with them new ideologies and ways of life that may come into conflict with those already present, which can be seen with the Anglo-European culture and its establishment of dominance over the already present Aboriginal cultures (Veracini 2011). Canada's history of colonialism is not in the past. As Veracini describes the process of settler colonialism it is possible to see how it can have persisting effects on Indigenous ways of life and has contributed to altering and recreating Indigenous identities that have led to damaging stereotypes. This section will highlight what settler colonialism has meant for Canada and Indigenous peoples, and will then focus on the lasting effects it has had for Indigenous women.

Canada's colonial history is extensive and filled with many instances of domination of one culture over others. Canada as a White settler colonial nation was established through the domination and exploitation of Indigenous peoples and their land (Bourgeois 2015, 1440). As a result, Green (2001, 716) discusses the fact that Indigenous peoples may have come to understand the state as oppressor, as it developed economically and politically at their expense. The forced relocations of Indigenous peoples and the creation of reservations was a tool used to secure Indigenous participation in the colonial project, increasing their dependence on colonial governments and removing them from traditional lands (Bourgeois 2015). Additionally, as will be discussed, the colonial state is the actor who created the basis for the social construction of contemporary Indigenous identity. While the argument of this research is that inaction of the state is based on the socially constructed stereotypes of Indigenous women, it cannot be overlooked that the very same institution initiated these social constructions to benefit its goals of colonialism. Canada, as a white settler society, continues to be structured by a racial hierarchy (Razack 2002). European settlers became the group most entitled to benefits of citizenship, with Indigenous peoples being portrayed as inferior, backwards, and deviant in comparison to the dominant settler society (Razack 2002). Razack (2002) explains that this

vilification of Indigenous peoples was necessary to justify the dominant society's violence against Indigenous peoples and the theft of their lands and resources for the settler nation state. So it is no wonder Indigenous peoples would come to view the state as oppressive, as Green mentions (2001, 716).

The colonial state created legislative tools to assist in the creation of these stereotypes and ways of imposing European ideals on Indigenous nations. Indigenous groups in Canada are diverse, holding varying cultural and political practices before colonial contact, yet there have been some common colonial ideologies and practices imposed by the Canadian state (Hunt 2013, 83). Since 1867, Indigenous nations have been governed by such legislations as the *Indian Act*, and Indigenous recognition continues to be set on the terms of the state with Canadian law remaining the primary route to justice (Hunt 2013). If the only tools present to seek justice are those of colonial creation and belonging to the dominant society, the very same that created the harmful stereotypes of Indigenous women, how then can we expect there to be adequate justice?

· Colonialism and Indigenous Women in Canada

The *Indian Act* has been amended since it was originally created in 1867. However, there remains repercussions of previous forms of the *Indian Act*, as women and their children who were previously denied status continue to face obstacles to regaining it, and additional consequences if they do (Hunt 2013). The Act was formed around colonial ideas of Indigenous peoples that include racist and sexist stereotypes, placing Indigenous peoples as inferior to Europeans, and women as inferior to men (Hunt 2013, 88). While the Canadian state has taken steps to remedy the detrimental clauses of the *Indian Act*, there remain lasting effects of this originally colonial policy. It has transformed how communities view women and the positions they hold within the community. It dictates how Indigenous women are defined and, prior to the amendment, this definition was predicated on who they married. This is problematic in that it provides communities with further reason for discrimination and further colonial interference in community composition and identity formation.

Indigenous women have had their capacity to fully engage as citizens in both dominant society and Aboriginal communities defined by colonialism, racism, and sexism (Green 2001). For example, Indigenous self-government has been outlined through the *Indian Act*, and until 1985 women who married non-Indians were denied membership and community rights (Green 2001, 723). This is an example of colonial state rules being enforced by Indigenous communities that in turn re-writes their own cultural and social ways of life. Additionally, it has led to lasting effects for Indigenous women and their families who have been excluded and have faced not only racial prejudices, but gendered ones as well. Colonial legislations aided in creating situations for racial and gendered prejudices to develop, enforcing ideals based on white European ideologies that create hierarchies based on gender, race, and class.

