

RACIAL EXTRACTIVISM:
NEOLIBERAL WHITE SETTLER COLONIALISM AND TAR SANDS
EXTRACTION

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Abstract

This dissertation traces the reoccurrence of logics which attempt to justify white settler occupation and the extraction, theft and harm of Indigenous lands and life in what is now known as Canada. By tracing the entrenchment of notions of white entitlement to land and life in this context, the repetitiveness of normalized epistemic and ontological colonial violence comes into view as just as much a part of the contemporary neoliberal moment as it was during the founding of the nation-state. This dissertation focuses specifically on the ‘resource’ extraction site of the Alberta tar sands. This bitumen deposit is the world’s second largest deposit of oil and is being aggressively extracted despite being an ‘unconventional’ oil source that requires massive amounts of energy, water, toxic chemicals and irreversible environmental damage to remove from the earth. For the Indigenous communities in the Athabasca region, their jurisdictional authority and roles and responsibilities as protectors of the land, water, and animal and plant life have brought them into relationship with oil and gas producers, pipeline companies, security forces and pro-extraction provincial and federal governments. These relationships exist in the context of ongoing white settler colonialism that does not and cannot recognize Indigenous jurisdiction let alone Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies and are instead weighed down with the decaying rot of racial logics and the neoliberal imperatives for profit that accompany them. Beginning with an explanation for the theoretical tools drawn upon herein and the methodological approach that has guided the project, historical narratives of empire and nation-building are examined and linked to extractive industries, first within a colonial mercantilist economy, secondly within a capitalist economic structure and lastly within the contemporary neoliberal capitalist context. The relationships between private capital and the white settler government are explored as deeply interconnected and as mutually involved in the creation and maintenance of normalized white settler colonialism. Furthermore, the dissertation examines the extractive practices of white settler colonialism as always already informed by logics of white supremacy, and develops the concept of ‘racial extractivism’ as a theoretical lens through which race, racism and racialization as well as colonialism may be centered in studies of ‘resource’ extraction and nation-state building. Influenced by Cedric Robinson’s (1983) theorization of ‘racial capitalism’, ‘racial extractivism’ contributes to studies of political economy, settler colonialism, and to cultural studies and is utilized in analyzing the more regionally specific context of tar sands extraction and the contemporary discursive strategies supporting it and marketing it domestically and internationally. Lastly, the project examines neoliberalism and the securitization of the industry and attempts to think about ‘racial extractivism’ intersectionally as white settler state power combines with the forces of private oil and gas companies to discursively and affectively normalize ongoing colonial violence.

Dedication

For Quinn

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I want to begin by acknowledging the brilliant work of the many Indigenous, Black and people of colour scholars and activists whose intellectual, creative and political labour has shaped the ways I think and see. These thinkers, most of them whom I've never met and most of them women, have contributed greatly to who I am today and to the tools I use on a daily basis to understand the world. While white supremacist structures continue to shape and act as a bedrock for the academy, it is the tireless work of those fighting daily against these systems all while producing and offering beautiful insight and awe-inspiring articulations of power and possibility to whom I owe the most thanks. Their work continues to be undervalued, dismissed and backgrounded to that of white scholars, whose work so often relies upon their intellectual contributions, institutional battles and emotional labour.

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Introduction



Image 1. Fort McMurray First Nation, Tar Sands Healing Walk 2014. Photo by Preston, J., 2014¹.

Indigenous² communities including the Mikisew Cree First Nation, Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation, Fort McMurray First Nation, Fort McKay Cree Nation, Beaver Lake Cree First Nation, Chipewyan Prairie First Nation, and Métis people live in the Athabasca region³ of Northern Alberta where bitumen⁴ or tar sands are being extracted and chemically altered in order to be transported to oil refineries primarily in the United States. Though most of the bitumen extraction sites are located in the province of Alberta, some deposits also extend into neighbouring British Columbia and Saskatchewan. The Indigenous communities most directly affected by the extractive mega-projects are represented by seven First Nation band councils, the Métis Nation of

Alberta, three Tribal Councils, and the traditional systems of governance which continue to inform the collective lives of Indigenous people in the region. Of course, not all of these forms of government and authority are recognized by the white settler state whose *Indian Act* (1985), first passed in 1876, requires Indigenous communities who are recognized as First Nations, Métis or Inuit to adhere to non-Indigenous electoral structures, financial reporting systems, spatial and racial reserve system regulations (Razack, 2002; Thobani, 2007) and white settler colonial law more generally. The statute is fundamentally a tool of biopolitical⁵ population control and an assimilative instrument of the white settler state⁶, designed and amended over the years to suit the shifting discourses and strategies of white settler colonial governance (Lawrence, 2003).



Image 2. Athabasca Oil Sands Map. Einstein, N., 2006.

In the face of ongoing colonial violence and control, many communities in the region are simultaneously working within and outside of settler colonial systems to challenge the persistent infringement of their birthrights as Indigenous peoples and nations, particularly in relation to oil and gas ‘resource’ extraction⁷. For instance, the Beaver Lake Cree Nation (Treaty Six) the Mikisew Cree First Nation (Treaty Eight), the Lubicon Cree (not signatories to Treaty Eight), and the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (Treaty Eight) are engaged in legal battles over the infringement of their rights by the extractive oil and gas industry. In addition to these court challenges, Indigenous children are learning their traditional languages, learning to hunt, trap, gather medicines, practice ceremonies, celebrate their Indigenous cultures and histories, and protect the land. As Kwagiulth scholar Sarah Hunt (Kwakwaka’wakw) and Cindy Holmes (2015) discuss, these practices of everyday decolonization within families, friendships, and partnerships “are often made invisible when activism is seen as only taking place in ‘public’ spaces such as community coalitions” (p.156). Instead, Hunt and Holmes urge their readers to consider the vast multitude of ways in which decolonization and Indigenous resurgence occur and acknowledge those whose resurgence work is often overlooked or undervalued, such as the important work that occurs in intimate spaces and relationships. These diverse forms of Indigenous regeneration, acts of protecting Turtle Island, and resistance to white settler colonialism, all take place within the context of ongoing tension between government and industry on one hand, and Indigenous peoples and their allies or co-conspirators on the other.

The scale of the Athabasca, Cold Lake and Peace River bitumen extraction projects is difficult to adequately convey - the area is massive. As Andrew Nikiforuk (2010) explains, “the bitumen-producing zone contains nearly 175 billion barrels in proven reserves, which makes it the single-largest pile of hydrocarbons outside of Saudi Arabia” (p.22) and Venezuela. An area the size of twenty-six Prince Edward Islands is currently being ‘developed’ (ibid). Huseman and Short (2012) describe the extraction process as follows:

Oil sands-derived oil must be extracted by strip mining or the oil made to flow into wells by ‘in situ’ techniques, which reduce the viscosity by injecting steam, solvents, and/or hot air into the sands. These processes use much more water than conventional oil extraction – three barrels of water are used to process one barrel of oil – and produce huge ‘tailing ponds’ (‘tailing lakes’ would be more accurate) into which over 480 million gallons of contaminated toxic waste water are dumped daily. (p.221)

The toxic tailings ponds are not ponds but lakes “visible to the naked eye from space” (Black, D’Arcy, Weis and Russell, 2014, p.9). These unlined tailings ponds leach deadly chemicals such as corrosive naphthenic acid and cancer-causing alkyl-substituted polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon into surrounding ecosystems and communities (ibid, see also Kelly et al., 2010; Kelley et al., 2009). They comprise over 170 square kilometers in total area and leech “at rates of millions of litres per day” (Carter, 2016, p.157; see also Kelley et al., 2009; Timoney and Lee, 2009). The mass amounts of water required for the extraction of bitumen has significantly altered the water cycle of the Athabasca River

Basin and water tables surrounding the extraction area have been polluted with air born pollutants released through the steamed bitumen from the in situ extraction process (Black, D'Arcy, Weis and Russell, 2014, p.9). Tar sands operations had licenses to divert 349 million cubic metres per year from the Athabasca River in 2008 alone (Carter, 2016, p.157).

Air pollution and surface pollution also pose significant detrimental health and environmental impacts of tar sands extraction. Air born pollutants have been shown to have significant impacts on climate change as studied by Liggio et al. (2016) who state, “the global development of this resource and the increase in oil production from oil sands has caused environmental concerns over the presence of toxic compounds in nearby ecosystems and acid deposition” (p.91). They go on to suggest that “the contribution of oil sands exploration to secondary organic aerosol formation (...) affects air quality and climate remains poorly understood (ibid). Their study found that due to the scale of tar sands extraction, and because “worldwide heavy oil and bitumen deposits amount to 9 trillion barrels of oil distributed in over 280 basins around the world, with Canada home to oil sands deposits of 1.7 trillion barrels” (ibid), the lack of sufficient scientific studies poses a significant threat to the climate. The authors argue that these significant amounts of air pollution need to be “considered when assessing environmental impacts of current and planned bitumen and heavy oil extraction projects globally” (ibid). Indeed, the scale of this site of oil extraction requires unique environmental considerations and study.

The machinery used to remove tar sands by the truckload (‘heavy haulers’) are capable of hauling up to 300 tonnes at a time (InfoMine, n.d.). The extraction sites make up a vast industrial wasteland; where once boreal forest had covered the region, toxic

tailings lakes, surface mining moon-scapes and massive bitumen processing facilities now stretch for hundreds of kilometers. Pipelines crisscross the region, disrupting caribou migration patterns, disturbing generations-old Indigenous trap lines that feed communities, and occasionally and inevitably leaking, bursting, leaching toxic diluent and bitumen into the water and earth. As Crystal Lameman (2015), outspoken Indigenous leader and member of the Beaver Lake Cree explains,

In 2013 a series of oil spills occurred in the region. One spill was discovered under a lake on the south-west shore, where elders say our ancestors are buried. Over 200 animals and amphibians died as a result and over 300,000 kg of oily vegetation was removed from site. How do I explain to my children what is going on? What do I say when my little girl asks: “Why is the water poisoned?”

Lameman’s question is one for Indigenous and non-Indigenous people alike to consider. Though those regional communities immediately impacted by tar sands extraction may seem a tiny minority compared to the many people who consume and benefit from petroleum and its byproducts, the global effects of this extractive industry and the resulting warming of the planet (due largely to the burning of mass amounts of fossil fuels) concerns everyone.

The majority settler community of Fort McMurray has a population that is increasing on average by eight per cent a year (Clarke, 2008, p.184) and had a 125 per cent population increase between 2000 and 2014 (Fort McMurray Tourism, 2015). Fort McMurray’s tourism department boasts on its website that “with continued oil sands development and increased labour demands, we expect our population to more than

double over the next two decades” (ibid). These statements and predictions were made prior to the 2016 forest fires which started on May 3, 2016 just southwest of Fort McMurray, decimating an area the size of Prince Edward Island, and leading to the evacuation of the town’s 80,000 residents (Giovannetti, 2016, n.p.). However, as the fires were eventually extinguished and both residents and the oil and gas industry return to business, Fort McMurray’s population will continue to grow. Additionally, population estimates do not account for the majority of Canadian tar sands labourers who do not permanently live in Fort McMurray, but who instead fly in for their shifts only to fly out when they are done; nor do they account for the live-in caregivers or temporary foreign workers (TFWs) brought in to do most of the unskilled service sector labour associated with rapid mass-scale extraction. Temporary foreign workers, locally referred to as TFWs, are essential to the industry’s survival and profitability and a specific type of neoliberal discourse is required to facilitate the normalization and conditional acceptance of this type of flexible and precarious, low-wage, migrant labour.

Those seeking work inside of Canadian borders, whose governments work in cooperation with the oil and gas industry and the Canadian government, are provided temporary cross-border mobility to supply the mega-project with its primary source of unskilled labour. TFWs are a relatively cheap labour supply, seen by the industry as easy to lay off or deport, and as willing to do the lower paid unskilled work in the industry and in the surrounding service sectors that most Canadians could not afford to do (de Guerre, 2009; Perry, 2014). The international inequities produced through living histories of the transatlantic slave trade and colonialism, and by contemporary global capitalism, consistently produce this type of under-valued labour force used in virtually

every extractive sector.

Influenced by the work of Cedric Robinson (1983) this dissertation presents a new concept to help discuss a component of racial capitalism, that of ‘racial extractivism’. Racial extractivism positions race and colonialism as central to extractivist projects under neoliberalism and preceding regimes of accumulation, and underpins how these racial and colonial epistemologies are written into the economic structure and social relations of production and consumption. Racial extractivism acknowledges the multitude of ways in which colonial histories and reiterations of race-based epistemologies inform the discursive practices used by the oil and gas industry, for example, and by the Canadian white settler government in promoting and managing ‘resource’ extraction. By examining the tar sands mega projects in Canada as a site of racial extractivism in a white settler context, racial and colonial relations and structures are revealed as foundational and central to the Canadian nation-state and to extractive industries more generally, whereas they are often otherwise completely ignored or are presented as common sense, apolitical and necessary realities of our time.

The conditions of mass-scale extraction in the Athabasca region, while unique and historically specific, are also heartbreakingly common in other white settler colonial contexts. The patterns and trends that exist have led many scholars examining various forms of colonialism to understand these similarities as indicative of uniquely *settler* colonial conditions. These conditions are produced and reproduced through various means, including through sets of discourse and language that inform what becomes socially and politically normal, popularly accepted, and as Mark Rifkin (2013; 2014) notes, common sense. Underlying white settler colonial normalcy is the narrative that

non-Indigenous settlers, and white settlers most of all, are entitled to the land and ‘resources’ due to their racial and moral superiority and their ‘natural’ ability to make land ‘productive’ or to turn it into commodity. This narrative of white settler supremacy supports other narratives convenient for white settlers such as those of Indigenous disappearance or vanishing, infantilization and incompetence. Notions that Indigenous people are somehow not qualified to self-govern, to continue living in direct relation to the land and ‘using it’ as they see fit, or that they no longer exist or have somehow vanished are common settler colonial stories. These stories come to stand in for national histories, dispersing tales of benevolent and adventurous pioneers and their brief and exotic encounters with ‘Indians’ who didn’t know how to farm or use the land ‘properly’, who were uncivilized savages or stoic, noble, and childlike. Racism has always been a central part of these stories; its logics attempt to justify the theft, genocide, violence and forms of appropriation common to settler colonial contexts.

Maya Mikdashi (2012) describes her understanding of settler colonialism as an Arab American and Chippewa descendant. She understands settler colonialism in Palestine and in North America and elsewhere as criminalization, as inherited silence, as uncertainty, as tourism, and for her as “feeling small, insignificant and diluted” (para.17). She writes,

Settler colonialism is being unable to fill in the blanks. It is the history of a family welded together by natives and settlers. It is the logic of superiority, of primacy, of genocide. It is the colonisation of memory and of events that come to be known as “History.” It is visiting a reservation or a refugee camp and wondering how this could have been your life. It

is being thankful that this is not your life, that this is only a visit or a passion, a choice to be here. It is realizing that this confidence in one's place has been bought with the logic and practice of settler colonialism. It is wanting answers to inquiries you cannot yet, and probably will never, articulate. It is seeking epiphany through writing and finding only the proliferation of questions, of doubts, and of histories. Like these questions, and more than anything, settler colonialism is ongoing. (para. 18)

Mikdash's (2012) description highlights the many questions that persist in settler colonial contexts when Indigenous, Black and people of colour histories have been silenced, actively suppressed, or forced underground. This is done in order to make way for dominant white settler narrations of the nation-state that come to inform and structure the discursive, epistemic, ontological and material forms of settler colonial violence a work in these particular contexts.

This dissertation attempts to trace some of these white settler colonial narratives over time in order to lay bare their contemporary manifestations as reiterations of the racist and colonial logics of early settlement in what is now known as Canada. What types of narratives were required at different historical moments (and in relation to the Athabasca region more specifically) for settler colonialism to persist and often go unrecognized? In the context of mass-scale extraction, how does the settler government work with private industry to exploit the land and labour of Indigenous and racialized people, and maintain settler colonial logics? These questions and others are examined in

a relatively chronological manner, and while the cyclical nature of many of these narratives is highlighted chapters are largely organized in chronological order.



Image 3. Alberta tar sands. Photo by Lenz, G., 2010.

Chapter One begins with an examination of the theoretical grounding of the project and its methodological orientation. This chapter traces some of the key theoretical contributions that the project engages with, and provides a review and engagement with the analytical approaches taken in subsequent chapters. Decolonial and Indigenous scholarship inspired this study's preoccupation with questions of epistemological and ontological violence, colonial knowledge production and the liberatory potentials of stories and scholarship that imagines otherwise. Living beyond the limits and logics of Western European epistemology and ontology is an essential

component of Indigenous self-determination and resurgence, as has been articulated by Indigenous scholars such as Alfred, 2005; Barker ed., 2005; Byrd, 2011; etc. Decolonial and Indigenous scholarship as well as critical race theory guide the analytical approach taken here to engage with other fields of study such as the emergent field of settler colonial studies and studies of political economy and ‘resource’ extraction.

Chapter Two engages in a practice of historicization⁸ as it provides a brief summary of key elements of eighteenth-century mercantilist extraction and its relationship to the emergence of a new white settler colonial nation state. Following a chronological order, this chapter further examines the post-confederation period and the surveying of Western Canada, including the Athabasca region. It examines the creation and execution of the Treaty Six and Treaty Eight processes in the nineteenth-century, and finally, early twentieth-century extractivism in the region. Though the chapter spans a lengthy time period in white settler colonial history, it serves to reveal the importance of narration and storytelling in the creation of a settler state and its logics of white possession (Moreton-Robinson, 2015). Nationalist mythologies of Canadian history serve the white settler state and its identity as a nation of rugged white pioneers, surviving the harsh conditions of an uncivilized, brutal, underdeveloped and largely unoccupied landscape⁹. In fact, the Hudson’s Bay Company is currently airing television commercials recounting Canada’s rugged but benevolent pioneer history. The campaign is called “A Country of Adventurers” and positions the extractive company as central to Canadian national identity (Robertson, 2015). Absent of course are the realities of attempted Indigenous genocide and organized colonial violence that were required for

‘resource’ extraction and for the founding and continuation of the Canadian nation state itself.