These hierarchies were enforced within Indigenous communities. As Martin-Hill (2003) discusses, the reality of colonialism has left Indigenous communities fragmented, traumatized, and resistance to colonial domination is being used to justify the subordination of Indigenous women through colonial versions of traditionalism. Prior to colonial contact, Indigenous women had extremely different roles in the community than those of European women, with Indigenous women holding power and authority and European women treated as minors or property (Harper 2006). A transformation of traditional beliefs took place, removing authority and historical roles of women, aiding in the construction of the Indigenous "traditional" woman stereotype who is silent and subservient (Martin-Hill 2003). This is then perpetuated by such platforms as Hollywood film and media, which is then used to justify the historical and even contemporary treatment of Indigenous women (Martin-Hill 2003). European and Christian traditions have influenced Indigenous communities, shaping how women have been and are treated – this adoption of European values has influenced gender roles in many Indigenous nations, transforming traditional roles of men and women as well as their authoritative positions and importance in the community (Martin-Hill 2003). Whether it has been through colonial legislation, or social and media reinforced ideas of female Indigeneity, there has

been immense interference with Indigenous female identity as a result of colonialism. Additionally, Canada's history is not controlled by the voices that are most negatively affected by these socially constructed identities throughout history.

Canadian history presents Indigenous cultures and traditions negatively, and have transformed their cultural systems through legislation creating such things as elected chiefs and the council system, removing Indigenous women's political power (Harper 2006), and even excluding them from legal status through government legislations (Bourgeois 2015). This historical oppression of Indigenous women through state institutions and forced transformations within Indigenous nations has lead Canada to its current situation. Martin-Hill (2003) mentions the missing and murdered Indigenous women in Canada, highlighting it as an example of how Indigenous women remain oppressed and are even viewed as disposable, with the state often justifying indifference by labelling these women as prostitutes and addicts – not as victims of colonialism and institutionalized racism and sexism.

One goal of settler colonialism was to assimilate Indigenous peoples, to strip them of their identities (Bourassa 2008). For colonized peoples, identity has come to be important since it can contribute to their health and well-being (Bourassa 2008), as will be discovered throughout this paper. Groups in positions of power are those who dictate history, who essentially define identities in the past that effect identities presently. The *Indian Act* defined who Indians were, managed and protected Indian lands, and concentrated authority over Indian peoples (Bourassa 2008). Differences were created by this Act that did not exist prior to contact, altering identities, positions of power (Bourassa 2008), and established long standing stereotypes. Eurocentric sexist ideologies were used to re-define Indigenous traditions and communities, re-defining Indigenous women's place in the community and family (Bourassa 2008). These earlier colonial goals have had lasting impacts on contemporary Canadian society, politics, and justice. It has contributed to the construction of Indigenous identities and Canadian views on what Indigeneity means and represents.

II. Theories: Social Construction and Intersectionality

This section will focus on bringing forth elements of social construction, and to some extent intersectionality, that will aid in understanding colonial constructs of Indigenous women. Additionally, it will be used in understanding the argument that Canadian state inaction of addressing the root of the problem of missing and murdered Indigenous women lies at least in part with these colonial constructs. Dominant groups that are in positions of power are those who decide what stereotypes are perpetuated, and in this case the dominant group is white European settlers. Social construction of groups and their identities play a part in social and political hierarchies. This in turn can have consequences on who has the power and authority to voice concerns. Social construction is based on patterns of "power over", such as one nation having power over another and imposing their way of life as the dominant and socially accepted one, or power of one gender over another (Anderson 2008, 4). These binaries and hierarchies of social power are made to seem natural, created and imposed by those with the power to do so, creating a society based on systems of dominance and marginalization (Anderson 2008).

The social construction of target groups, the role of narratives in social construction, and who has the power to control those narratives and construction of images influence public policy. Schneider and Ingram (1993) highlight the importance of the social construction of target groups in studying public policy. In this case, Indigenous women are the target group, gaining oppressive and negative characteristics through this construction as a tool of colonial control and domination. These constructs can be embedded in policy affecting citizens' orientations and participation, essentially advantaging some groups over others in society (Schneider & Ingram 1993). Indigenous women became the subordinate group to not only settlers, but to Indigenous men as well. With colonialism came the subordination of women and the knowledge and power they held. There is contention between expert and lay knowledge, with dominant discourses relying primarily on expert knowledge that often goes uncontested by the

majority of society. The spatial segregation of certain groups of people often means that the only or primary interaction society has with them are those stereotypes provided though mainstream media that largely promote the dominant discourse (Hallgrimsdottir et al. 2008, 121). Understanding power relations is essential when analyzing who has the greatest impact with their narratives and why certain discourses are more influential. This theoretical aspect of social construction and spatial segregation aids in understanding why such negative stereotypes were able to flourish, relying on not only segregating Indigenous women, but also on traditionally held beliefs by settlers on gender and the unknown "other".

Hortatory tools promote policy actions based on beliefs and values, using cultural norms of right and wrong as motivations of compliance and support of policy (Schneider & Ingram 1990). Elite actors have power that allow them to manipulate these values in society, influencing policies meant to help the less powerful, resulting in the labelling of those individuals (Schneider & Ingram 1990), such as what has taken place with Indigenous women. Public policies and programs like residential schools were supposedly aimed at assisting Indigenous peoples, but instead fuelled and reinforced stereotypes and colonial missions of assimilation. This power held by the dominant group produces knowledge, with knowledge in turn upholding that power, and individuals who hold that power are also those who create the boundaries of normalized behaviour (Brass 2000). Being in the position to control definitions of normalized behaviour and manipulate the tools used to promote desired behaviour means that groups in less powerful positions can be marginalized or constructed negatively and stigmatized. Stigmas are powerful social labels constructed and distributed through discourse, subjecting individuals to negative treatment and often applied to target populations that hold less power and the ability to "rewrite" these stigmas (Hallgrimsdottir et al. 2008, 120). Structural processes and power relations underlie the creation, legitimation, and maintenance of stigmas that are given meaning through narratives (Hallgrimsdottir et al. 2008, 120-21), with these narratives contributing to the social construction of realities and

often important tools for policy success with coalitions using narratives in an attempt to influence the public and policymakers' preferences (McBeth et al. 2014). As will be discussed later, coalitions of Indigenous women have come to gain a national voice, placing their issues in greater view of policymakers.

Schneider et al. (2014, 105) describe social constructions as powerful images or stereotypes that may explain the unequal citizenship that can be produced through public policy, providing benefits to some portions of the population and punishing others. The manipulation of these images can lead to differential treatment of target groups (Schneider et al. 2014), such as Indigenous peoples, and more specifically women, by providing legitimation for stigmas and negative constructs. Policy design itself can shape experiences of target groups, shape institutions and culture, structure opportunities, and often reproduce power relations and social constructions (Schneider et al. 2014, 109), for example as the *Indian Act* was used to define Indians and aided in the construction of their "new" identities. The allocation of benefits or burdens by policy on a target group depends on the extent of political power they hold and the positive or negative construction of their image in society, with advantaged groups holding the most political power and positive social construction and deviants constructed negatively and lacking not only political power but receiving blame for societal problems (Schneider et al. 2014). Additionally, policymakers will receive social capital by punishing target groups that have been constructed as deviants (Schneider et al. 2014), which can been seen with the fact that some missing and murdered Indigenous women happen to also be sex workers. As with the case of Pamela George discussed by Razack, she was depicted as a deviant Indigenous woman, working on the street, in comparison to her white college murderers. Her life was separated from her attackers not only by the spaces they occupied, but also through the identity she was given.