Chapter Three continues to follow these narratives into the twentieth and twenty-first centuries, looking first at neoliberalism’s historical emergence and the Canadian economy’s ties to the United States, as well as post-World War II shifts in global power structures. As the welfare state began to decline with the dominance of neoliberalism, this chapter examines the Canadian political economy and the emergence of bitumen extraction as a viable endeavor.

Chapter Four continues an examination of white settler colonialism in the context of contemporary neoliberalism, looking more closely at some of the discourses used by both the oil and gas industry and the government to attempt to justify the use of violence and surveillance against those opposing the tar sands projects and the pipelines they require. This chapter also examines the Temporary Foreign Worker Program as another example of racial extractivism. These racialized workers are a necessary labour force for the industry to remain profitable and require legislation and governmental mechanisms to quickly and easily move labourers to and from the extraction sites, all at a very low cost. This phenomenon is hardly anything new for the oil and gas industry or for any extractive industry. The construction of the Canadian rail system - required for extractive industries and increased white settlement - is one historical example of the exploitative use of foreign workers. The state’s role in facilitating the migration of Chinese labourers into Canada ensured that cheap deportable labour was available to the many industries relying on rail transport. Similarly, migrant farm workers in the contemporary

agricultural sector are required to make those industries profitable under neoliberal logics where the market determines the value of human labour and life.

Chapter Five finally turns to the underlying anxieties of Canadian white settler society and the discursive strategies of security and insecurity, threat and securitization that these anxieties have incited. In the context of seeking to secure a nation whose very sovereignty and jurisdiction is consistently on shaky ground in the face of Indigenous nationhoods, this chapter focuses on ‘secure’ investment discourses; on several exemplary pieces of legislation aimed at ‘securing’ the oil and gas industry including the *Jobs and Growth Act* (2012), an omnibus bill that called for a massive reduction in environmental protections in Canada); and on the surveillance and criminalization of those who express dissent or objection to any aspect of the industry’s presence in the region (including *Bill C-51*, or the *Anti-terrorism Act* (2015) which effectively criminalized direct action opposing the oil and gas industry).



Image 4. Alberta Tar Sands and Cops, Healing Walk 2014. Photo by Preston, J., 2014.

As opposition to tar sands extraction grows in light of climate change and the problems of transporting the diluted bitumen to foreign markets by way of risky pipelines and massive oil tankers, efforts by the industry and government to surveil and criminalize those who oppose the extractive mega-projects intensifies. The relationships between white settler anxieties and an increase in securitization (and criminalization) is intimate, psychological, and deeply embedded within processes of subject formation in this context. Persistent anxieties and failures haunt white settlerhood and the correspondent subjectivities grounded in a sense of entitlement to Indigenous land.

Chapter One: Theory and Methods

As delineated in the introduction, this project explores the relationship between white settler-colonialism and tar sands extraction in Canada. My research question asks: how does white settler colonialism in Canada refashion itself over time and in relationship to tar sands extraction? By examining early colonial settlement policies from the early 18th century to the present day, I further ask more broadly, what does this historicized analysis reveal about the relationship between race and neoliberalism in the on-going project of racial extractivism? In grappling with these two questions, the methodological approach that I take to this study is informed by many different schools of thought including: decolonial theory, Indigenous theory, critical race theory, theories of settler colonialism, Black liberation theory, and theories of political economy. Bringing these into conversation I delineate and attempt to highlight what these epistemic lenses reveal about the fraught relationship between white settler nationbuilding and Indigenous jurisdiction in the context of bitumen extraction.

I center decolonial epistemologies in order to trouble the idea that there is an objective knowledge that speaks for itself as modernitncolonial epistemology suggests. My methodological approach allows for various decolonial theoretical lenses to come together to examine racial extractivism in the tar sands, and allows for the examination of a wide variety of data including primary documents such as British Crown legislation, post-Confederation federal legislation, contemporary oil and gas advertisements, security firm promotional materials, and private tar sands lobby group materials. Analyzed in relation to one another, and through the lenses of decolonial political urgencies, these

forms of data reveal the processes of discursive and representational normalization that maintain white settler colonial order (despite the fact that it continues to fail at its project of Indigenous elimination when met with the powers of Indigenous jurisdiction). The interconnections between theory and method inform both what phenomena I consider to be data, and how I then interpret and analyze that data. This relationship between theory and method guide which questions I ask throughout the dissertation to reveal the processes and discursive strategies of white settler colonialism and racial extractivism. The theory that has proved useful in examining white settler colonialism in Canada and racial extractivism in the tar sands ranges from that which uncovers and traces the colonial work of discourse and its insidious and normalizing nature, to writing that demonstrates the creative and liberatory power of decolonial thought. Edward Said's work for instance, demonstrates how to bring Western epistemological logics and colonial practices into analyses of contemporary discursive practices. Said writes,

The thing to be noticed about this contemporary discourse, which assumes the primacy even the complete centrality of the West, is how totalizing its form, how all-enveloping its attitudes and gestures, how much it shuts out even as it includes, compresses, and consolidates. We suddenly find ourselves transported backward in time to the late nineteenth century. (Said, 1993, 22)

Accordingly, this project has been deeply informed by Indigenous and decolonial scholarship whose analyses of coloniality/modernity as an epistemology has provided critical insight into how this social and political order and way of knowing has structured the contemporary moment. Modernity/coloniality are collapsed here to signal their

inseparable interconnection. Drawing from the work of Grosfoguel (2005; 2011) the conjoining of these terms denotes the interconnections between colonialism and modernity as a hegemonic Eurocentric paradigm. While this paradigm changes and shape-shifts over time, it maintains its central epistemological premises and its global dominance. Grosfoguel refers to this as a “world-system” and uses the term “Capitalist/Patriarchal Western-centric/Christian-centric Modern/Colonial World-System” (2011, p.28) to further elucidate some of its various interconnected elements. While Grosfoguel (2011) does not explicitly center or foreground race as a key organizing principle of this world-system with this term, he does discuss it at length when describing his world-system formulation in greater depth (p.28-29). In his view, “the international ‘left’ never radically problematized the racial/ethnic hierarchies built during European colonial expansion and still present in the world’s “coloniality of power.” No radical project can be successful today without dismantling these colonial/racial hierarchies. (p.29). This assertion mirrors Cedric Robinson’s (1983) earlier critique of the Marxist movement’s failures to address how race and colonialism structure capitalist economics and social relations.

This study has been guided by politically engaged scholars such as Franz Fanon (1952, 1961), Edward Said (1978; 1993), and Aimé Césaire (1955) whose decolonial scholarship has shaped my epistemological orientation to the question of contemporary white settler colonialism in Canada and the processes of racial extractivism in the Athabasca region. These scholars emerged from and worked within very different but interconnected colonial contexts and provided timeless analyses of coloniality and colonialism that have given scholars like myself the analytical tools required to think

through various contemporary colonial contexts whose present conditions are structured by the past and modernity/coloniality's epistemological and ontological hegemony.

Beginning with a brief overview of some of the texts most influential to the epistemological underpinnings of this project, this chapter will examine central conceptual tools, analytical approaches and fields of study that have oriented the project beginning with decolonial and Indigenous thought and scholarship addressing Indigenous jurisdiction, resurgence which has oriented the political urgency of the project. Next this chapter examines Edward Said's (1993) concepts of the cultural archive and contrapuntal reading, followed by a discussion of intersectional theories of power as theorized by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) and others. These concepts and approaches to research are examined as important contributions to the project's analytical and methodological approach. This chapter locates my research at the intersections of the emergent scholarly field of settler colonial studies (as emerging first from Native American and Indigenous studies), and scholarship on Canadian political economy and resource extraction. My interdisciplinary contribution to these fields of study come from the intersectional analytical approach I use to engage with the question of ongoing white settler colonialism in the tar sands. These approaches draw from an intersectional understanding of power, from critical race theory and from decolonial and Indigenous approaches to research. Though many other disciplines have influenced, interjected and contributed to the project, these have remained some of the central points of engagement. The final section of the chapter addresses political economy and some of its theories of neoliberalism and reviews Cedric Robinson's theory of racial capitalism while presenting a new analytical tool, racial extractivism. Racial extractivism is presented as a tool for studying the

intersections of colonialism, capitalism and race thinking in contexts of ‘resource’ extraction and pays particular attention to the role that land and Indigenous jurisdiction play in extractive contexts.

Decolonial and Indigenous Theory

Franz Fanon’s (1952) deep investigation into the psycho-affective powers of colonizing and being colonized provides a window into potential ways that racism and colonialism can structure subject formation and, as in Albert Memmi’s later work (1957), offers analyses of the psychological violence of white supremacy. In *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), Fanon begins his chapter “The Fact of Blackness” with a reference to his coming into the world seeking to know its source and to find meaning, only to discover that he was “an object in the midst of other objects” (p. 109). He goes on to explain how the “glances of others fixed me there” (ibid) in a white construction of Blackness. Through a process of being fixed by the gaze of white supremacy he was made to burst apart and then finally to have the fragments “put back together again by another self”(ibid). Fanon’s later work in *The Wretched of the Earth* (1961), describes pathways and roadmaps to liberation that have proved useful for countless anti-colonial and liberation struggles. The ripple effects of Fanon’s writing have directly and indirectly influenced many of the decolonial and Indigenous scholars whose work is engaged with herein and has contributed to Indigenous resurgence movements across Turtle Island. The political economy work of Yellowknives Dene scholar, Glen Coulthard (2014), for instance, draws from Fanon (1952) to argue for Indigenous self-recognition and against seeking

accommodation from or cooperation with the settler-state. Periodically returning to Fanon's work while writing this dissertation provided a reliable and consistent reminder of the urgency of anti-colonial and decolonizing approaches to writing and its potential impacts.

Edward Said's (1978, 1993) studies of colonial cultural production in both *Orientalism* and *Culture and Imperialism*, demonstrate how scholars working to reveal and dismantle colonialism can effectively do so by locating it within the everyday discourses and cultural productions emerging from colonial societies and from within their imaginings of the rest of the world. Said (1993) presents a methodology of "contrapuntal reading" whereby one must,

take account of both processes, that of imperialism and that of resistance to it, which can be done by extending our reading of the text to include what was forcibly excluded... In reading a text, one must open it out both to what went into it and to what its author excluded. Each cultural work is a vision of a moment, and we must juxtapose that vision with the various revisions it later provoked... (p.66-67)

Furthermore, the contrapuntal reader "must connect the structures of a narrative to the ideas, concepts, experiences from which it draws support" (p.67). Therefore, in examining texts such as oil industry public relations materials or advertisements, industry lobby group campaigns or white-settler-centric narrations of Canadian history, I engage in contrapuntal reading to locate race and its work in maintaining and simultaneously refashioning the discursive strategies of white settler colonialism, as well as to make

visible the structures and tools of neoliberalism meant to normalize free market ideology and exploitation.

Ultimately though, a question posed by Aimé Césaire in 1955 is the primary preoccupation of this dissertation. Césaire's (1955) question was the following: "...the essential thing here is to see clearly, to think clearly—that is, dangerously—and to answer clearly the innocent first question: what, fundamentally, is colonization?" (p.32).

In the context of this study, white settler colonialism can be traced through the operations of the oil and gas industry and the settler state's support of it culturally, discursively, and materially. Its examination and scrutiny thus flows from the work of scholars who have demonstrated how scholarship can serve interconnected processes of decolonization, including the everyday decolonial relations that play out in intimate relations and spaces (Holmes and Hunt, 2015).

Indigenous scholarship which also grapples with Césaire's (1955) question and with the related questions of decolonization and Indigenous resurgence have similarly influenced the approach taken with this topic and its political urgency. Nishnaabeg teacher and scholar Leanne Simpson's (2011) work has been particularly powerful in centering everyday acts of Indigenous resurgence and using Nishnaabeg thought and philosophy to interpret contemporary settler colonialism. Always prioritizing the importance of land in her work, she writes "ethically, it is my emphatic belief that the land, reflected in Nishnaabeg thought and philosophy, compels us towards resurgence in virtually every aspect" (p.18). Yellowknives Dene scholar Glen Sean Coulthard (2014) links these practices of Indigenous resurgence and freedom to a critique of the liberal pluralist politics of recognition so often promoted in the context of ongoing white settler

colonialism. Seeing these politics as reproducers of “colonialist, racist, patriarchal state power” (p.3), Coulthard calls for “an era of peaceful coexistence grounded on the ideal of *reciprocity* or *mutual recognition*” (ibid). The possibility of such reciprocity and mutual recognition however, requires that non-Indigenous peoples are equipped with the knowledge and skills required to first recognize the colonial, racist and patriarchal underpinnings of Western epistemology and ontology and its neoliberal manifestations. One central component of this are, of course, the notions of private property and the commodification of land and life. These are antithetical to kinship relationships to land, water and all life forms structure the laws and systems of governance, languages and transference of knowledge, art forms, communal relationships and cultures central to Indigenous ways of knowing and being across Turtle Island. This has been articulated and rearticulated time and time again by Indigenous scholars whose jurisdiction is consistently ignored by ‘resource’ extraction companies, white settlers, and land-owners who see the private ownership of land as part of full citizenship in a white settler state. To own the land and to extract from it has historically been a marker of colonial and settler colonial sovereignty. The very concept of *terra nullius* is bound up with the notion that land is empty unless substantial extractive practices are at work (such as agricultural cultivation). Both *terra nullius* and the treaties, for instance, recognize prior occupation of the land but operate with the intent to rescind rights and Indigenous jurisdictional powers. Together they both operate as discursive and legislative tools of the Crown and of the white settler state to deny Indigenous jurisdiction, albeit through different strategic approaches to Indigenous elimination. As Reid (2010) notes, *terra nullius* operated as discursive tool and a principle of vacancy justifying land theft:

The French and English also developed the idea of *terra nullius* (“vacant land”) to further substantiate their right to assert sovereignty over regions belonging to non-Europeans. By this principle, land could be regarded as empty, and underlying title could be claimed, if non-Europeans were failing to make use of it in accordance with European expectations or if they had migratory subsistence patterns. (p.340)

The concept of *terra nullius*, while recognizing the existence of Indigenous peoples, actively functions to deny recognition of Indigenous relationships to land and Indigenous forms of jurisdiction in order to discursively render the land vacant. This discursive strategy echoes the approach to treaty-making in its ability to both recognize the existence of Indigenous peoples while simultaneously denying their authority in relation to land. Therefore, if the clearly dubious Christian logics used to justify establishment of European settler colonies (as well as the trans-Atlantic slave trade and colonial expansion and occupation beyond Turtle Island) are truly recognized and accounted for, it is non-Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island who must reckon with the realities of ongoing Indigenous jurisdiction and the relationships to land and life that structure and inform that jurisdiction.

Tuck and Yang (2012) also emphasize a land-centered approach to research and activism that goes beyond decolonization as a metaphor or discourse, and urge scholars to instead engage with questions of Indigenous land and sovereignty, jurisdiction and repatriation. In calling for “an ethic of incommensurability”, the authors challenge the trend in non-Native scholarship towards a depoliticized settler colonial studies and towards a language of decolonization that is divorced from or which erases Indigenous

life, labour, and relationships to land. Ultimately, they argue that “Decolonizing the Americas means all land is repatriated and all settlers become landless. It is incommensurable with the redistribution of Native land/life as common-wealth” (Tuck and Yang, 2012, p.27). Tuck and Yang take direct aim at reformist and liberal notions of decolonization that attempt to maintain capitalist logics of private property and ‘resourceification’. Instead, they assert that decolonization on Turtle Island cannot take place within nation-state structures, neoliberal free market systems, or even from within European radical traditions such as Marxism. The authors assert that these non-Indigenous systems and structures all become colonial impositions on Indigenous relations to land and life. It is those diverse and regionally-specific relations to land and life that describe the specifics of what Indigenous jurisdiction looks like in different places.

It is important to highlight that Indigenous communities share no single understanding of jurisdiction or sovereignty, or of the territorial boundaries of that sovereignty. These are relationships to land and governance that have been effected by centuries of white settler colonialism and its various technologies of division, relocation, elimination and assimilation. Yet many Indigenous scholars have attempted to provide some elucidation of critical and regionally specific understandings of sovereignty, jurisdiction, peoplehood. Critiquing what Craig Womack (2008) calls cultural studies’ view of nationalism as “pathology”, the author challenges cultural studies scholars to recognize the “Native studies view of it in terms of survival of tribes” (p.37). Robert Allan Warrior’s *Tribal Secrets*, for instance, argues that sovereignty is not an isolationist position, but that “tribal governments exist in complex relationships with municipal,

state, and federal powers that demand constant movement between and across borders” (Womack, 2008, p.37). Other Indigenous scholars insist on different terminology and see sovereignty as a European concept - proof, according to Womack - that sovereignty is an ongoing, dynamic process. He suggests “that Native people can hope for more than the way sovereignty is often limited by the courts, that sovereignty can be opened up to other arenas – the personal, artistic, and communal lives of American Indians, for instance – than the legal one” (p.74). In *American Indian Literary Nationalism* by Jace Weaver, Craig Womack and Robert Warrior (2006), the authors argue that literary nationalism focuses not on a critique or analysis of colonialism, but on a centering and promotion of resurgences and Indigenous self-determination and a revitalization of Indigenous ways of knowing and of being. They write, “let a thousand separatisms bloom” (p.15), referring to separate and distinct Indigenous nationalisms, governance and communal practices, and views of sovereignty or jurisdiction.

Sovereignty, nationhood and resurgence are of course examined at length by Indigenous scholars who take direct aim at the settler state in their assertions of Indigenous nationhood and often play direct roles in the resurgence practices they discuss. These studies can be categorized as central to Native and Indigenous Studies that influence, sometimes guide and often push settler colonial studies to go further in its attempts to attend to indigeneity and to the surviving multiplicity of Indigenous nationalities on Turtle Island in particular. Justice and Teuton and Womack’s (2008) edited collection by the Native Critics Collective for instance, examines Native literature and Native literary criticism in conjunction with U.S. settler colonial legislation and policies that structured the material realities of their production and the politics which

marked the period. This simultaneity, particularly evident in Craig S. Womack's (2008) contributions, contextualizes the theoretical contributions and preoccupations of Indigenous scholarship from a particular period in relation to colonial policies and programs ultimately aimed at their erasure and at the elimination of Indigenous nations more broadly. This type of contextualization reveals the political stakes of these scholarly contributions and the importance of this work in nurturing other forms of Indigenous resurgence.

One example of Indigenous resurgence that took place outside of the academic setting was the 2013 P'KOLS (formerly Mount Douglas) action by the WŚÁNEĆ nations and their supporters. This action was collective and assertive and reclaimed the place-name of an important meeting spot for Indigenous nations in what is unfortunately still know as the Greater Victoria region of British Columbia, Canada (Simpson, 2013). In advance of the re-naming action that resulted in the permanent decolonial name-change, Leanne Simpson (Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg and a member of Alderville First Nation) wrote a call-out on her blog to promote the action.

On May 22nd, members of the Tsawout (STÁUTW) nation, with support from the Songhees and the other local WŚÁNEĆ nations, including Tsartlip (WJOLEEP), Pauquachin (BOKÉĆEN), Tseycum (WSIKEM), Malahat (MÁLEXEŁ) and allied supporters from the Greater Victoria community, will lead an action to reclaim the original name of PKOLS, now known as Mount Douglas, in what is now known as Victoria, in what is now known as British Columbia. (Simpson, 2013)

Simpson's (2013) emphasis that all colonial place names will over-time all be

challenged and replaced with their original Indigenous names is both a calling in to the decolonial future and a call to action in support of Indigenous national resurgences. It is a prioritizing of Indigenous relations to the land, and the epistemologies and ontologies informing these relationships. Actions such as these are connected to everyday practices of decolonization (Holmes & Hunt, 2015) and processes of political self-determination and liberation from colonial power (Alfred and Corntassel, 2005).

Weaver, Womack, Warrior (2012) examine Indigenous nationhoods and tribal forms of governance as clear responses to the strategies of white, liberal, settler multiculturalisms and their various strategies of relegating Native peoples to a fictive 'private sphere', depoliticized and ornamentalized. Similarly, Mark Rifkin (2013) discusses how Indigenous nationhoods are reconfigured through racialized heteronormativity and the white settler imaginary to become figments of the past whose cultural material is appropriated as the property and part of the identity of the settler state.

Often stressing the importance of stories in knowledge transfer (including political and governance knowledge transfer) inevitably cultural regeneration practices are intimately linked to political and self-determined strategies of everyday decolonial resistance to settler colonialisms. John Burrows (2002) and Leanne Simpson (2011) both stress narrative and oral histories as living knowledge that is central to resurgence and education. Additionally, Taiaiake Alfred's (2005) work is of course highly influential in matters concerning nationhood and resurgence as he promotes notions of tribally specific peoplehoods, and opposes the language of sovereignty.

The politics of recognition are examined at length in Glen Coulthard's (2014) *Red Skin, White Masks*, and in Joanne Barker's (2011) work, *Native Acts*. These two authors

take direct aim at the white settler colonial states of Canada and the US and the politics of recognition, or “the now expansive range of recognition-based models of liberal pluralism that seek to ‘reconcile’ Indigenous assertions of nationhood with settler-state sovereignty via the accommodation of Indigenous identity claims in some form of renewed legal and political relationship with the Canadian state” (p.3). Coulthard’s work calls for reciprocity and mutual recognition instead of the reproduction of racist, patriarchal and colonialist power that liberal forms of recognition produce (ibid). Similarly, Barker’s work examines “the political and ethical implications of how Native peoples choose to navigate the legal and cultural demands for their authenticity with one another.” (p.6). She challenges these same liberal forms of recognition and their reliance on notions of ‘progressive’ historical trajectories of national narrations which begin with “tales of Native savagery” and end with “those in power finding resolution and affirmation—but only if the Native recognized and celebrated is authentic” (Barker, p.5). Race functions in these dynamics of settler state recognition to not only define the authentic and demand it prove itself in colonial courts and in everyday interactions within white settler institutions and structures, but also within Indigenous communities themselves who continue to struggle with and against these dominant forms of recognition to define themselves and their communities. This includes definitions of governance structures and relationships that cannot be accounted for by the *Indian Act* or band council system in Canada.

Said's Cultural Archive, Contrapuntal Reading and Discourse Analysis

Edward Said presented the concept of the “cultural archive” in his 1993 book *Culture and Imperialism*. Said’s methodological approach to his own study of “a more general pattern of relationships between the modern metropolitan West and its overseas territories” (xi) required the development of a theory of culture that re-politicized the concept and put an end to conceptions that left it “exonerated of any entanglements with power” (p.57). He argues against widely accepted understandings of cultural representations as “apolitical images to be parsed and construed as so many grammars of exchange” (ibid) and against “the divorce of the present from the past [that] is assumed to be complete” (ibid). Said writes,

And yet, far from this separation of spheres being a neutral or accidental choice, its real meaning is as an act of complicity, the humanist’s choice of a disguised, denuded, systematically purged textual model over a more embattled model, whose principal features would inevitably coalesce around the continuing struggle over the question of empire itself. (p.57)

This inevitable coalescence of culture and empire under a decolonizing analysis that recognizes their interrelation and the important role that cultural reproductions play in maintaining empire is also the methodological birthplace of projects like this one. By engaging with “a more embattled model” of culture as demonstrated by Said, normalized and depoliticized discursive practices are brought back into the fold of that

which is political, impactful, structuring and subject making.

Said understands culture as “all those practices, like the arts of description, communication, and representation, that have relative autonomy from the economic, social, and political realms and that often exist in aesthetic forms, one of whose principal aims is pleasure” (xii). He goes on to describe culture as “a concept that includes a refining and elevating element, each society’s reservoir of the best that has been known or thought...In time, culture comes to be associated, often aggressively, with the nation or the state; this differentiates ‘us’ from ‘them,’ almost always with a degree of xenophobia” (xiii). This description of culture from Said’s text, published in 1993, was perhaps not able to entirely predict the neoliberal transformations of the twenty-first century’s deep embedding of the economic in the everyday. Neoliberalism’s hegemony has further blurred the distinct realms that Said refers to, and has worked on affective levels to imbue even intimate sentiments such as one’s sense of self and one’s notions of success and value with individualizing and competitive free market ideology. While ‘the cultural’ remains dominantly associated with the state, and in the Canadian context within the narratives of white settler colonialism, free market capitalism its neoliberal ideology now compliment and shape the cultural in much the same way. Therefore the “relative autonomy [of the cultural] from the economic, social and political realms” that Said discussed are further blurred and complicated in the contemporary moment.

The realm of representation becomes difficult to contain and categorize, extending itself to discursive fields that at first glance appear disparate, entirely distinct and separate. For instance, what do oil and gas advertisements or security company

promotional videos have to do with white settler ‘culture’? This dissertation analyzes representations, text and discursive forms that at first glance may appear unrelated or disparate, yet it is in analyzing their interrelationships that the continuities of common sense white settler colonial thought becomes visible or traceable. This project draws from Said’s methodological approach because it suggests that these sometimes depoliticized and sometimes disparate representations can be analyzed together from a “contrapuntal perspective” (p.32) where we become “able to think through and interpret together experiences that are discrepant, each with its particular agenda and pace of development, its own internal formations, its internal coherence and systems of external relationships all of them coexisting and interacting with others” (ibid). This approach facilitates the sometimes interdisciplinary, intersectional and always “embattled” study of colonial and imperial discourse. For Said’s work, this was examined through the analysis of canonical Western literature and visual art, and for this dissertation it is examined through the analysis of representations of tar sands extraction in Canada, representations including state legislation, private corporate narrative and representations of the white settler context, corporate lobby group materials and private security firm representations of oil and gas extraction security. A contrapuntal approach to the cultural archive opens up the possibility of examining how, for instance, white settler colonialism has reproduced and maintained itself so effectively over time through a variety of representational and discursive practices.

David Theo Goldberg (1993) argues, “The social formation of the subject involves in large part thinking (of) oneself in terms of—literally as—the image projected in prevailing concepts of the discursive order. These concepts incorporate disciplinary

norms of behavior, rules of interaction, and principles of social organization” (p.3). Goldberg sees a direct link between dominant representations emanating from the discursive order and the social formation of the subject. In white settler societies like Canada the prevailing conceptual and discursive order is shaped in part by the historically specific context not only of white settler colonialism at large, but regionally and locally as well. While Goldberg is here concerned with the individual subject, the same could be argued for the larger social collective whose individual identities and collective and/or national identities are also shaped by the prevailing discursive order. Therefore the “concepts central to the dominant sociodiscursive scheme” (Goldberg, p.2) are important markers of historical and contemporary colonialism. In this thesis, the analysis of white settler colonialism and the discursive order that maintains it focuses specifically on the Athabasca region and spans a significant time period (primarily from the early nineteenth century to the contemporary moment). Analyzing this significant stretch of time allows for the study of repetitive and reiterated patterns that signal the particular trajectories of white settler colonialism in relation to racial extractivism. Goldberg writes, “[a]s the formative rules are historically specific and thus subject to change, so, too, is the discursive object in question. Racism is not a singular transhistorical expression but transforms in relation to significant changes in the field of discourse” (p.42). Accordingly, this study traces broad discursive strategies that attempt to legitimate white settler control in the Athabasca region.

This dissertation examines discursive formations through text, documentation and other media as its source materials or data, focusing on the socio-political importance of these texts and their relationships to structures of power, including white settler

colonialism. Therefore, the primary methodological approach used throughout is a form of discourse analysis. Developed primarily in the 1960s and 1970s and often attributed to the French post-structuralist scholar Michel Foucault, discourse analysis examines written, spoken, advertised and otherwise communicated knowledge and its complex and shifting relationship to power. Understanding race as one of the “central conceptual inventions of modernity” (Goldberg, p.3), thus coloniality (Grosfoguel, 2011), this dissertation traces how racialized discourse has operated and continues to operate within white settler colonialism in Canada.

Racial discourse is theorized by Goldberg (1993) who makes the important distinction between racialized discourse and racism, a distinction that allows for a more in-depth and subtle examination of the ways that racialized discourse operates. Goldberg argues that racism is one “expressive object” of racialized discourse, but that racialized expressions operate in a variety of ways which of course change over time, changes that this dissertation seeks to examine in the specific context of racial extractivism in the Athabasca region. Goldberg asks the following questions, which are relevant to this study: “How have the forms of racialized expression changed over time, and why? How have these discursive changes in racial expression affected the forms of racial expression?” (p.43). Goldberg links racialized discourse to modernity and describes it as modernity’s “continually reinvented common sense” (ibid) emerging from the “preconceptual elements of racialized discourse” (p.48). These preconceptual elements are,

embedded within social discourses central to and legitimized by practices and relations constitutive of modernity. Normalization of racialized

expression and racist exclusion turns on the embedding of their conditions of possibility deep in modernity's formative sociodiscursive structures and scientific vision. (Goldberg, 1993, p.49)

Building on Goldberg's notion of racialized discourse and its prediscursive elements, Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2015) presents the concept of "white possession" as "a discursive predisposition servicing the conditions, practices, implications, and racialized discourses that are embedded within and central to white first world patriarchal nation-states" (p.xxiv). This particular concept of discursive predisposition is useful in examining contemporary white settler colonialism and its normalized and embedded culture and structure. Because it centralizes the racial ordering that is foundational to white possession, it complements and enhances the discussion of racial extractivism throughout the dissertation. White possession is also a broad enough concept to be useful in the examination of a wide variety of data (as is done throughout this project). The different forms and types of data that I engage with operate on different scales and demonstrate different discursive strategies of white settler colonialism and racial extractivism. As previously discussed, what constitutes data in this study includes examples of a broad range of representational and discursive practices that have been chosen for their varying abilities to demonstrate the range, reach and normalized embedding of white entitlement to Indigenous land and life by settlers, extractive industries and white settler governments. I will further expand on how these various objects of analysis or sites of data contribute to this study of white settler colonialism and racial extractivism in the tar sands.

Informed by this contrapuntal approach to reading, and by the notion of the

cultural archive as opening up analytical practices to a relational approach to seemingly disparate forms of data, this dissertation examines a number of primary sources which have been selected for their ability to elucidate the discursive strategies of racial extractivism in the context of ongoing white settler colonial violence. In examining how white possession is central to the formation and reiteration of settler colonialism in Canada, and thus to the extraction of bitumen from the Athabasca region, I have chosen to analyze several key primary sources throughout the dissertation. Chapter Two examines historical pre- and post-Confederation primary texts that informed founding logics of dispossession and colonial rule; these include *The Doctrine of Discovery* and more specifically Pope Alexander VI's 1493 *Inter Caetera*, and *The Royal Proclamation of 1763*. Nineteenth century primary documents are also examined as indicative of the prevailing logics of white settler colonialism and early settler state-craft that attempted to legitimize practices of attempted Indigenous elimination and assimilation as revealed through a brief analysis of *The Gradual Civilization Act* and *The Indian Act*. These documents have been selected due to their dual roles in managing the state's containment and management of Indigenous lives and land, and for their epistemological and ontological function in attempts to re-script life and land as capital.

Additional primary documents are analyzed in the later part of the dissertation in order to trace more contemporary discursive and representational strategies of racial extractivism, which of course build upon the discursive foundations laid by previous examples of white settler colonial knowledge production. In Chapter Four, these include Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers' advertisements, a Cenovus advertisement campaign, as well as multiple independent tar sands lobby group

advertisements. These sources are examined as exemplary of neoliberal discourse that attempts to legitimize racial extractivism by, for instance, operationalizing national myths of Canadian humanitarianism and benevolence by representing the oil and gas industry as also innovatively humanitarian. Additionally, lobby group materials demonstrate how race operates through representational practices that draw from pre-existing embedded notions of racial order. For example, these representational and discursive strategies operationalize Orientalist tropes of a racialized terrorist Other to position tar sands extraction in Canada as ‘ethical’, for instance. Other examples reveal the intersectional operation of racial and sexual tropes which draw on homonationalist claims to Canadian humanitarianism and benevolence positioned in opposition to racialized oil and gas producing nation-states. Chapter Five includes several primary source documents including the former Conservative federal government’s *Jobs and Growth Act (2012)*; *Bill C-51 or the Anti-terrorism Act (2015)*. These primary sources were selected because they demonstrate the contemporary neoliberal imperatives of the white settler state to deregulate oil and gas extraction and promote industry and investor interests, while continuing the ongoing processes of attempted Indigenous elimination as evidenced through the denial of Indigenous jurisdiction. Furthermore, they were selected as exemplary of discursive strategies of the white settler state that further criminalize opposition to racial extractivism by targeting Indigenous activists and land protectors in particular. These forms of data, work with and as part of public discourse that activates preexisting racial and colonial assumptions about jurisdiction, the role that extractive industries play within the Canadian economy, degrees of national dependency on the oil and gas sector, and the inevitability of bitumen extraction more generally.

These assertions of white possession are entrenched through public and private sector discursive practices and forms of representation, as shown through the analyses of primary documents throughout the dissertation.

Contested Theories of Settler Colonialism

After the death of non-Native anthropologist and scholar of settler colonialism Patrick Wolfe, Kanaka Maoli (Native Hawaiian) scholar J. Kēhaulani Kauanui (2016) engaged with some of the central theories that Wolfe had presented, and the ways in which his work has and has not been taken up. Kauanui argues, like Wolfe (1999), that theories of settler colonialism emerged from native scholarship, first within American Studies, and then - after the creation of the Native and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) in 2008 - within Native and Indigenous Studies. The focus on the structures and discourses, techniques and institutions of settler colonialism cannot displace the need for Native and Indigenous Studies which nurture resurgence scholarship, place-based and land-based analyses of Indigenous languages, thought, theory, practices and life ways. Native and Indigenous Studies support the resurgence and application of Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies that ultimately demonstrate a relational view of how people are intimately bound up with other forms of life and with the planet. Centering these ways of knowing and being also immediately demonstrates how white settler colonialism has failed and will continue to fail at eliminating Indigenous life and at possessing Turtle Island, for instance. Kauanui ultimately suggests that, alongside any

analytic of settler colonialism must come “indigeneity as a counterpart analytic” (2016, n.p.). This combination would allow us to grasp for instance, the failures of the white settler colonial mission in Canada. Therefore, like Tuck and Yang’s (2012) “ethic of incommensurability”, Kauanui’s counterpart analytic re-centers indigeneity and its political urgency within non-Native discussions of settler colonialism. This political urgency and the incommensurability of white settler colonial epistemologies and ontologies for a project of decolonization lie at the heart of the following chapters and reflect my aim as a non-Indigenous white scholar to contribute towards white settler colonialism’s undoing.

Decolonizing methodologies have also been critiqued as requiring further articulation and clarity (Zavala, 2013), and the relatively recent proliferation of engagement with decolonization as a concept - particularly in settler colonial studies - has warranted caution and critique. In their article ‘*Decolonisation Is Not a Metaphor*’, authors Tuck and Yang (2012) assert:

When metaphor invades decolonisation, it kills the very possibility of decolonisation; it recenters whiteness, it resettles theory, it extends innocence to the settler, it entertains a settler future. Decolonise (a verb) and decolonisation (a noun) cannot easily be grafted onto pre-existing discourses/frameworks, even if they are critical, even if they are anti-racist, even if they are justice frameworks. The easy absorption, adoption, and transposing of decolonisation is yet another form of settler appropriation.

(p.3)

Tuck and Yang assert that the politics and relations to the land itself must be centered and

accounted for if decolonization is to be a productive concept in the termination of colonial logics and materialities.

Theories of settler colonialism have emerged from a multi-disciplinary acknowledgment that settler colonial contexts cannot be adequately examined through the interpretive categories and theoretical tools provided by colonial, postcolonial or subaltern studies (Warrior, 2003; Veracini, 2010; Wolfe, 1999, Barker, 2012). Again, as Kauanui (2016) makes clear, the critique of settler colonialism has primarily and historically emerged from Indigenous scholarship which challenges the jurisdictional powers of settler states like Canada and its contemporary liberal and neoliberal multiculturalism that repetitively attempts to erase Indigenous nationhoods and refashion them into special status ethnic minorities within a white society (see for instance Flanagan, 2000; Cairns, 2000). This scholarship has served to unite Indigenous scholars across Turtle Island in collective efforts to promote and encourage Indigenous scholarship including in the 2008 formation of the Native American and Indigenous Studies Association (NAISA) (Warrior, 2003; Deloria, 2003).