It can be difficult for marginalized peoples to voice their concerns and be heard by people in positions of power able to make legislative changes. Social construction comes from emotional and intuitive reactions and giving only selective attention to evidence, with policymakers exploiting emotional judgements (Schneider et

al. 2014). Regulation encompasses a wide range of social and institutional practices and processes placing restrictions on behaviours ad normalizing certain identities, marking individuals outside the normative frame as deviant or abnormal (Grant 2008). Historical policy designs can have long-term effects for future public policy and once a group is negatively constructed with legislative outcomes depicting their deviancy, negative social memory remains as a precedent for that target group (Schneider et al. 2014). This can be seen when reviewing Canada's history of its treatment of Indigenous peoples, as negative constructs decades old continue to shape perceptions and policy directed at them. As mentioned by Schneider et al., historical policy designs are present within Canada and continue to provide the base for policies like the *Indian Act.* Despite its amendments, it remains a colonial product.

Ore discusses how differences are constructed, using social factors to distinguish categories as different from one another (2006, 1). Ore continues on to say that differences are not necessarily negative, as they can illustrate the presence of different cultural traditions and make society interesting and diverse – but, the meanings and values applied to these classifications and differences can be problematic (2006, 1). Placing a category (white) as superior to others and as a cultural standard against which all others are compared is what creates a system of racial inequality (Ore 2006, 2). This is seemingly what has taken place with Canada's Indigenous population, as white settlers came to be the dominant cultural standard that was used to measure the legitimacy and adequacy of Indigenous cultures and practices. Social construction theory suggests things like categories of difference and systems of inequality are the result of human interaction that then creates aspects of culture, leading individuals to internalize and take these cultural products for granted as "real" based on the values of our culture (Ore 2006, 5). These categories of difference are learned through social interaction, along with their meanings and values – a group may be defined as inferior, although they are not, resulting in them experiencing and being treated as inferior (Ore 2006, 5-6).

Before moving on to discuss the case of missing and murdered Indigenous women and state action, a brief understanding of intersectionality is required. It is impossible to overlook the intersecting forms of oppression Indigenous women can face, as they are not only discriminated against because of gender, but race and potentially class as well. Categories of race, ethnicity, social class, sex, and gender are socially constructed. These intersecting forms of oppression and disadvantage stem from the subordinated position Indigenous women may hold socially, politically, and culturally (LaRocque 2007). Theories of intersectionality – coined by Kimberle Crenshaw – describe the multiple dimensions of inequality that can be experienced by any one person and can intersect to compound vulnerabilities, such as race, sex, and class (Gilchrist 2010). Racism, sexism, classism, and colonialism can intersect and increase vulnerabilities faced by Indigenous women (Gilchrist 2010). These experiences of racism are perpetuated by Canada's colonial past as well as its neo-colonial present, intersecting with social constructs of masculinity and femininity (Anderson 2008).

III. Indigenous Women in Canada – The Case of the Stolen Sisters and State Action

· Evidence in Numbers

Why does this matter? And who does it affect? Statistics provide a picture of exactly why this matters for Indigenous women, and Canada as a whole. Indigenous females represent 4.3% of the Canadian female population, yet they make-up 11.3% of missing females in Canada and 16% of female homicides, an extremely disproportionate representation (RCMP 2014). As of 2014, there were 164 unresolved cases of missing Indigenous women, and 1017 known homicides between 1980 and 2012 (RCMP 2014). The RCMP (2014) reports that Indigenous females are 5.5 times more likely to be murdered than non-Indigenous women in Canada. Indigenous women compose 2% of the Canadian population, yet they are 5 times more likely to face a violent death than any other member of Canadian society (Gilchrist 2010). Indigenous women are paying the price of colonial social constructs of gender, race, and class. Anglo-European ideals were

implanted into Indigenous cultures, along with decades of oppression and violence have had long-lasting effects. Notions of who is deserving of aid and justice can be influenced by binary definitions of deviance and socially constructed stereotypes.

The UN Quality of Life survey examines the health, education, and wealth of a country's citizens to determine how well the country is doing, however, in the case of Canada there is a large disparity between the dominant society and Indigenous peoples (Harper 2006). This is particularly so for Indigenous women who suffer from inequality of status compared to both Indigenous men and non-Indigenous women, with high rates of violence and experiences that are passed on inter-generationally (Harper 2006). While Canada may score well on the UN's survey, when looking at Indigenous peoples separately Canada does not fare as well. The disparity here is masked when such a large picture is taken, overlooking a segment of Canada's population and suggesting this situation is unimportant. However, for Canada to move forward, particularly after the Truth and Reconciliation Commission recommendations, recognition of these issues and action are necessary. A first step may be in providing a platform for other voices to be heard by the Canadian population.