Indigenous scholarship on Turtle Island has emerged from diverse Indigenous contexts which have survived, resisted and continued to reproduce Indigenous life despite the shifting forms of colonization that have persisted (on Turtle Island) for hundreds of years. This broad body of theory and knowledge has provided a multiplicity of perspectives and theoretical orientations to historically specific processes of colonial violence and Indigenous resistances to it. These forms of violence include the epistemic violence of colonialism and its relationship to land and life as commodity; the gendered and sexualized violence experienced primarily (but not exclusively) by Indigenous

women and girls and Two-Spirit peoples. It has included institutionalized processes of genocide and their generational effects, such as the residential school system in Canada, the forced relocations of many Indigenous nations across Turtle Island (including in the case of the many Inuit and Innu/Cree nations in the high north, some of whom are currently involved in international legal coalition campaigns to address the damages resulting from relocation campaigns) (Inuit Circumpolar, 2016). White settler colonialism in particular has required and produced forms of racism specifically directed at Indigenous populations, as previously discussed. This includes the environmental racism that places Indigenous communities as those directly impacted by ‘resource extraction’ and the many forms of environmental damage and destruction resulting from it.

Though Indigenous scholarship has the longest tradition of theorizing settler colonialism, many non-Indigenous scholars have engaged with analysis of this specific form of colonial violence. Perhaps the most well-known is the late anthropologist Patrick Wolfe (1999; 2006) who famously argued that settler colonialism is a structure, and not an historical event. Wolfe describes a “logic of elimination” which, he argues, underpins all settler colonial contexts and is a unique and consistent element of settler colonialisms. He depicts elimination as often genocidal, but always as involving repression of the figure of the native “...whereby the native repressed continues to structure settler-colonial society” (2006, p.390). The tendency within academia to cite the work of white, male scholarship over that of Indigenous, Black and people of colour scholarship is an institutional and systemic problem that is intersectional in nature. I mention it here because while I have chosen to begin with Indigenous scholarship on settler colonialism,

Wolfe's academic labour made significant contributions to existing theory on the subject, and deserves attention just as the politics of citation deserves attention as well. Settler colonial studies has emerged in order to account for the historical and contextual specificities of these settler colonial nation-states, and as an academic space wherein Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholarship remain in productive but also sometimes incommensurable dialogue.

In order to directly address the white supremacist ideological foundations of settler colonialism I use the term *white* settler colonialism and figure whiteness and white supremacy as foundational structuring concepts. Drawing attention to the white supremacist logics which structure and inform settler colonialisms also requires that the roles of anti-Blackness and the trans-Atlantic slave trade, as well as Orientalism and indentureship be recognized as central to the rise and proliferation of the European colonial period and thus to contemporary global capitalism (Lowe, 2015). The role of slavery and anti-Blackness in trajectories of European colonialism and in the settler colonial contexts of the Americas needs to be read alongside the genocidal project and logic of Indigenous elimination that structures settlement. This includes settler colonial contexts where plantation economies did not prevail, as in the case of Canada, but instead where the colonial metropolises were able to fund these white settlement projects because of the use of slave and indenture labour and colonial land and resource theft elsewhere. The central role of slavery thus troubles the "triangular system of relationship" (p.6) theory presented by settler colonial theorist Lorenzo Veracini (2010). Veracini's analysis positions the settler, the metropolitan state and Indigenous agents as the primary actors in relations of settler colonialism (ibid). This system evicts the roles of slave and indentured

labour in amassing imperial wealth and obscured the role of the European construction of the Black body in defining what was meant by the concept of man in the early modern/colonial period.

Again, the most common definition of settler colonialism comes from anthropologist Patrick Wolfe (2006) who argues that settler colonialism is a structure and not an event (p.390) and one that is informed by “the logic of elimination” which describes the settler endlessly seeking to prove or achieve the fallacy of *terra nullius*. He goes on to further define settler colonialism as “an inclusive, land-centered project that coordinates a comprehensive range of agencies, from the metropolitan center to the frontier encampment, with a view to eliminate Indigenous societies” (p.393). Wolfe’s work examines how anthropology acts as a discursive practice that “encodes and reproduces the hegemonic process of colonial settlement” (1999, p.3). His study traces the genealogies of particular anthropological narratives in the Australian context, whose ideological impacts continue into the present (ibid). Like his analysis of this particular discourse or set of discourses, many theorists of settler colonialism have drawn attention to the various narratives and logics used to justify conquest, land theft and settlement, and have addressed the ways in which racism and the legal notion of *terra nullius* in particular, continues to structure settler societies.

As non-Native scholar Lorenzo Veracini (2010) notes, through the goals of indigenizing the settler population while eliminating or transferring Indigenous ones -thus setting the settler colony apart from the metropole and symbolically marking it as its own unique ‘Indigenous’ settler state – racist logics of genocide and elimination come to both found and structure white settler states. As Andrea Smith (2005) explains, “racism does

not merely arise in moments of crisis, in sporadic cleansings. It is internal to the biopolitical state, woven into the web of the social body, threaded through this fabric” (p.8-9).

Other scholars such as Mark Rifkin (2010), who is also non-Native, describe settler colonialism as also intrinsically tied to compulsory heterosexuality which functions as a key part of disassembling landholdings, ‘detrribalizing’ native peoples, and/or translating the terms of native territoriality and governance into those of liberalism and legal geography (p.6). It is important to note that, drawing on Cathy Cohen, Rifkin sees heteronormativity as rooted in white supremacist ideologies (p.6), and further suggests that ideal heterosexuality, as understood by white settler colonial ideals, indicates “the organizing framework of an imperial imaginary” (p.5) involving kinship, residency and of course, land tenure. Rifkin disrupts dualistic notions of homosexuality and heterosexuality, critiquing queer theory’s depiction of heterosexuality, by drawing attention to the non-sexual aspects of kinship, residency and land tenure. His work draws from analysis found in the 2010 GLQ issue entitled, “Sexuality, Nationality, Indigeneity” which argued for increased conversation between the disciplines of Native Studies and Queer Theory (Driskill, Finley, Gilley and Morgensen, 2011).

Elkins and Pedersen (2005) understand settler colonialism as distinct from imperial expansion undertaken for military advantage or trade, as they depict imperial overlords as often concerning themselves as little as possible with land seizure or internal governance, focusing instead on finding work for themselves or in securing profit through reliable Indigenous partners or chartered companies. They understand the settler populations as intent on making a particular territory their permanent home while

continuing to enjoy metropolitan living standards and political privileges, which, they argue, creates quite a different dynamic than that of imperial expansion (p.2). Seeing settler logic as one of elimination and not exploitation, the authors characterize settlers as “wishing less to govern Indigenous peoples or enlist them in their economic ventures than to seize their land and push them beyond an ever-expanding frontier of settlement” (Elkins and Pedersen, 2005, p.2). Furthermore, as several scholars have suggested, settler colonies often sought to weaken (or even rid themselves of) both metropolitan control and Indigenous populations as quickly as possible.

Lorenzo Veracini (2010) is one prominent non-Indigenous scholar who has argued for the creation of a distinct discipline of settler colonial studies that can account for this particular colonial form. This argument however, can serve to overshadow goals or processes of decolonization in his work by failing to address the concerns of Indigenous scholars like Kauanui (2016) who call for “indigeneity as a counterpart analytic to settler colonialism” (para. 4). Without foregrounding Indigenous scholarship that has always critiqued settler colonialism and its regional and specific manifestations over time, analyses of settler colonialism such as the one offered by Veracini (2010) present and construct the field of study as a new academic discipline with its own set of typologies, systematic norms and continuities. Often studied through comparative analyses of various settler colonial nation-states or projects, this comparative approach to studies of settler colonialism can obscure just as much as it is able to reveal. Indigenous scholar Tol Foster (Mvskoke Creek, Oklahoma) (2008) has asserted the importance, for instance, of a “relational regionalism”; a methodological recognition of the interdependence of tribally specific, and regionally specific frameworks. Foster stresses

that “theory arises out of historical events and in response to particular contexts, and if transported too carelessly it has tremendous capacity for damage” (p.266). Veracini’s frameworks for understanding settler colonialism through a set of repeating structures and approaches to colonial settlement runs the risk of performing this form of damage. “Relational regionalism” is instead able to attend to the assimilative approaches of the Canadian white settler state while requiring a spatial analysis that is conscientious of particular place-based territorial histories, and contemporary specificities including the very ways that spaces have been constructed, and in the case of this study it assists in following the consistencies and shifts in the discursive powers that construct space. For instance, as Indigenous lands in the Athabasca region were re-scripted through notions of *terra nullius* and through treaty processes, they were simultaneously reimagined as commodifiable property. The land was claimed, divided and privatized through white settler colonial and neoliberal processes of dispossession but also through discursive practices specific to racial extractivism and to the extraction of an unconventional oil source, bitumen. “Relational regionalism” as a methodological tool, assists this study in identifying the particulars of settler colonial law, administration and institutions of settlement and in identifying and examining neoliberal racial extractivism in this particular context. This is done in order to facilitate the denaturalization and ultimate undoing of these processes, which is the ultimate goal of decolonial scholarship.

In a significant portion of non-Indigenous settler colonial theory, there is a lack of acknowledgement of these methodological objectives thus leaving open the question of what socio-political and decolonizing work this scholarship is able to perform. On the other hand, when attention is paid to the work that theorizing does politically, its

effectiveness or its ability to interrupt, denaturalize or even momentarily rupture contemporary settler colonial logics, this literature is able to make effective contributions to decolonial thought. In addition to attending to “relational regionalism” and to the erasure of Indigenous scholarship within the emerging disciplining of settler colonial studies, critical race theorists and feminists of colour, Black feminists in particular, have signaled the importance of understanding power relations through an intersectional approach to studying systemic and structural forms of violence. The following section examines the relationship between an intersectional approach to critical race theory and to other studies of structural power with decolonial approaches to research.

Intersectionality and Decolonization

As intersectional analysis suggests, no single-issue identity politics can possibly attend to the shifting and complex matrix of power existing in any embodied relationship, and thus within any one identity group. As Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991) stated in her 1991 *Stanford Law Review* article:

The problem with identity politics is not that it fails to transcend difference, as some critics charge, but rather the opposite—that it frequently conflates or ignores intragroup differences. In the context of violence against women, this elision of difference in identity politics is problematic, fundamentally because the violence that many women experience is often shaped by other dimensions of their identities, such

as race and class. Moreover, ignoring difference within groups contributes to tension among groups, another problem of identity politics that bears on efforts to politicize violence against women. Feminist efforts to politicize experiences of women and antiracist efforts to politicize experiences of people of color have frequently proceeded as though the issues and experiences they each detail occur on mutually exclusive terrains. (p.1242)

Crenshaw has now offered generations of scholars and organizers the crucial warning that ignoring difference within groups or focusing on single issue identity politics without recognition of the complexities of multiple and co-produced sources of power cannot lead to solutions or possibilities that actually address the complexities of how power operates. Crenshaw's theorization of intersectional power challenges researchers to consider the interdependent and non-exclusive ways in which power operates. For those studying settler colonialism, as this study does, intersectional critical race theory enriches the analysis of settler colonial power by recognizing the ways in which race operates to position differently racialized bodies according to logics of white supremacy. Intersectional approaches to research bring scholarship on race into conversation with analyses of class and capitalism, gender and sex, ability, sexuality, nationality, coloniality, indigeneity, and other sources of power, seeing these as co-constitutive elements of the historical and contemporary contexts under analysis (Collins and Bilge, 2016; Crenshaw, 1993; Collins, 2000; Dhamoon, 2011). Just as race, racism and racialization are underlying, structuring and enabling ideologies of settler colonialism and

capitalism, so too are these other concepts which imbue each other with further social and political meaning, and which result in the material realities that structure life.

An intersectional account of power dynamics where meaning-making is always dependent upon multiple forms of social and political power and can never be singular or based in the analysis of a single-issue identity category. Sirma Bilge and Patricia Hill Collins (2016) provide a comprehensive genealogy of intersectionality and contextualize its emergence as an analytic tool. Intersectional analysis demands a more nuanced and complex reading of relationships between peoples, nation-states and institutions, discourses and ideologies, identities, lands and forms of power. Blige and Collins (2016) define intersectionality as,

A way of understanding and analyzing the complexity in the world, in people, and in human experiences. The events and conditions of social and political life and the self can seldom be understood as shaped by one factor. They are generally shaped by many factors in diverse and mutually influencing ways. When it comes to social inequality people's lives and the organization of power in a given society are better understood as being shaped not by a single axis of social division, be it race or gender or class, but by many axes that work together and influence each other. Intersectionality as an analytic tool gives people better access to the complexity of the world and of themselves. (p.2)

These varying (and often shifting) power relationships require interdisciplinarity and cross-field analysis, while also often requiring holding several analytical approaches in the air at once.

In analyzing extractive relationships to land and the dominant liberal and neoliberal discourses that shape and influence these relationalities in a white settler colonial context, intersectional approaches to this research prove indispensable. As relationships to the land itself must move away from white settler colonial and neoliberal norms of possession and property, entitlement, and commodification or 'resourceification'. These changes also require that their supporting epistemologies and ontologies are destabilized and dismantled, a project that this dissertation seeks to contribute towards with the assistance of intersectionality as an analytic tool.

Considering an intersectional approach to research alongside a decolonial one (as guided by Indigenous scholarship) requires that researchers also consider the ways in which Indigenous knowledges continue to be appropriated, discounted or ignored through western academic approaches to research (including settler colonial studies [see Driskill et. al, 2011; Kovach 2010; Zavala, 2013; Tuck and Yang, 2012]), and demands a centering of land and questions of jurisdiction. Though notions of decolonizing methodologies have been discussed by many scholars (Huynes, 2011; Kovach, 2009; Morgensen, 2011; Smith, 1999; Sunseri, 2010, Zavala, 2013) from many disciplines and in heterogeneous ways, all are attentive to the mechanisms of colonial knowledge production (Said, 1978; Ludden, 1993; Arondekar, 2005; Foucault, 1997; Derrida, 2001; Spivak, 1985, 1999), to those "prolific producers of social categories" and to the "grids of intelligibility [that] were fashioned from uncertain knowledge" (Stoler, 2010, p.1). Decolonizing methodologies require keen attention to these tendencies in colonial knowledge production, and also require non-individualistic creative and coalitional

approaches to their disruption that center relationships to land, which are complimentary with intersectional methods of analysis.

Considering Tol Foster's (2008) assertion that place based theories which are always historically specific and cannot be so easily transported and applied to different contexts, it is not surprising that there are points of contention and conflict in applying intersectional approached to research which emerge from post-structuralist critical race theory, to settler colonial contexts where Indigenous nations struggle for recognition of and respect for their jurisdiction over their lands and lives informed by different epistemologies and ontologies. This can mean that poststructural analyses of identity formation that reject notions of biological determinism and take up theories of social construction run the risk of eclipsing Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies that differ in their understandings of subject formation and cosmology. Again, Kauanui's (2016) critique of settler colonial studies without "indigeneity as a counterpart analytic" (para. 4) signals a major weakness of the emerging field of study where epistemic and ontological violence can a do occur.

Using an anti-essentialist approach that delves into the particulars of an object or subject of analysis (p.6), Craig Womack's (2008) discussion of decolonial research methods stresses "some kind of commitment to archival sources and other kinds of knowledge rather than atemporal, nonhistorical, clichéd analyses...." (p.7, 25) in order to provide a "dynamic and interactive view of history" (p.28). This approach historicization is both historically specific and results in political and material outcomes that support Indigenous resurgence. This approach to decolonial research is further exemplified through the work of Kwagiulth scholar Sarah Hunt (Kwakwaka'wakw) and

non-Indigenous scholar Cindy Holmes (2015) describe and demonstrate the politics of everyday decolonization alongside the importance of intersectional analyses of white settler colonial power.

The authors describe how, in their cases, as queer cis women, everyday decolonization requires a politic that “seeks to *queer* White settler colonialism and the colonial gender and sexual categories it relies on—to render it abnormal, to name it and make it visible in order to challenge it” (Hunt and Holmes 2015, p.156). Hunt and Holmes (2015) refer back to Indigenous lesbian and Two-Spirit women authors working on these questions in the 1980s such as Beth Brant (1994), Chrystos (1988; 1995), and Paula Gunn Allen (1986), and note how rare it is to see these women cited as contributors to LGBTQ and Indigenous scholarship (p.157). Their observation is indicative of the politics of citation which see non-Indigenous scholars (such as Patrick Wolfe) cited and engaged with on a regular basis, while the work of others is relied upon extensively but not recognized or cited. Clearly the systems and structures of academic knowledge production pose particular problems for interdisciplinary and intersectional analysis, and encourage a capitalist approach to research itself as a commodity requiring the exploitation of others (often Indigenous women, Black women and women of colour academics).

Both decolonizing methodologies and intersectionality as an analytical tool have been critiqued and revisited by many scholars who have challenged the popularization of the concepts. Intersectionality has been critiqued, for instance, as unfocused in its ability to account for power relations as they relate to shifting/multiple identities; as inattentive to debates around anti-essentialism versus strategic essentialism; and as dismissive of

Indigenous theories of survival (Spivak, 1987; Weaver, et al., 2006). These critical conversations and productive tensions articulate the importance of nuanced and historically specific studies of complex power relations that are simultaneously able to acknowledge their limits. For instance, while intersectional theory emerged from the particular context of Black female experiences of oppression in U.S. law that could not account for their various experiences through a single-axis analysis of power, and through experiences of racism and oppression in relation to a largely white Women's Movement, it has proven to be a productive lens through which to analyze racial extractivism in the tar sands and the complex ways in which white settler colonialism reproduces itself in Canada.

Intersectionality can attend to multiple axes of power simultaneously, and in doing so highlight how each relationship of domination/subordination is changed in relation to these other forms of power and their historical specificities. Classical liberalism and later neoliberalism; forms of colonialism and white settler colonialism in particular; race and racial taxonomies; epistemological and ontological violence and hegemony; Eurocentrism and later Euro-Americancentrism; class and capitalism are examined throughout this project with the help of intersectional theorizations of power. Kinship and family structure, sex, sexuality and gender regulation are of course also significant sites of settler colonial identity regulation and control that require comprehensive analysis but which are outside of the scope of this particular project. Future studies of racial extractivism need to take these sites of regulation into account as also central structuring factors within white settler colonial contexts¹⁰

Chickasaw critical theorist Jodi Byrd (2011) describes her approach to research as

“reading mnemonically” which is “...to connect the violences and genocides of colonisation to cultural productions and political movements in order to disrupt the elisions of multicultural liberal democracy that seek to rationalize the originary historical traumas that birthed settler colonialism through inclusion” (p. xii). Much like Said’s “contrapuntal reading” (1993, p.66), Byrd’s approach stresses the importance of historicization in unsettling these rationalizations that maintain white settler colonialism. Byrd approaches Native Studies with an engagement with critical race theory in order to make clear the role that whiteness and race act as central components of settler colonialism and the production of an indigeneity that supports the projects of white possession and settlement.

Like Byrd, Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2015) locates whiteness as intricately bound up with settler colonialism and possession. Drawing from Cheryl Harris’s work on whiteness as a form of property in law, she writes,

White propriety rights were cemented in law through the appropriation of Native American lands and the subsequent enslavement of Africans, Harris’s theoretical framework opens the door for an Indigenous reading of how white property rights are connected to the internal territoriality of patriarchal white sovereignty in the form of the nation-state. As a form of property, whiteness accumulates capital and social appreciation as white people are recognized within the law primarily as property-owning subjects. As such they are heavily invested in the nation being a white possession. (Moreton-Robinson, 2015, p. xix)

As an example of an intersectional and decolonial approach to research, Moreton-Robinson demonstrates how the coming together of these analytics reveals a richer more complex analysis of white possession that is both historicized in relation to larger-scale dynamics of Black enslavement and settler colonialism and brought to bear on how these histories come to life and inform the present, for example through the ways white people are recognized within the law.

This analytical relationship between decolonial and intersectional approaches to research informs my orientation to this study of white settler colonialism and racial extractivism in the tar sands. Also informing my approach to this topic are theories of political economy which have examined the emergence of neoliberal order and ideology over time.

Political Economy and Neoliberal Order

This section examines the role of political economy as a theoretical approach to white settler colonialism but begins with a brief summary of the rise of neoliberal economic and cultural order before moving to an examination of theories of political economy that engage with neoliberalism. Classical liberalism emerged from mid-eighteenth century changes in Great Britain and Western European production methods and the mass urbanization that these changes brought about. As previous political, social and economic orders supported systems of aristocratic rule of the landed classes, the Industrial Revolution supported the rise of a middle class and of entrepreneurial

capitalism. Often linked to the work of Adam Smith (1776) and his work *The Wealth of Nations*, the individual subject of the state is positioned as the primary political actor within a free market economy, though classical liberalism did not unilaterally advocate for a pure free market system. The use of mechanized production methods in both the agricultural sector and in the mass production of goods in urban centers changed the social and political structures of land ownership and political participation. Poor working conditions and the mass use of child labour resulted in the creation of labour unions that gained significant leverage with their abilities to strike and interrupt economic order. These conditions supported shifts in governance systems and political order towards a system of representative democracy co-existing with free market capitalism. Through a utilitarian perspective, however, the state held the role of regulator, legislating a maximum number of working hours, conditions for child labourers, taxation policies, and other social welfare and public education services). The free market under classical liberalism represented a significant shift from the mercantilist structure that pre-dated it, though it represented a dominant economic order that led to the rise of the welfare state structure by the late nineteenth century. In opposition to the welfare state structure, neoliberal order emerged in the late 1960's and early 1970's, became a dominant economic and social configuration that advocated for a *laissez-faire* approach to government intervention in private capitalist markets.

Neoliberalism is popularly described as relating to or characteristic of the belief in *laissez-faire* free market capitalism and in the individual as the primary political actor (Oxford English Dictionary, 2014), or as a “new economic configuration” or doctrine emerging in the 1970s (Harvey, 2005, p.1-2). Far less often however, is it described as a

central component of contemporary white settler colonialism, or as deeply informed and structured by race-thinking as I argue herein. Roberts and Mahtani (2010) do however, argue that “neoliberalism (its underlying philosophy) is fundamentally raced and actively produces racialized bodies” (p.248). The authors note that most descriptions and studies of neoliberalism (within geography specifically) neglect this relationship and instead understand racism and racialization to be products of neoliberalism. The authors suggest that neoliberalism does more than merely “modify the ways race functions”, and instead see race, racialization, and neoliberalism as existing in a relationship of co-constitution (p.250). I add to Roberts and Mahtani’s observation that within white settler colonial, ongoing colonialism is also “inextricably embedded” in neoliberal ideology, structures, representations and discourse. Thus, while the authors identify the normalized and embedded nature of race-thinking and racialization within neoliberalism, the authors fall short of recognizing how ongoing forms of colonialism also do this work, thus leaving the white settler state, for instance, as a given.

In the Canadian settler colonial context, where both neoliberalism and the political economy of the settler state are studied widely, race and white settler colonialism seldom appear as organizing principles of the economic and political order. Carter and Zalik (2016) discuss this in relation to rentier state literature¹¹ which, they argue, often “reify state forms, taking the formal, structural aspects of the state *a priori* – that is, the state is understood as a pre-given structure rather than a set of institutions that is constituted through social relations” (p.62). They note how this approach sees rentier states as structurally determined, resulting in over-simplistic analyses which “generally omit the broad historical conditions influencing oil development, key non-state actors,

and the international or transnational context” (ibid). Furthermore, the authors note how these studies cannot account for the complexities of Alberta’s contemporary politics as long as they overlook its specific colonial history and “the ways in which colonialism and imperialism have facilitated access to particular territories by major oil companies” (ibid). Other than the state, non-state actors such as the oil and gas companies themselves, the workers and the social movements which reform, restructure and effect the political economy at various scales, are also neglected by this literature.

While the Canadian state’s regulation of financial markets and its redistribution of public funds through the provision of public social services may have marked a previous era of state-craft and of popularly supported state-function, the contemporary moment is one characterized by the state’s deregulation of the market economy and divestment in public infrastructure and services in favour of an ‘unhindered’ global free market, where the state takes a ‘hands off’ approach to regulation and intervention in global economics. Neoliberalism suggests that individual citizens themselves must compete for life chances and not be shielded or protected from this free-market competition by the state. It argues ultimately that the free market will advance human quality of life and self-regulate, with the state playing a minimal role in society and primarily addressing those matters that are seen as ‘external’ to the market economy. Thus, neoliberal logic suggests that the state’s role in transition from a welfare state model to a neoliberal one requires the removal any environmental, regulatory, taxation, supervisory or managerial elements of its systems and institutions, obviously resulting in the shrinking of the state’s infrastructure. This logic is materialized, for example, through legislation such as the former Harper government’s *Jobs and Growth Act* which decimated Canadian environmental review

processes, and protective and regulatory protocols in order to facilitate investment in the extractive sectors.

This uniquely neoliberal approach to the role of the state differs from that of classical liberalism, whose foremost theorist, Adam Smith, saw the state as performing three important duties:

The duty of protecting the society from violence and invasion[...]the duty of protecting, as far as possible, every member of the society from the injustice or oppression of every other member of it[...]and[...]the duty to erecting and maintaining certain public works and certain public institutions, which it can never be to the interest of any individual, or group or individuals, to erect and maintain because of profit would never repay the expense, though it may frequently do much more than repay it to a great society. (Smith in Heilbroner, 1992, p.53).

Smith's three duties of the state have all been privatized in various ways in the neoliberal era, informed by neo-liberal theory's expansion on Smith's liberal economics of the eighteenth century. Smith's theories did, however, present the classical liberal notions of the self-regulating free market capitalist economy. *The Wealth of Nations* (Smith, 1776) suggests that the state's interference in the market economy will result in inefficiencies, and its role instead is to help facilitate the free market from the outside (in addition to performing its three primary duties outlined above). Liberal economic theory influenced many nation-states whose citizens were engaged in the market economy and who generally felt that the state could be judicious in regulating the market, and had a positive role to play in securing social justice and redistributing profits to the public.

Jonathan Swarts' *Constructing Neoliberalism: Economic Transformation in Anglo-American Democracies* (2013) argues that it was not until the economic constraints of the 1970s that these dominant liberal views were overtaken by neo-liberal perspectives on the importance of unhindered, deregulated free markets. Looking primarily at Canada, Great Britain, Australia and New Zealand, Swarts traces the normalization of neoliberal economic ideology through what he calls a "political-economic imaginary" (p.3). Swarts describes this process of normalization:

material incentives and even compulsion were deployed in the service of both new public policies and long-term ideational change. Then, as reluctant individuals were either coerced or materially induced to conform to the new economic structures, experience and habituation led the new ideological and policy paradigm to become 'taken-for-granted' by many and even accepted by increasing numbers as objectively 'true' and necessary. (p.4)

These Anglo-American states all took part in this process of neoliberal normalization, one which, of course, also occurred in the United States. The U.S. context is of particular importance to discussions of Canadian neoliberalism for a variety of reasons, and for the purpose of this study, the fact that Canada is the U.S.'s primary source of foreign oil is crucial. While the oil and gas industry extracting unconventional from the tar sands is searching for ways to access other foreign and emerging markets, for now it remains essentially tied to the U.S. market. Thus, examining the relationship between U.S. and Canadian forms of neoliberalism provides both a window into two different white settler colonial contexts and beyond, as oil and gas companies operate transnationally. There is

nothing fixed about the highly mobile and extensive reach of neoliberal economic structures and norms. As Carter and Zalik (2016) note, “the political space ‘Alberta’ cannot be understood apart from the socio-economic, colonial (historical), and political relationships that have shaped it and that connect it to a range of actors outside its borders. Indeed, the political economy of oil has been transnational for over a century” (p.54).

Matthew Huber (2013) argues that these popular neoliberal shifts in what was expected of the state were in fact part of a longer process of rescuing capitalism in the United States and beyond, first through government intervention then through government withdrawal in the market. Huber’s neo-Marxist perspective sees this shift emanating from the American New Deal policies of the 1930’s and 1940’s whereby, beginning with Franklin D. Roosevelt, a series of U.S. government reforms were put in place to address the mass poverty and economic disaster that was the Great Depression. These reforms saw the state step in to not only regulate the markets, but also to stimulate growth through government funded job creation and the foundation of extensive social security measures. While many political economists have come before Huber to examine Fordism, such as Elmar Altvater (1992), Alain Lipietz (1982), and Timothy Mitchell (2011), Huber’s historicized analysis of contemporary oil and gas politics accounts for neoliberal shifts in discourse and in popular consumptive trends in the United States that prove useful for this study and therefore his work is discussed here as a relevant contemporary contribution to studies of political economy.

While the New Deal state measures may seem positive in their aims to protect the population from the failures of the market system (the Great Depression), and to provide

some degree of equalizing economic security for the nation, Huber (2013) argues that this period instead represented the rescue of a failing economic order and the re-development of popular notions of the ideal ‘American life’, which became heavily dependent on petroleum products. Huber describes this period of liberal government regulation, wealth redistribution and financial market restructuring as bringing millions of Americans out of Depression-era poverty, unionized workers on a mass scale and re-stabilized the markets. It simultaneously presented new markers of economic success and new consumption trends on a mass scale - namely petroleum-based products including plastics, vinyl, building materials, chemicals, lubricants, asphalts, and new fertilizers for more ‘efficient’ mass scale mono-crop agricultural development.

Obviously, these consumption changes occurred both within and beyond the borders of the United States. The fractional distillation of crude oil (heating crude in order that its component parts can be separated) brought a wide range of cheap petroleum products onto the (rescued) market and thus dreams of single detached suburban homes, private transportation and mass consumption of new plastic goods became more realistic goals for many Americans (Huber, 2013). The consumption norms and practices trends of many Canadians also shifted with the influx of cheap petroleum-based and mono-crop agricultural products into the market. What Huber (2013) neglects in his analysis of the New Deal era, however, is the heavily racialized nature of the distribution of state-sponsored supports, and their role in reshaping spaces and markets along racialized as well as class lines.

Racial Capitalism and Racial Extractivism

Cedric Robinson (1983) cites Aristotle's racialism as one example of the race thinking that has intimately structured dominant Western thought. He notes that for Western societies, since the 12th century, 'race was its epistemology, its ordering principle, its organizing structure, its moral authority, its economy of justice, commerce and power (1983, p. xxxi). As an "organizing structure", race came to inform the value of land and life and as extraction, for instance, requires that there first be established a system of valuation, this system was racialized in Western societies. The project of 'resource extraction' that was the transatlantic slave trade, for instance, spanned five centuries and required and produced a deeply embedded logic of white supremacy and a construction of Blackness within modernity and thus also within the colonies established by those same European empires. This ordering principle, discussed by Robinson, structured the economy and allowed for white, property owning, modern men of the fifteenth through to the nineteenth century to justify the slave trade, and through epistemic trajectories over time these same organizing principles continue to operate and structure contemporary neoliberal economies, societies, and conceptions of the human.

Nancy Leong (2013) claims to have developed the concept of 'racial capitalism' in her examination of contemporary neoliberal debates on the commodification of racial diversity and on affirmative action policies in the United States. She describes racial capitalism as 'the process of deriving social and economic value from the racial identity of another person' (p.2152), and focuses less on the racial nature of all

capitalism and more on the racial nature of this particular neoliberal phenomenon. She writes,

Racial capitalism is troubling on both a symbolic and a practical level. When white people and predominantly white institutions commodify nonwhiteness and exploit its value, even under the auspices of a well-intentioned diversity rationale, racial capitalism evokes one of the darkest eras in American history, during which nonwhiteness — and nonwhite human beings — were assigned value and transferred among white people as commodities. (p.2156)

Unlike Leong however, this analysis is interested in the ways that race and white supremacist fantasies have historically structured the economic order of the day, including extractivist economic orders as demonstrated in the case of the Canadian tar sands. Curiously, Leong's piece neglects to acknowledge that the Black Radical Tradition has long discussed how capitalism is and has always been racial in nature. Robinson focuses on the work of three Black male intellectuals for instance: W.E.B. Du Bois, C.L.R. James and Richard Wright, though he has been critiqued for neglecting to examine the work of female Black scholars such as Claudia Jones and Angela Davis (see Boyce Davies, 2016). Racial capitalism is discussed at length in fact by Cedric Robinson (1983) in *Black Marxism*, where the author traces the pre-capitalist development of racial taxonomies in the West and fundamentally troubles Marxist historiographies of capitalism's emergence and race-free revolutionary possibility. By locating 'racialism' as both pre-capitalist and central to the modern world system, Robinson foregrounds the

trajectories of racial ordering in Western epistemologies where slavery, violence, colonialism, imperialism and genocide were (and are) rationalized.

Tracing the Black Radical Tradition and the work of W.E.B. Du Bois, C.L.R. James and Richard Wright in particular, as well as the long history of recognizing and resisting the racial nature of Western power and knowledge production, Robinson (1983) development of the concept of racial capitalism that continues to illuminate the racial calculus that structures contemporary capitalism. His concept centers race as an organizing principle of the dominant economic order and thus, when one examines extractivism within contemporary neoliberal societies like Canada, race is absolutely already present determining the value of bodies and of the land itself.

Extending Robinson's concept of racial capitalism into the contemporary neoliberal moment, and applying it to contexts where Indigenous jurisdiction is concertededly suppressed and ignored and where relationships to the land are central to understanding the politics of 'resource' extraction, a new analytical tool is required. Therefore, drawing from Cedric Robinson's conceptualization of racial capitalism this project develops the notion of 'racial extractivism' as a tool to examine the racial and colonial logics that are concealed in many examinations and representations of 'resource' extraction, and of tar sands extraction in particular. Robinsons work traces the Black Radical Tradition and the long history of Black-led liberation Movements and their relationships to Marxism, and to dominant Marxist theorizations that often ignored or marginalized the role of race and racialization in capitalist social relations. Robinson's (1983) development of the concept of racial capitalism centers race as an organizing principle of the economic order though the two become co-constitutive. Robinson's work suggests that when one examines extractivism

within contemporary neoliberal societies like Canada, race is absolutely already present, determining the value of bodies and of the land itself.

The concept of racial capitalism is limited, however, in its ability to move from a large-scale historicized analysis of global capitalism (and the roles that Black Liberation movements have played in shaping economic orders through their resistance to them), to more regionally specific and particular contexts, such as white settler colonial extractive contexts. For this reason, the notion of racial extractivism is presented as an analytical tool that assists in denaturalizing white possession in extractive contexts. Racial extractivism centers Indigenous jurisdiction and relationships to land in its critique of the colonial and racial orders that structure and shape ‘resource’ extraction in white settler colonial contexts. While the analytical tool may prove useful beyond the specific context of white settler colonial nation-states, here it is developed in relation to the particularities of Canadian tar sands extraction and to ongoing processes of Indigenous elimination and land theft. Racial extractivism positions race and colonialism as central to extractivist projects informed by neoliberal ideology, and stresses how the epistemological and ontological assumptions of white possession are operating within extractivist projects in order to unsettle the assumed relationships to land and life that make ‘resource’ extraction possible or ‘thinkable’ in the first place.

Racial extractivism acknowledges the multitude of ways in which colonial histories and reiterations of race-based epistemologies and ontologies inform the discursive practices used by the oil and gas industry, for example, and by the Canadian white settler government in promoting and managing ‘resource extraction’ on Indigenous lands. By examining the tar sands mega-projects in Canada as a site of racial extractivism

in a white settler context, the intersections of racial, colonial and neoliberal relationships to land and life are revealed as foundational and as central to the discursive regimes producing dominant narratives and knowledge about bitumen extraction.

Racial extractivism operates at different scales and its epistemological and ontological foundations are deeply embedded through wide ranging discursive strategies that seek to not only normalize white entitlement, but also to make it appear natural and inevitable.