The media plays a part in defining who society views as deserving of aid and attention, of who can be a "victim". Over 500 Indigenous women have gone missing or have been murdered since the 1980s in Canada, yet there has been minimal media attention (Anderson 2008; Gilchrist 2010). Gilchrist (2010) conducted a study of press coverage of missing Indigenous women as compared to non-Indigenous women, discovering that Indigenous women received 3.5 times less coverage, shorter articles, and less details than non-Indigenous women. Gilchrist (2010) goes on to state that feminist media studies and theories of intersectionality argue that devaluing Indigenous femininity while idealizing middle-class white womanhood supports the systemic inequalities present within Canadian society, producing and reproducing racism, sexism, classism, and colonialism. The racialization of Indigenous women can be linked to, as well as be constructed by, other oppressions they face (Monture-Angus 1995; Jiwani & Young 2006). The issue of intersectionality is apparent

here when considering the multiple forms of socially constructed oppressions Indigenous women may confront, and the extent that popular media supports their stories. The importance media can play can often be overlooked, as in the past it has aided in creating these stereotypes faced by women and contemporarily they can continue to reinforce them through what is chosen to be shown to the public. Playing off decades of socially constructed stereotypes of Indigenous women, the media can be influenced and influence the public. It can also be a tool to begin challenging these damaging stereotypes.

There has been increasing public effort to create awareness and understand the issue of racialized and sexualized violence in the context of colonization that is faced by Indigenous women (Anderson 2008). This issue has been deemed a human rights violation, yet continues to receive minimal attention in parliamentary debates (Anderson 2008). While the federal government may have made strides by amending certain legislations and giving voice to the Truth and Reconciliation Committee, former PM Harper denied a need to conduct an inquiry into the situation faced by the female Indigenous population.

· Government Involvement and New Pressures for Action

The Harper government refused to hold a federal inquiry into the missing and murdered Indigenous women of Canada, stating it is an issue of law and order, and an issue that has nearly all its cases solved (Bronskill & Tutton 2015). As Bronskill and Tutton (2015) point out in their *Globe and Mail* article, this view of violence against Indigenous women and girls is quite narrow and overlooks underlying causes. Understanding where this violence comes from, why Indigenous women are more likely to experience it, and why it is seemingly acceptable are all very important in order to attempt fixing this problem. PM Harper's statement that there has been progress in solving existing cases of this violence overlooks the very important need for prevention. Bringing justice for existing cases of violence is important, but it is only one form of action that is required by the state and Canadian institutions. There is increasing recognition of the missing and murdered Indigenous women across Canada, with a national study revealing that there

are over 500 of these cases (Hunt 2013, 92). Hunt (2013) points to the fact that the story often ends on that of the missing or murdered woman, but does not go beyond to address the women and girls living in situations that put them at risk for this same fate. One obstacle for the Canadian government and its institutions are the persisting colonial constructs of Indigenous peoples originally produced by settler colonialism. Long-held beliefs continue to shape decisions and views of traditionally understood deviant groups. Canada's history of settler colonialism has contributed to the current situation of intersecting forms of discrimination faced by Indigenous women.

Government involvement in this situation goes beyond solving the problem – it also took part in creating the problem. Colonial stereotypes of Indigenous women were important to the colonial project – these stereotypes were used as justification in creating reserves, prohibiting spiritual practices, and removing their children (Hunt 2013). Currently, when women and girls leave small communities and go to the city, they can end up on the street for example on the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver, because available resources are lacking (Hunt 2013). Urban migration of Indigenous peoples from small communities, dissolution of support networks, isolation, the absence of resources, and the normalization of violence in rural communities contribute to the vulnerability Indigenous women can face (Bourgeois 2015, 1440). Bourgeois (2015, 1439) mentions the interlocking social factors such as gender and racial discrimination, poverty, and inadequate housing that contribute to the vulnerability of Indigenous women. Many women who are missing/murdered from the Vancouver Downtown Eastside are poor sex workers who may also be Indigenous, and as such are labelled "high risk" from the start, a label carrying with it the connotation that violence occurs because they made bad choices (Gilchrist 2010). This discourse blames women and overlooks unequal social conditions that held great influence over their choices, fuelling and being fuelled by the degrading stereotypes that undermine their victimization and allows the public to view them as unimportant (Gilchrist 2010).