Chapter Two: Historicizing Racial Extractivism and Canadian White Settler Colonialism

In 1986 the Treaties and Historical Research Centre of Indian and Northern Affairs Canada (currently known as Aboriginal Affairs and Northern Development Canada) issued a report on Treaty Eight that aimed to provide a comprehensive summary of the history of the Athabasca region's treaty process. The report chronicles how Indigenous communities in the Athabasca river basin region experienced a period of particular brutality leading up to Treaty "negotiations". From approximately 1870 until the mid-1890's reports in settler newspapers such as the *Calgary Tribune* described appeals by Hudson's Bay Company employees, members of the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) and missionaries to the settler government and Crown to address the conditions of Indigenous populations in the region ((Government of Canada, INAC. 1986), n.p.). Representatives from several Indigenous communities also traveled to trading posts towns in attempts to draw attention to the conditions of starvation, disease and rogue settler violence and looting that harassed their nations (ibid).

None of these reports or pleas for assistance garnered the attention of Prime Minister John A. Macdonald's government, whose hardline approach to only treaty making when the extinguishment of title was required for extractive 'development', the construction of railways or in preparation for state-facilitated white settlement ruled the day. These accounts reference starvation and the survival strategy of Indigenous peoples being forced to kill and eat their own horses for food while an influx of white squatters and settlers invaded their territories, destroying trap lines, driving away fur bearing

animals and food sources, and with white miners disrupting Indigenous hunting grounds. White squatters and settlers were described as using poison traps to kill animals, a practice strictly prohibited by Indigenous communities of the area. There was a massive increase in destructive forest fires due to settlers and there was the emergence of the highly destructive liquor trade in the region. It was under these conditions that survey parties arrived to map and secure access to bitumen in the region (see Image 5), and thus these were the conditions of the eventual treaty signings.



Image 5. Athabasca survey party near Jasper House, Alberta, 1871. Photo by Horetzky, C., 1871.

This chapter will begin with a brief discussion of the role of historical narrative in constituting white settler colonial statehood, structures and subjectivities. These narratives entrench white entitlement and jurisdictional dominance in the creation story of

the nation-state, in the discovery narratives of mercantilist racial extractivism examined here, and the early capitalist period of treaty making and the establishment of the Constitution. The first section provides a brief genealogy of white settler colonialism in Canada beginning with the post-1492 period of European mercantilist economics and Western European epistemological development. This period will be examined in relation to the proliferation of European colonialisms around the globe, the concomitant trans-Atlantic slave trade and systems of indentureship, as well as the early establishment of the French and British, and later solely British, settler colony now known as Canada. The Hudson's Bay Crown Corporation and later the North West Company will be discussed for their central mercantilist roles in the white settler colonial project and the creation of a national mythology. I will analyze the symbolic logics developed to justify the theft and occupation of Indigenous lands in Canada and examine the role of private capital in the creation and maintenance of these symbolic logics of white settler colonialism.

Moving westward throughout the 17th and 18th Centuries, mercantilist order re-structured itself to meet the ongoing changes in European colonial economic systems and developed capitalist modes of production that shaped Canadian Confederation of 1867. This period will be analyzed in the second section of the chapter that traces the eventual rise to dominance of capitalist economics. My analysis focuses on the epistemology, ontology and racial thinking that structured this economic order and the white settler state itself. As the Canadian nation state sought to establish itself as a nation both connected to and separate from the British empire, unique discursive and managerial strategies of racial classification and biopolitical control were developed that facilitated the theft of

Indigenous lands. Lastly, this chapter will trace some of the key moments in oil and gas exploration and industrial development in the Athabasca River Basin region in the late 19th and early 20th Centuries, focusing primarily on Treaty Eight and on racial extractivism in this particular context. The discursive structures and foundational ideological premises that accompanied this period of settler state production and the development of a national identity will also be analyzed in relation to the emergence of racial extractivism.

Much of this chapter will take a less regionally specific perspective in order to illuminate broader developments in Canadian white settler colonial statecraft, national identity development and racial extractivism. While cognizant of some Indigenous critiques of “the tremendous capacity for damage” (Foster, 2008, p.267) that general historical, cultural and theoretical claims hold for Indigenous communities, this chapter seeks to nonetheless trace broad ideological and systemic practices of white settler colonialism in Canada. Attending to the workings of this colonial order from the fifteenth to the twentieth century will by no means yield an in-depth analysis of the manifold ways in which white settler colonialism varied in its manifestations in different regions and in relation to the hundreds of diverse Indigenous nations. For this reason, I have attempted where possible to situate this examination of racial extractivism in the Athabasca region within larger-scale narrations of white settler colonial history.

Representations of History and Time

Edward Said (1994) describes the contemporary world as one of commodity and

representation, where no objective epistemic position exists outside of colonialism and imperialism (p.56). This general commentary on culture and the political nature of representation troubles dominant views in white settler colonial contexts like Canada, which suggest that colonial violence is a thing of the past, no longer structuring systems, institutions, discourses and representations. The dominance of this notion of a colonial past as distinct from the present supports further white unintelligibility with regards to systemic racism and white settler colonialism. Furthermore, the entrenchment of these dominant myths appear through what Mark Rifkin (2011) calls “settler structures of feeling”, where these feelings inform social and legal structures that ultimately transform them into material certainties. In his application of Raymond Williams’ concept of “structures of feeling” to settler colonial subjectivities, Rifkin links settler subject formation to the structural and material realities of settler society (see also Mackey, 2014, p.243). This relation of co-constitution interweaves these two scholarly concerns. As interrelated phenomena, the analysis of subjectivity and structure in white settler colonial contexts of racial extractivism (such as the Athabasca region) require attention to what Elizabeth Povinelli (2011) describes as the “governance of the prior” (p.29). Povinelli writes, “a formation of power articulated as tense and event – the governance of the prior – is foundational to the imaginary of sovereign power to both settler and Indigenous as such and to late liberalism more generally” (ibid). With this in mind, this chapter seeks to analyze historical narratives and practices of “governing the prior”, which entrench *a priori* propositions onto the white settler state’s sovereignty, structures and existence.

How, for instance, are narrations of the past structured to facilitate white settler colonial possession in the present? In the context of this study, the “settler structures of

feeling” discussed by Rifkin materialize through historical accounts of Canadian history which often narrate the conditions of settler entitlement and sovereignty as documented fact (as opposed to, for example, constructed, privileged and contested narratives). The “governance of the prior” is intimately linked to subjectivity and the national identity of the national community who continually engages in ongoing processes of white settler colonial violence. Johannes Fabian (1983) examines this in relation to anthropological uses of Time that strive to “constitute its own object – the savage, the primitive, the Other. It is by diagnosing anthropology’s temporal discourse that one rediscovered the obvious, namely that there is no knowledge of the Other which is not also temporal, historical, a political act” (p.1). Oppressive uses of Time are traced by Fabian to reveal how the age of Enlightenment brought about the secularization of Time in order to generalize and universalize this Western European construction.

This conception of Time becomes oppressive precisely when universalized, as is the case in many non-Indigenous narratives of Canadian history and particularly those presented and celebrated by the state itself. This is also the case in the Hudson Bay Company’s (HBC) extensive historical narration of Canadian settlement and its corporate role in the establishment of mercantilist networks of racial extraction. This chapter examines representations of Canadian history presented by the state and HBC, as well as by historians and Canadian studies scholars whose narratives serve the dual purpose of providing a sense of the structural and discursive shifts in colonial strategy and white settler state-craft while simultaneously revealing how the “governance of the prior” is executed and internalized by subjects of the state. According to Mi’kmaq scholar Bonita Lawrence (2002), a common practice of non-Indigenous scholarship scripting a singular

‘objective’ story of Native history exists in the Canadian context, whereby these narratives erase and flatten the rich multitude of Indigenous nations, political orders and cultures in their accounts. Lawrence addresses the issue of non-Indigenous historical narratives of colonialism through her question “what is the cost for Native peoples, when these academic disciplines ‘own’ our pasts?” (2002, p.24). She writes that this ‘owning’ is in fact a central part of the normalization of colonialism and of settler statehood and goes on to outline three major problems with these accounts:

‘Native history’ becomes accounts of specific intervals of ‘contact’, accounts which neutralize processes of genocide, which never mention racism, and which do not take as part of their purview the devastating and ongoing implications of the policies and processes that are so neutrally described. A second problem, which primarily affects Aboriginal peoples in Eastern Canada, is the longevity of colonisation and the fact that some Indigenous peoples are considered by non-Native academics to be virtually extinct, to exist only in the pages of historical texts. In such a context, the living descendants of the Aboriginal peoples of Eastern Canada are all too seldom viewed as those who should play central roles in any writing about the histories of their ancestors. Most important, however, is the power that is lost when non-Native ‘experts’ define Indigenous peoples’ pasts--the power that inheres when oppressed peoples choose the tools that they need to help them understand themselves and their histories (p.24-25).

Considering Lawrence’s critiques, how does the particular language and structure of this

non-Native historical account complicate, unsettle or disrupt the power structures that attempt to naturalize and fix this conglomeration of colonial narratives, processes, institutions and structures? As processes of racialization are central to white settler colonialism and to racial extractivism in this context, this historicization seeks to identify ‘white possession’ and its discursive tools of legitimation and jurisdictional entitlement; my aim here therefore is not to write ‘Native history’ but instead to highlight historical processes and representations of white settler colonialism (particularly those related to racial extractivism in the Athabasca region).

The Doctrine of Discovery, Mercantilism and the Fur Trade

While the fur trade began as early as the 1530s on the east coast of Canada, where European traders landed in Mi’kmaq territory, its impacts on the Athabasca region were less radical until the 19th Century, when the Canadian state’s institutions were being established and once it became clear that securing resources required the signing of treaties with Indigenous communities (Innis, 1930; Lawrence, 2002; Government of Canada, INAC, 1986). The colonial techniques of treaty making, along with the creation of institutions and the refinement of colonial knowledge required to undertake the seizure of the Athabasca oil and gas reserves developed over time, beginning in the east and moving northward and westward. Working for the French empire, Jacques Cartier’s 1534 voyage led to the imposition of French jurisdictional powers over what is now known as the Maritime Provinces and the Gulf of St. Lawrence (HBC Heritage, ‘Radisson’, n.d.). Much like another notorious and incorrect explorer of the time

Christopher Columbus, Cartier also initially believed that this was in fact Asia or at least the Northwest Passage to Asia (ibid). Prior to this, evidence exists that the first Europeans to explore what is now eastern Canada (primarily Newfoundland and Labrador) were the Norse in the late tenth century, first accidentally by Bjarni Herjolfsson whose ship was blown off course, and later by Leif Ericsson (McGhee, 1984). Though the Viking settlements were brief they did prove that some knowledge existed of what became known in Europe five centuries later as the New World. More relevant to this study however, are the European colonial missions from the sixteenth century onward.

As Lawrence (2002) discusses, throughout the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries “northeastern North America was invaded by hundreds of trade ships of different European nations engaged in a massive competition for markets; an invasion instrumental in destabilizing existing intertribal political alliances in eastern North America” (p.26-27). This competition for markets in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries reflected shifts taking place in European trade, commerce and geopolitics. As examined by Cedric Robinson (1983), the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries saw European famine (the Black Death) and the Hundred Years War (1337-1453) decimate populations and feudal economies (Robinson, 1983, p.17). Endemic and pandemic plague, war and the first peasant resistance movements revealed economic weakness, social disorder and mass scale demands for a wage labour system led to the demise of the existing systems of long-distance trade (Robinson, 1983, p.17-19). These changes included a focus on trade in the Atlantic region inspired by merchant and colonial voyages (this as opposed to the Mediterranean and Scania regions of the

previous era), and the expansion of state structures that determined investment and commercial networks and enforced the political security required to support such networks.

This period of shifting merchant and European colonial expansion was guided by the discursive order of Catholic doctrine, including the Papal Bulls that comprised what is commonly referred to as the Doctrine of Discovery, which emerged during the medieval period but continued to inform and set the conditions under which the Catholic Church condoned and encouraged the colonial expansion and colonial violence. As discussed by Jennifer Reid (2010) discusses The Doctrine of Discovery as an amalgam of theological assumptions that came to underlie legal relationships between Europeans, European settlers and Indigenous populations (p.336). Tracing the conditions of the emergence of the doctrine, Reid notes that its roots can be traced to the Crusades and Augustine's Catholic teachings on 'just war', whereby the Church had to explicate its justifications for invading other peoples' territories and seizing the property of primarily Muslims (2010, p.337-338). Here, even in the mid-thirteenth century, property rights were central to these papal pronouncements that justified theft in the service of Christendom (2010, p.338). By 1452 and 1455, the doctrine was being used by Pope Nicholas V to establish the legal principle required to sanction "the conquest of north Africa by the Portuguese, and ultimately provided the legal foundation for European colonialism and the slave trade" (Reid, 2010, p.338). By 1493 the Doctrine came to inform justifications for the colonization of the 'New World', specifically through Pope Alexander VI's *Inter Caetera*, which granted the Americas to Spain and Portugal. *Inter Caetera*, referring

repeatedly to the then recent colonial voyages of Christopher Columbus' on behalf of the Portuguese Empire and Catholic faith,

And, in order that you may enter upon so great an undertaking with greater readiness and heartiness endowed with benefit of our apostolic favor, we, of our own accord, not at your instance nor the request of anyone else in your regard, but of our own sole largess and certain knowledge and out of the fullness of our apostolic power, by the authority of Almighty God conferred upon us in blessed Peter and of the vicarship of Jesus Christ which we hold on earth, do by tenor of these presents, should any of said islands have been found by your envoys and captains, give, grant, and assign forever to you and your heirs and successors, kings of Castile and Leon, all and singular the aforesaid countries and islands thus unknown and hitherto discovered by your envoys and to be discovered hereafter, provided however they at no time have been in the actual temporal possession of any Christian owner, together with all their dominions, cities, camps, places, and villages, and all rights, jurisdictions, and appurtenances of the same. And we invest you and your aforementioned heirs and successors with them, and make, appoint, and depute you lords of them with full and free power, authority, and jurisdiction of every kind, with this proviso however, that by this our gift, grant, assignment, and investiture no right acquired by any Christian prince is hereby to be understood to be withdrawn or taken away. (Pope Alexander VI, p.62-63)

The Papal Bull presents the Christian justification for colonization, forced conversion, violence and land theft based the notion that the lack of a Christian sovereign or “owner” in any given region of the world grants Christian explorers “full and free power, authority, and jurisdiction of every kind” (p.62) over that land and Indigenous populations. Through the language of Christianity and imperial rule, it racializes Indigenous peoples of Turtle Island as essentially incapable to self-governance, as in need of salvation, and attempts to justify the establishment of systems and structures of racial extractivism and eventual white settler colonial rule.

The late-fifteenth century colonial missions praised in Pope Alexander VI’s *Inter Caetera* proliferated in the sixteenth century contributing the shifting political orders in the European metropolises as racial extractivism generated mass amounts wealth for the empires themselves, and for the colonial extractive companies employed by them. Cedric Robinson (1983) writes,

The bourgeoisie of the sixteenth century accumulated in the interstices of the state. And as the state acquired the machinery of rule—bureaucracies of administrative, regulatory, and extractive concerns, and armies or wars of colonial pacification, international competition, and domestic repression—those who would soon constitute a class, settled into the proliferating roles of political, economic, and juridical agents for the state. And as the state necessarily expanded its fiscal and economic activities, a new merchant and banking class parasitized its host; State loans, state monopolies, state business became the vital concerns of its construction. (p.20)

These changes characterize a significant shift in the economic and political orders which brought European colonizers to North America and led the seventeenth century to be described as a period of “pure mercantilism” (Robinson, p.20). The development of European state structures and bureaucracy, accompanied by bourgeois mercantilist order, propagated “myths of egalitarianism while seizing every occasion to divide peoples for the purpose of their domination” (Robinson, 1983, p.26), both within Europe and beyond. Tools of division, which served metropolitan elites, included papal bulls such as the Doctrine of Discovery, a formal code that served as international law, governing the acquisition of new colonies and territories by competing European powers, and which still influences contemporary Western legal decisions in several states including Canada (Lawrence 2002, footnote 12; Thobani, 2007, p.42-48; Reid, 2010). As Sunera Thobani (2007) notes,

The self-endowed right of discovery of European powers was translated into their right of ownership of such discovered territories. This right of discovery, and the internationalization and subsequent secularization of European law, were the most pertinent factors in legitimizing the subjugation of Aboriginal peoples, of turning the violence of conquest into authorizing authority. (p.43)

During this period, European sovereigns and their religious and secularist elites debated the racial inferiority of ‘colonized peoples’ and their lack of Christian religion or civilized law—attempts to justify the theft of their lands, their exploitation, and their murders (ibid). Robinson (1983), too, traced the emergence of racial order codified and systemically employed in labour practices in feudal Europe, demonstrating how this

ideology endured throughout the mercantilist period and came to deeply structure the eventual development, organization and expansion of capitalism and its social ideology (p.2).

Like Robinson (1983), Thobani (2007) and Reid (2010), Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz (2014) addresses the epistemic roots of colonial violence that founded the “culture of conquest” (p.32) and looks to the period from the eleventh to the thirteenth century Crusades to trace the emergence of “this profit-based religion that was the deadly element that European merchants and settlers brought to the Americas” (ibid). Dunbar-Ortiz argues that by the end of the fifteenth century, Europeans had already perfected “the institutions of colonialism and methods of relocation, deportation, and expropriation of land” (2014, p.33). She notes that as these developing states supposedly required more resources, land and labour “the peoples of the Caribbean, Central America, Mexico, and the Andes were the first overseas victims. West and South Africa, North America, and the rest of South America followed. Then came all of Africa, the Pacific, and Asia.” (Dunbar-Ortiz, 2014, p.34). It is worth noting that while Dunbar-Ortiz refers to local Indigenous communities in these colonized regions as “overseas victims”, her historical narrative centralizes the manifold forms of resistance that took place and the survival of these communities, signaling the ultimate failure of these genocidal projects. Thus, as colonial institutions and methods were refined leading up to the fifteenth century, the state form grew in prominence throughout Europe during the sixteenth century. The epistemologies, techniques and structures of settler colonial domination were well established by the time the first European settlement was founded in what is now known as Canada.