The racist and sexist stereotypes of dirty and deviant Indigenous femininity are enduring colonial constructs, again providing

justification for poor treatment and lack of concern by the state and general public (Bourgeois 2015). This not only points to the theory of social construction, but also that of intersectionality. This devaluing of Indigenous lives stems from colonial stereotypes, in some cases coupled with involvement with the sex trade, leads to enhancing the inadequacy of Canadian systems like health and justice when responding to violence against Indigenous women (Bourgeois 2015). This is apparent when analyzing why former Prime Minister Harper refused to initiate a governmental inquiry and investigate the disappearances and deaths of Indigenous women and girls across Canada since the 1980s, despite confirmed statistics suggesting a need to do so and increasing political (i.e international protocols, Native Women's Association of Canada) and public demand (Bourgeois 2015). Bourgeois (2015) describes the criminal justice system in Canada as one that over-criminalizes Indigenous women and girls while simultaneously failing to protect them from violence. The colonial, racist, sexist, and classist ideologies that compose the damaging Indigenous female stereotype increase their risk of experiencing violence, as well as presents them as "unworthy victims" (Gilchrist 2010, 384). Systemic discrimination perpetuate stereotypes that in turn continue to fuel public perceptions of deviance and the underserving victim. The way Indigenous women have been represented in history impacts how they are perceived contemporarily, with historical representations of European-Indigenous relationships being presented according to the values and perceptions of the dominant European-Canadian society (Harper 2006).

The Amnesty International report in Stolen Sisters revealed some troubling aspects of Canadian institutions. It was found that police were aware that white men sexually preyed in Indigenous women and girls, yet they felt this issue did not require any particular attention, having few protocols to deal with reports of missing women and doing little when reported (Harper 2006). It was not until the media became aware of the large numbers of missing sex workers on the Downtown Eastside of Vancouver that a joint taskforce was created to search for the more than 70 missing women, eventually leading to the arrest of Robert Pickton (Harper

2006). Why was there little attention paid to such a large number of missing women? How is it possible that there was no interest in determining the underlying factors to large numbers of missing women? It seems that the coalition of voices brought with it greater pressure on authorities to conduct serious investigations into the cases of these missing women, despite their "risky" lifestyles. This seems to be a prime example on just how damaging socially constructed stereotypes of deviancy can effect authoritative and institutional reactions.

The National Coalition for our Stolen Sisters, 2002, marked the beginning of a national voice for Indigenous women, challenging the unaddressed realities they faced and the low priority for change given by governments (Harper 2006). Status quo has been an enemy to Indigenous women, continuing to place them at higher risk for victimization and marginalization (Harper 2006). Perhaps the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's expansive public exposure will lend support to such coalitions as that of the NCSS, coupled with Prime Minister Trudeau's commitment to an inquiry into the missing and murdered Indigenous women. While the Harper government was able to evade any direct and revolutionary change, greater public awareness and platforms for diverse voices may put pressure on the newly formed federal government.

Conclusion

Harper (2006) states that to understand the present it is important to understand the past. Monture-Angus (1995) explains that the Indigenous experience in Canada is not linear – the past does not remain in the past. There are lasting impacts of colonial policies on Indigenous women, with intergenerational effects of abuse and violence that lead to high risk behaviour and lower socio-economic positions (Gunn 2014). The Canadian state's (in)action is predicated on decades of settler colonial history. This paper has attempted to highlight briefly Canada's colonial history as it relates to the current situation faced by Indigenous peoples, and specifically Indigenous women. Decades of constructing the "Indian" through colonial practices of domination and suppression, through assimilation and altering traditional lifestyles and nations' political systems, does not disappear without leaving its mark. The

colonial governments of the 19th century did indeed construct what it is to be Indian today, and they also constructed Canadian governments and institutions. They constructed how the rest of the Canadian population views and understands Indigenous peoples, and how governments and state institutions take action.

Socially constructed identities are persistent. They are created and perpetuated by people in positions of power, the same people who choose what is remembered in history. Power dynamics that place the dominant group in control of defining target groups, like Indigenous women, can have long-lasting and detrimental effects that in turn effect policy-makers and state institutions when they are tasked with dealing with a problem. The social construction of gender binaries and the persisting stereotypes men and women endure despite much of them being false social ideals centuries old is similar to the circumstances being discussed here. Centuries of believing gender functions in a certain way has been difficult to shake, despite multiple waves of feminism and social and political evolution. Something that is so engrained and socially learned, and often even claimed to be biological, is difficult to unlearn and change. It is much the same for the constructs discussed in this paper and their lasting results. Canadian state inaction, or its very minimal action, is based in many decades of social constructs that influence who has power, a voice, and essentially who really matters.

This paper focused on Western Canada's cases of violence against Indigenous women, but that does not mean the rest of Canada is excluded. In 2015, Quebec provincial police were accused of sexually assault and other abuses against Indigenous women (APTN 2015). Razack's (2000) article on the murder of Pamela George was written 15 years ago, yet many of the details of this recent and seemingly long-standing violent abuse by officers of justice was reported just months ago. There was complete disregard for these women, much like Pamela George. While there was media attention given to this situation in Quebec, the problem lies with the systemic violence present in Canada's institutions. In this situation the violence and abuse could not be blamed on an abusive partner, drug abuse of a relative or the victims themselves, the dangers of living on the street. This situation makes it perfectly

clear that there is systemic violence and discrimination present in Canada's institutions. PM Harper's refusal to establish an inquiry is seemingly an example of this at the highest level of authority in this country.

We must look to the root causes of racialized and sexualized violence (Anderson 2008) and listen to Indigenous voices that are speaking out against this violence. This is something the Harper government refused to attempt. In their stance of refusing an inquiry because there has been progress in solving cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women they also refuse to commit to preventing these cases. This form of inaction is just as damaging as the violence perpetuated throughout society. It is also evidence of persisting colonial power and the resulting groups that remain dominant and in control of the state's actions. The argument that persisting colonial constructs impede state action in addressing the very real problem of missing and murdered Indigenous women is just one part of the explanation. For example, we must also look to the issue of power dynamics between Canadian governments and Indigenous nations. While self-government may be present in some Indigenous communities, this is still predicated on Canadian government ideals and superiority. Uncovering the root cause of discrimination and violence faced by Indigenous women can be a step in the right direction – in the direction of decolonization and reconciliation, in the direction of deconstructing these damaging stereotypes that can control how Indigenous women live and how far the Canadian state and its institutions are willing to go for them on the path to justice. The title of this paper implies that Canadian governments have been relatively inactive in the situation of missing and murdered Indigenous women and it is time this changes.

The fall 2015 federal government elections resulted in a transition from a Harper conservative government to that of a Trudeau liberal government. While this is a recent transition, there are already radical changes in intergovernmental relations, ideological perspectives regarding public policy, and relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities. While the Harper government largely remained inactive regarding the missing and murdered Indigenous women of Canada, this new federal

government has increased consultation and commitments to address this serious issue. This leads to the notion that this research is incomplete. Perhaps an additional variable to state inaction is the government's dominant ideology at the time, as well as its approach to federalism. Two major changes that took place as a result of the election were the end of a conservative dominated federal government and open federalism, championed by Harper. We now see a liberal dominant government that values intergovernmental relations and strengthening relationships with Indigenous peoples and communities. This research would benefit from a comparative investigation of the Harper open federalism area and the new Trudeau liberal approach to Indigenous and Canadian state relations.

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