Having established the embedding of the *Doctrine of Discovery* in European international law and colonial mentality and continuing to trace racial capitalism, I now return to the material effects of such a sovereign claim. This claim is symbolically solidified through a combination of early colonial settlements of the seventeenth century and by the re-naming, mapping and the work of Crown corporation monopolies who would manage the establishment of mercantilist economic structures and systems molded after French and British colonial economies established in other development settler states and or colonial contexts.

The first formal European settlement in what is now Canada was established in 1608 with Samuel de Champlain (working for the French empire) founding Quebec City and the first Acadian settlements for New France. As the French empire claimed an imaginary jurisdictional authority in these regions, the British settled further south and the two empires competed for trade routes, leading to “extreme levels of competition between Indigenous nations” (Lawrence 2002, p.27) resulting in inevitable warfare. Lawrence (2002) chronicles this almost continuous period of warfare that, combined with the spreading of European diseases decimating Indigenous populations, the effects of missionary activity weakening traditional practices, and the introduction of new commodities, gave particular nations material advantages over others (ibid).

The Hudson’s Bay Company (HBC) was founded by British royal charter in 1670 and continues to operate today (HBC Heritage, ‘Radisson’, n.d.). This company was instrumental in colonially mapping and surveying what is now Canada and in establishing fur trading posts, which often developed into larger settlements over time and with the influx of settlers. Specializing first in the fur trade and later in land sales, and with an

aim to reap the highest possible profits, HBC played a central role in designing and establishing white settler colonialism in what eventually became Canada. The Company supplied the required information to colonial administrators, which facilitated the settlement of the colony primarily with dispossessed western European farmers, many of whom as settlers were given land grants or access to cheap land bought from the HBC. For example, thousands of Scottish farmers who were dispossessed in the eighteenth century 'clearances' (whereby wealthy landowners evicted farmers to use their lands as pastures for sheep) were granted one hundred acre lots by Thomas Douglas, Earl of Selkirk, who was both the majority shareholder of HBC and the owner of seventy-four million acres in the Red River region of Manitoba, which he purchased for the dispossessed Scottish farmers from HBC for ten shillings (HBC Heritage, 'Acquisitions, Fur Trade', n.d.). This particular settlement did not last however and settlers were successfully driven out by the Métis population fighting against settler encroachment and violence. The rival fur trade company, the Northwest Trading Company, aided in this Métis resistance to settlers as it was in their economic interest to do so and to gain access to newly loyal fur traders in the area (ibid). This HBC settlement project does however demonstrate how rapid settlement was clearly facilitated by the private company and its wealthy metropolitan funders. Settlement in the Athabasca river basin did not begin until 1776, when non-Indigenous fur traders (including one of the Northwest Trading Company's employees, Peter Pond) crossed the confluence of the Clearwater and Athabasca rivers and saw the bituminous sands for themselves (Hein, 2000, p.1; Chastko, 2004, p.2).

According to an Alberta Energy Utility Board's report, the presence of the bituminous sands was known by the HBC as early as 1719, after a Cree guide named Wa-Pa-Su delivered a sample of bituminous sand to Henry Kelsey, Manager of the York Factory on Hudson's Bay (Hein, 2000, p.1). Mentioned only in passing in the report on the historical overview of the Fort McMurray area, Wa-Pa-Su is described only in relation to Kelsey who is historicized as "the first European to see oil sands" (ibid). This reference signals to Lawrence's (2002) critique of non-Native historical narratives that reduce Indigenous ancestors to "'stick figures', noble savages, proud if wily, inevitably primitive" (p.24). The report does not cite any details about Wa-Pa-Su, the guide hired to deliver the sample, or why it was requested. Instead the narrative foregrounds the recipient of the sample as a kind of extractive pioneer, an important historical figure in settler narratives of discovery and of early 18thC European industrialism. This sample did not lead to a survey of the region or to a geological assessment; it was 1819 when the first survey was conducted and 1848 when the first settler geological assessment was undertaken (Hein, 2000, p.1).

The Rise of Racial Capitalism in Canada

Europe in the eighteenth century is of course often characterized by the rise of industrial and mechanized production, shifts that came to be known as the Industrial Revolution, primarily linked to the English nation. Robinson (1983) troubles this common narrative of capitalist emergence by shifting the focus and scale of analysis to the international emergence of these technological shifts and their social and political implications. He

notes that this can hardly be called a revolution when in fact these shifts involved all of the British Empire and western Europe and required the economic developments of previous centuries, which organically determined the social, political, technological and commercial character of the eighteenth century (Robinson, p.29-31). Robinson's analysis draws attention to the use of migrant labour, to the unbound and heterogeneous nature of national communities of the time, and to the racial logics that informed these interconnected industrial phenomena.

Linked to the colonial competitiveness between European empires and their global race to claim the territories of racial Others for one's monarchy, state and mercantilist corporation, the conditions for mass production in the metropolises arose. For instance, in England a shift from the aristocratic rule of the landed class to the rise of a new British merchant capitalist class that altered political power structures and the economy both domestically and internationally. The technological shifts which arguably account for the move from mercantilist economics to industrial capitalist ones emerged from a period of colonial expansion and violence. As David McNally (1981) notes, Adam Smith attributes this shift to capitalism as system of commerce and exchange (the market), which resulted in revolutionized industry, as opposed to Marx's conception, which attributed the shift to the social relations of production (pp.38-39). Following Smith, Harold Adam Innis developed his staple theory based on the idea that capitalism's emergence could be understood as the geographical expansion of the commercial system (McNally, p.39). I will return to this in the following chapter; however, it is worth noting here that this analysis views the Canadian context and its social relations as thoroughly colonial, deeply structured by racial taxonomies of human valuation, as

gendered and based on patriarchal notions of private property ownership, and the “settler common sense” (Rifkin, 2013) normalizations of white entitlement to Indigenous land and life.

In 1763 the Treaty of Paris was signed between Great Britain, France, Spain, and Portugal, and facilitated British colonial dominance outside of Europe (Library and Archives of Canada, 2005). Many North American territories previously under French imperial rule were ceded to the British crown, including Quebec. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 was an attempt by the British crown to further consolidate its imperial dominance and establish forms of government for newly acquired territories (Lawrence, 2003, p.6; Fleras and Elliott in Murdocca, 2010). The Royal Proclamation (1763) states,

And whereas it is just and reasonable, and essential to our Interest, and the Security of our Colonies, that the several Nations or Tribes of Indians with whom We are connected, and who live under our Protection, should not be molested or disturbed in the Possession of such Parts of Our Dominions and Territories as, not having been ceded to or purchased by Us, are reserved to them. or any of them, as their Hunting Grounds.--We do therefore, with the Advice of our Privy Council, declare it to be our Royal Will and Pleasure. that no Governor or Commander in Chief in any of our Colonies of Quebec, East Florida. or West Florida, do presume, upon any Pretence whatever, to grant Warrants of Survey, or pass any Patents for Lands beyond the Bounds of their respective Governments as described in their Commissions: as also that no Governor or Commander in Chief in any of our other Colonies or Plantations in America do presume for the

present, and until our further Pleasure be known, to grant Warrants of Survey... (King George R. III, 1763)

The Proclamation (1763) remains important for many Indigenous Nations in Canada as an important tool of European colonial law that can be used to protect Aboriginal treaty rights and unceded territories and as part of the ongoing struggle to find clarity around the meaning of s. 35 of the *Constitution Act, 1982* (Reid, 2010, p.337). The Royal Proclamation “recognized Aboriginal land title to all lands not ceded and acknowledged a nation-to-nation relationship with the Indigenous Nations” (Lawrence, 2003, p.6). Both the Treaty of Paris and the Proclamation came after the British defeated the French in the 1759 battle at Plains of Abraham, and saw New France become an English colony, along with New Brunswick and Nova Scotia (Library and Archives of Canada, 2005). By 1791, the colony had been divided into Upper and Lower Canada, where English and French bilingualism was preserved in Lower Canada and abolished in Upper Canada (Haque, 2012, p.43)

The period following the Royal Proclamation, from 1763 to 1850, saw the white settler population multiply a hundredfold (Lawrence, 2003, p.7) with the influx of British loyalists coming to Canada after the American Revolution (especially to the Atlantic region, bringing a sizeable Black slave population with them) among others (Library and Archives of Canada, 2005). Further westward, Peter Pond of the Northwest Trading Company began writing about the bituminous sands by 1778. Several settler exploratory missions were conducted in the 1770’s partially as a result of Pond’s writings on bitumen - one by Alexander Mackenzie in 1792, another by David Thompson in 1799, and a third by Sir John Franklin in 1819, who surveyed the Athabasca river between Lake Athabasca

and the confluence of the Athabasca and Clearwater rivers. These ‘discoveries’ were ideologically and institutionally supported by the Doctrine of Discovery and the attendant theory or *terra nullius*, which both provided justification for conquest and land theft on the basis of a sovereign claim that symbolically recognized Indigenous title while simultaneously claiming that the land was vacant. Vacancy was claimed because the occupants were non-Christian and their land-use techniques were unrecognizably different from the enclosed land cultivation practices of British agriculturalists (Pasternak, 2014, p.157)

As Altamirano-Jiménez (2013) argues,

Although Indigenous territories were imprinted by human actions and inhabitants were governed by complex systems of land use and ownership, disavowing Indigenous peoples and constructing them as ‘hunter-gatherers’ and their lands as being waste or ‘wilderness’ corresponded to a practice of eliminating Indigenous peoples. Moreover, these constructions justified the civilizing action of English settlers and the rejections of Indigenous land ownership (p.32)

Altamirano-Jiménez draws attention to the ways in which “the logic of elimination” discussed by Wolfe (1999) structured early stage settlement legislation and ideologies of settler colonial entitlement.

Canadian Confederation (1867), Treaty Making, and the *Indian Act* (1876)

The 1841 Act of Union created United Canada (formerly Upper and Lower Canada) and commenced a period of unified settler coalition government, led by Robert Baldwin and Sir Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine (Library and Archives of Canada, 2005). The quickly multiplying settler population and the newly unified British colonial government passed legislation in 1850 that allowed for the creation of Indian reserves (Lawrence, 2003, p.7). Lawrence (2003) writes: “This legislation, designed to reinforce the rights of settlers to the entire land base by restricting ‘Indians’ to specific territories within it, for the first time defined, albeit extremely loosely, who should be considered to be an ‘Indian’” (p.7). Lawrence suggests that this action by the newly formed colonial government was the first nation-building action to set it apart from the British metropole. The colonial government asserted power over newly identified ‘Indians’, even while they had no legislative authority to do so (ibid), and in direct violation of the 1763 Royal Proclamation.

The development and implementation of the reserve system is discussed by critical race theorist Sunera Thobani (2007) who suggests that the “quintessential zone of exception” (p.37) is in fact the reserve, out of which western forms of sovereignty arose. Both drawing from and critiquing the work of Giorgio Agamben (1995), Thobani (2007) writes: “colonialism (which predated his analysis of the concentration camp as the paramount site of exception) has been central to the development of western forms of

sovereignty as racialized forms of power through the institution of the law within modernity” (2007, p.37). Both Lawrence (2003) and Thobani (2007) locate the reserve system as a principal colonial mechanism of the Canadian settler nation state. Used to racially and spatially manage Indigenous land and bodies in order to facilitate land theft, the reserve system instituted a technology of control and coercion based around space and containment. Indeed, since its inception in 1850, the reserve system continues to structure and spatially manage racialized Indigeneity in Canada (Razack, 2003).

White settler colonial imperatives to spatially manage Indigenous bodies and contain their mobility in order to access to land is exemplified through the 1857 *Gradual Civilization Act*, or *The Act to Encourage the Gradual Civilization of Indian Tribes in this Province, and to Amend the Laws Relating to Indians*. The fifth Parliament of the Province of Canada passed the bill that sought to facilitated colonial land acquisition and attempted to regulate Indigenous identity and communal membership through official state mechanisms. The Act stated:

...and if such Commissioners shall report in writing to the Governor that any such Indian of the male sex, and not under twenty-one years of age, is able to speak, read and write either the english or the french language readily and well, and is sufficiently advanced in the elementary branches of education and is of good moral character and free from debt, then it shall be competent to the Governor to cause notice to be given in the Official Gazette of this Province, that such Indian is enfranchised under this Act; and the provisions of the third section of the Act aforesaid, and all other enactments making any distinction between the legal rights and

liabilities of Indians and those of Her Majesty's other subjects, shall cease to apply to any Indian so declared to be enfranchised, who shall no longer be deemed an Indian within the meaning thereof. (Canada, *Gradual Civilization Act, 1857*, Section III)

The bill was directed at Indigenous men and excluded women from independent opportunities for enfranchisement as patriarchal British notions of political autonomy were not only racialized but also deeply gendered and sexually regulative as heterosexual marriage was required for an Indigenous woman to become enfranchised through the bill. English or French language requirements served the state's assimilation goals though through a discourse of education and civilization, not assimilation and organized cultural genocide. Very few people came forward to be 'enfranchised' despite the limited monetary and property incentives offered by the United Province of Canada (Johnson in Haque, 2012, p.41). Three years later the British crown transferred rule over 'Indians' to its Canadian colony (Lawrence, 2003, p.7). The development of legislative tools of assimilation and further dispossession, paired now with the formal endorsement of the metropole helped pave the way for the British North American Act (which received Royal Assent on March 29, 1867) and for subsequent Canadian Confederation on July 1, 1867 (Library and Archives of Canada, 2005).

Canadian Confederation ushered in a period of treaty making between the newly established Dominion of Canada and some Indigenous nations. By 1870, the Hudson's Bay Company surrendered its charter to Rupert's Land once it was purchased by the Dominion who then claimed legal authority over the vast region (Government of Canada,

INAC. 1986, n.p.). The Company had, however, been providing some degree of health and social welfare assistance to communities it traded with and after the surrender, the federal government felt no obligation to maintain these supports as long as no treaties existed requiring them to do so (ibid). This period of shifting relationships to the settler state and to private capital brought Indigenous people of the Athabasca, Cold Lake and Peace River regions into more contact with the federal government and its Indian Affairs Department.

Ten years after confederation, the *Indian Act* was created to consolidate legislation concerning Indigenous peoples, including the *Gradual Civilization Act* (1857). By 1884, due to the low numbers of people coming forward to be enfranchised, the government “circumvented the requirement for the band’s consent for enfranchisement – displacing community authority over its members and disposition of land” (Haque, 2012, p.42). The *Indian Act* (1857) and its many amendments reflect the changing positions of a white settler state attempting to legislate Indigenous annihilation over time, through various approaches and described using ever-changing white settler colonial discourses. Nonetheless, the ultimate aim of eliminating Indigenous peoples and ‘the Indian problem’ in order to steal the land has always underpinned the Act, just as it underpinned the treaty process. Though amendments made in 1885 and thereafter did away with the explicit goals of assimilation, recent changes reveal a discursive shift from the language of enfranchisement (ending in 1885) towards that of land privatization, which essentially achieves a similar goal of freeing up collectively held lands for private ‘resource’ extraction and commodification. The *Indian Act* attempts to regulate virtually all aspects of Indigenous life.

The *Indian Act* provides definitions and regulations surrounding the state constructed band council system and defines who is and who is not an ‘indian’ under white settler colonial law (p.5-17); it sets out the terms and conditions of reserves and all regulations concerning the private possession of lands in reserves (p.18-26) and states clearly in section 20. (1) that: “No Indian is lawfully in possession of land in a reserve unless, with the approval of the Minister, possession of the land has been allotted to him by the council of the band” (p.18). It describes the regulations around inheritance and wills (p.26-34), it dictates policy regarding the management of surrendered and reserve lands (p.36-38) and all financial matters concerning band funds including treaty payments (p.38-45). It also governs the election of band councils and chiefs (p.46-54) and issues surrounding taxation (p.54), the application of provincial laws and legal rights and restrictions related to property on reserve (p.55-56), ‘trade with indians’ (p.56-57) and regulations regarding the removal of materials from reserve (p.58). “Offences, punishment and enforcement” and are dictated in the Act, as well as the jurisdiction of provincial court judges presiding over these matters (p.58-61). The final sections of the Act address enfranchisement and the regulation of Indigenous education and schools (p.61-65), though sections 109 to 113 dictating enfranchisement policy were repealed in 1985, as previously mentioned.

As Western European capitalist relationships to land were applied throughout Turtle Island throughout the nineteenth century, land and life became commodified and a property relationship was established through law and epistemically entrenched within newly forming white settler states. This capitalist relationship to land and life structured treaty making processes in Canada and the U.S. (along with other states), two white

settler states who consulted each other's approaches to treaty-making and the resulting treaty documents (Government of Canada, INAC., 1986, n.p.). In Canada, the Royal Proclamation of 1763 had stipulated that Indigenous title to land existed and had to be extinguished before settlement and development could proceed, and before the land could in essence be converted into capital. On this basis, and as briefly discussed in the opening to this chapter, extractive interests guided much of the treaty making process. The impetus for the Canadian government seeking the signing of Treaty Eight was the confirmation of petroleum reserves, and the Klondike gold rush of 1896. It was not until 1897 that the Treaty Eight process began, despite many reports of brutal hardship after the Hudson's Bay Company ended its health and social assistance role in the region in 1870 (Government of Canada, INAC. 1986, n.p.). Altamirano-Jiménez (2013) observes that by the end of the nineteenth century the shifts in settler colonial tactics of Indigenous elimination revolved around the notions of progress, "with its attendant binary of barbarians versus civilizers..." (2013, p.33). This notion "turned logical distinctions into moral hierarchies that targeted the existence of Indigenous bodies, law, and governance systems" (ibid). In the case of the Athabasca region, "resource" extraction and securing access to this form of future capital was the driving force behind the use of tactics of elimination, discursively disguised and ultimately normalized by settler populations as "progress".

Tar Sands Extraction and Treaties Six (1876) and Eight (1899)

Treaty Six was signed in 1876. As described by James Daschuk (2013), Indigenous

signatories were under significant duress at this time and were essentially forced into signing with little bargaining power and under conditions of mass starvation.

[...] a key aspect of preparing the land was the subjugation and forced removal of indigenous communities from their traditional territories, essentially clearing the plains of aboriginal people to make way for railway construction and settlement. Despite guarantees of food aid in times of famine in Treaty No. 6, Canadian officials used food, or rather denied food, as a means to ethnically cleanse a vast region from Regina to the Alberta border as the Canadian Pacific Railway took shape. (Daschuk, 2013, n.p.)

While these conditions do not mean that Indigenous communities lacked the agency or political will required to negotiate treaty, they reveal the structural and contextual devices utilized by the white settler state to force (by way of starvation) unfavorable terms for title extinguishment upon Indigenous communities in the Prairies. For Indigenous communities of the plains, conditions of starvation were also intimately linked to the mass killing of the plains bison by white settlers in both Canada and the United States. According to wildlife conservationists, “an estimated 20 to 30 million bison once dominated the North American landscape from the Appalachians to the Rockies, from the Gulf Coast to Alaska. Habitat loss and unregulated shooting reduced the population to just 1,091 by 1889” (Defenders of Wildlife, 2016).

Prior to the signing of Treaty Eight the federal government’s intentions had been quite clear with regard to not accepting any responsibility for the condition of Indigenous peoples in the Athabasca region who were not already ‘accounted for’ through treaty

agreement. The new settler state's position was that it held no responsibility to even provide the meagre assistance that the Hudson's Bay Company had previously delivered; they were however concerned about threats that this population could hold for extractive projects, white settlement and railway and transportation infrastructure. By 1896, with the discovery of gold in the Klondike, large numbers of white American prospectors and extractive opportunists began arriving in the region (Government of Canada, INAC, 1986, n.p.; Huseman and Short 2012, p.218). In 1883 for example, Lawrence Vanhoughnet (then deputy superintendent general of Indian Affairs) argued to Prime Minister John A. Macdonald that,

The Indians in the unceded portions of the Territories are not numerous; but at the same time they could do great injury to any railway or any public work which might be constructed in their country, unless the Government had a previous understanding with them relative to the same. (Vanhoughnet in Government of Canada, INAC, 1986, n.p.)

The North West Mounted Police (NWMP) had been stationed in the region in efforts to establish and assert settler colonial sovereignty - the deputy superintendent general of Indian Affairs, Inspector J.D. Moodle, also warned that "there is no doubt that the influx of whites will materially increase the difficulties of hunting by the Indians" (Moodle in Government of Canada, INAC, 1986, n.p.). He went on to assert that,

...they are very likely to take what they consider a just revenge on the white men who have come, contrary to their wishes, and scattered themselves over the country. When told that if they started fighting as

they threatened, it could only end in their extermination, the reply was
'we may as well die by the white men's bullets as of starvation'. (ibid)

These threats of "extermination" by the North West Mounted Police and the conditions of starvation that Indigenous people were surviving under must be contextualized within this larger white settler colonial project (see Image 6). The statement of this unnamed Indigenous person resisting the threat of colonial violence in the face of conditions of forced starvation demonstrates the fierce will and courage required to survive the settler "logic of elimination" (Wolfe, 1996). This same period was one of population transfer and settlement for the purpose of claiming settler sovereignty over Indigenous territories, facilitated partially by the coercive arm of the state, the NWMP. As American settler incursions into Canada became more common, the newly formed Dominion sought to assert its claims to these regions and 'secure' them for white settlers with the aid of state sanctioned violence. Therefore, just as the NWMP had been stationed in the Athabasca region to declare settler sovereignty and control, so too were white Europeans being actively encouraged through incentive programs to re-settle in the Canadian northwest.

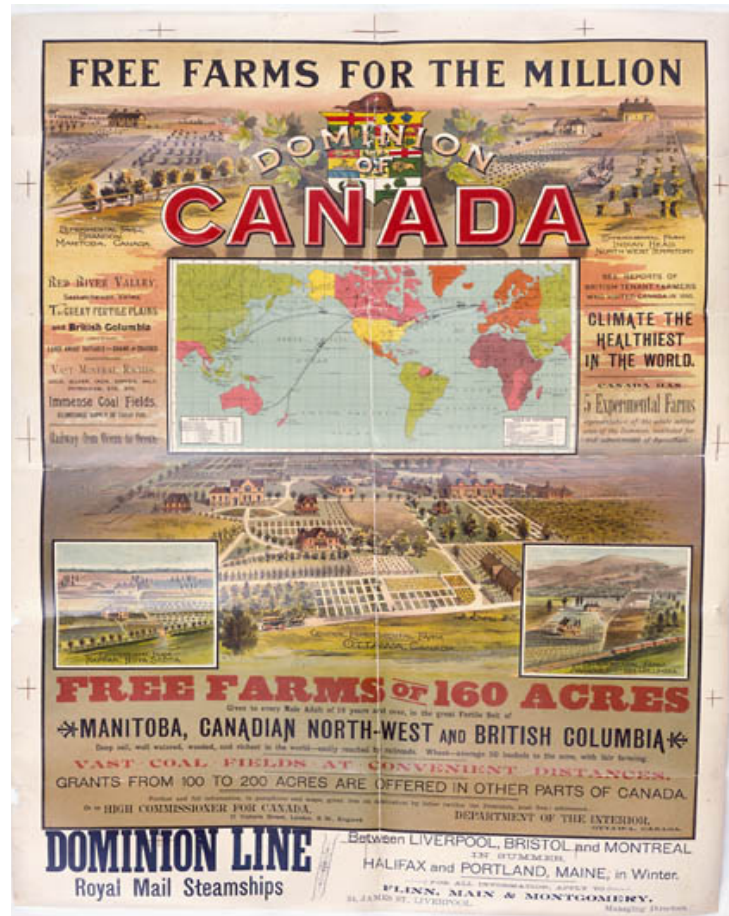


Image 6. Free farms for the million ca. 1893. From Library and Archives Canada, 1893.

In 1882 the Geological Survey of Canada was instructed again to collect samples from the Athabasca river basin region and geologist Robert Bell led the expedition, focusing on the oil sands (Chastko, 2004, p.2). Bell concluded that there must be an underground petroleum reservoir beneath the regions where tar sand existed on the surface and instructed the government to drill for oil (ibid). The news of the petroleum wealth and plans for white settlement and extractive ventures were conveyed in the 1891 Privy Council Report which, for these reasons, encouraged the Government create treaty or treaties with Indigenous nations in the region (Government of Canada, INAC, 1986, n.p.).

Again, the white settler colonial project and its attendant racial extractivism was and remains deeply informed by white supremacist myths like terra nullius, which ignore Indigenous sovereignty and rely on flawed theories of social Darwinism and racist and infantilizing conceptions of Indigenous people as unable to self-govern or properly use the land. Land use and European liberal ideologies of property not only motivated the ‘resourceification’ of Indigenous territories then and now, but also informed the racialization of Indigenous peoples as wasteful, lazy, and unable to be productive in the economy or in white settler society generally. This is expressed in reports made by J.A. Macrae, an inspector with the Indian Affairs Department appointed by the Commissioner of Treaty Eight. Macrae, who was to pay annuities to those Indigenous people who were eventual signatories of Treaty Eight, described Indigenous opposition to agriculture as a means of livelihood as a preference for “old pursuits”, dismissing the importance of hunting, trapping and fishing for these communities by placing them firmly in the past, as a mere disappearing relic (Macrae in Government of Canada, INAC, 1986, n.p.).

Mass scale extractivism was the mode of European colonial accumulation in the West Indies, Caribbean, in Africa and India as in “the New World”. Mass extraction in the form of plantation economies rapidly stripped the over-farmed soil of nutrients, resulted in over-fishing, over-hunting, mass deforestation, and required mass scale slave and indentured labour forces. Through slavery and indentured servitude, and through mechanization and technological innovation that created the possibility of mass production, the European Industrial Revolution created an elite class of colonial administrators who eschewed or ignored Cree or Dene sovereignty, subsistence living or

nomadic communities, and of course Indigenous communal (and often matriarchal) governance structures. In 1891, the Privy Council Report from the Superintendent General of Indian Affairs, dated seventh of January, stated,

[...] the discovery in the District of Athabasca and in the Mackenzie River County, that immense quantities of petroleum exist within certain areas of these regions, as well as the belief that other minerals and substances of economic value, [...] appear to render it advisable that a treaty or treaties should be made with the Indians who claim those regions as their hunting grounds, with a view to the extinguishment of the Indians title in such portions of the same, as it may be considered in the interest of the public to open up for settlement. (PAC, RG 10, Vol.4006, file 241, 209-1 in Government of Canada, INAC, 1986, n.p.)

Thus, Treaty Eight followed the precedent of other numbered treaties and was written in advance of any consultation with the communities, based on previous numbered treaties and with its boundaries decided by the Commissioners themselves. Treaty Eight, like Treaty Six and many others, was initially proposed during a period of forced starvation and systemically facilitated hardship, creating conditions wherein Indigenous nations were more likely to agree to treaties to ensure survival. By 1899 however living conditions were slightly more favorable for many Indigenous people in the Athabasca region, and as a result there was resistance to the process from many nations who felt in particular that hunting, trapping, and fishing rights would be ultimately curtailed, and that their people would be forced onto reserves (Government of Canada, INAC, 1986, n.p.). These justified concerns reappeared throughout the treating process (see Image

7).

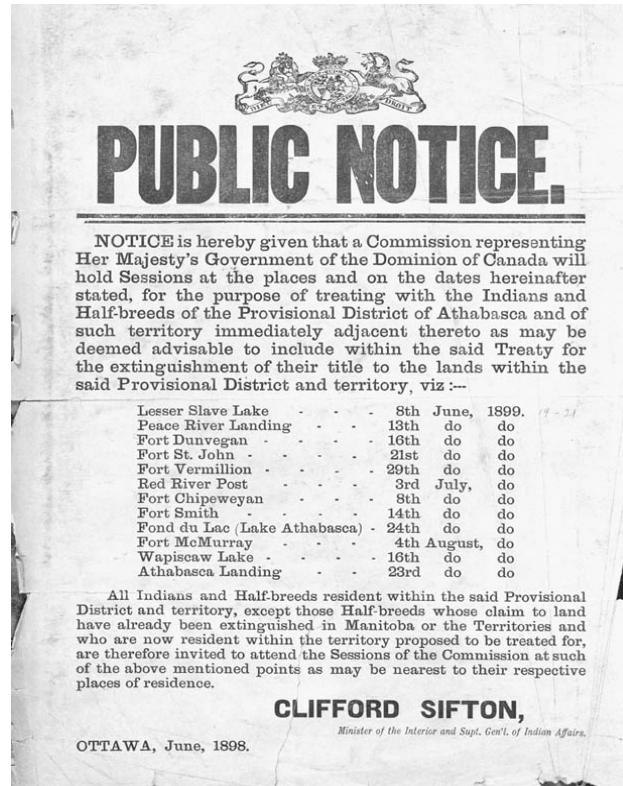


Image 7. Public Notice of Treaty Eight sessions, June, 1898. From Library and Archives Canada, 1898.

The Treaty Eight commission was led by David Laird who was appointed by Clifford Sifton (then Minister of the interior in the Wilfred Laurier administration), and included a second commission charged with extinguishing Métis title, led by Inspector A.E. Snyder and his NWMP detachment. This 'Half-breed' commission ultimately followed the previous treaty processes in allowing Métis people to join treaty or to be granted script. The form of the was largely objected to by the Métis (Government of Canada, INAC, 1986, n.p.). Other Métis land grant agreements in Manitoba had been erratically administered and had allotted differing acreage dependent upon the authorities' interpretations of status. Additionally, because of the Northwest Rebellion

of 1885, the Métis were viewed as a threat to the treaty process and colonial administrators worried that their unrest would influence other Indigenous communities in the negotiation process (ibid).

The terms of treaty had been written in advance of consultations with Indigenous communities in the region and were based on the Commissioners' limited knowledge of Indigenous communities in the prairies and their completely different lifestyles and needs, and the written terms and conditions that largely mirrored Treaty Seven. This was evident to Indigenous representatives present at the treaty sessions, and thus it is not surprising that there was general opposition to treaty by Indigenous communities (Government of Canada, INAC, 1986, n.p.). Like Treaty Six, Treaty Eight was presented to people in the Athabasca region as a necessity; settlement and extraction would go ahead regardless but the Commissioners promised that the treaty was a way to ensure at least some protections in advance of these forthcoming threats.

As Tony Clarke (2008) notes in his study of the tar sands, it was subsequently proven in a 1973 court case launched by the Indian Brotherhood of the Northwest Territories that the conditions of the treaty were never adequately explained to Indigenous communities in their own languages, and that most of the seventy-five signatures on the treaty are in fact forgeries (p.27). He writes, "Elders who recall the oral version of Treaty Eight and the other treaties negotiated during this period remember them as 'peace and friendship treaties', not as land surrender deals" (ibid). The Indigenous leaders who did sign Treaty 8 also were not necessarily representatives of their entire communities as, in many cases and for many nations, there was no centralized structure of governance with a male figure head, but, rather smaller kinship

structures. Those centralized governmental structures were later instituted through the colonial and patriarchal band council system (see Figure 8).



Image 8. Chief Keenooshayoo and unnamed woman at Treaty Eight signing, 1899. From Library and Archives Canada, 1899.

This period saw the continued testing of bitumen samples by the Geological Survey of Canada scientists, and as oil and gas producers in the United States began to hear about the deposits, interest in the region and its potential profitability grew. Treaties Six and Eight (see Image 9) were used by the new settler state as legal contracts securing access to and ownership of the petroleum and bitumen reserves found in the Athabasca, Cold Lake and Peace River region and made way for thirty years of further investigation into potential industrial uses of bitumen and its ability to be extracted and transported.



Image 9. Department of Indian Affairs Treaty Eight Map, 1900. From library and Archives Canada, 1900.

Early Twentieth Century Extractivism

After the signing of Treaty Eight, the treaty commissioner and staff continued to sign other nations into the agreement through adhesion for the next fifteen years, with some additional Métis adhesions in the early 1930's as well as some subsequent Band adhesions thereafter. Largely based on Treaty Seven and coming from a place of utter ignorance on the part of Treaty Eight Commissioners regarding the Indigenous nations of the Athabasca River Basin region, the provisions did little to protect traditional ways of living, hunting, trapping, fishing, seasonal moving, governing or general self-determining. The Treaty provided for the:

Right to pursue their usual vocation of hunting, trapping and fishing throughout the tract surrendered as heretofore described subject to such regulations as may from time to time be made by the Government of the country, acting under the authority of Her Majesty, and saving and excepting such tracts as may be required or taken up from time to time for settlement, mining, lumbering, trading or other purposes. (Canada, Treaty No. 8, p.12)

These conditions, allowing for the Crown to essentially “take up” land for any purpose it saw fit, have created an open pathway of ‘secure investment’ for racial extractivism in the tar sands region. The period from 1894 until the outbreak of war in 1914 was a period of massive white settler population growth. Throughout the Canadian Prairies and into Alberta, white settlers from Eastern Canada, the U.S., Great Britain and Western Europe poured into the region (Chastko 2004, p.3) (see Image 10).



Image 10. Western Canada the new Eldorado ca.1908-1918. From Library and Archives Canada, 1918.

Encouraged and incentivized to settle there, the Federal Government offered immigrants free land, provided they settled on it and worked the land agriculturally within three years (ibid). The population of Alberta went from 73,022 in 1901 to a staggering 373,943 by 1911. The federal government and the province began a long period of disagreement over who had jurisdiction over mineral rights. The Crown, however, possessed the capital required to administer both the Prairie Province and Western provincial mineral extraction, thus retaining control over them in exchange for a subsidy based on white

settler population granted to the provincial governments (Chastko, 2004, p.3). The Crown did not, however, possess the capital required to extract petroleum resources or develop the oil sands, thus the private sector entered into the region for a second time by way of first-come, first-served petroleum and natural gas leases.

This chapter has provided a brief historicization of the early colonial period of white settler colonialism in what is now Canada and highlighted several historical discursive mechanisms of racial extractivism and white settler colonialism. Tracing how racial extractivism has consistently operated throughout the white settler colonial project that is Canada, racial and colonial logics that informed and attempted to justify early mercantilist economics were examined. For instance, *The Doctrine of Discovery*, the racial logic of *terra nullius* that sought to justify land theft through a rationale of ‘appropriate’ European land-use are but two examples of racial and colonial discourses and managerial strategies that support racial extractivism from this period. The epistemological and ontological grounds and assumptions that structured the development of mercantilist order and later the creation of the reserve system and emergent capitalist order were facilitated by both the French and British Crowns, and by the Hudson’s Bay Company in particular, prior to confederation.

After *the Royal Proclamation (1763)* and the sharp increase in white settlement in central and western Canada, racial capitalism came to structure the treaty making process as extractivist aims required new techniques of Indigenous elimination for the developing settler state. I have traced this emergence with particular attention paid to the Treaty Six and Eight regions, which cover the three major tar sand deposits (Athabasca, Peace River and Cold Lake), revealing how racial extractivism drove those coercive processes.

Informed by white supremacist notions of entitlement, bitumen reserves in Northern Alberta were tested, mapped and sold to private oil and gas companies by the turn of the century, which disturbed Indigenous ways of life.

As the forces of capital and white supremacy continue to structure the white settler state's relationship to Indigenous communities, the following chapter will focus on this subsequent period of racial extractivism, whereby the new white settler state established itself through a "logic of elimination" (Wolfe, 1999) and a white supremacist sense of entitlement to Indigenous lands and bodies. Cooperation between the state and private oil and gas sectors eventually gave rise to a neoliberal normalcy whereby dominant settler notions of inevitable extractive economics prevailed, despite the persistent survival of Indigenous nations.

Chapter Three: The Neoliberal State and Tar Sands Extraction

Building on an analysis of the historical context of oil and gas extraction in the Athabasca region, and the white settler colonial policies, management, discourses and logics that enable it, the aim of this chapter is to examine the racialized Canadian nation-state's neoliberalization, and seeks to analyze the state's relationship to the extractivist transnational oil and gas industry in the Athabasca region. Through a historical analysis of the emergence of neoliberalism in the interconnected white settler contexts of the U.S. and Canada, the chapter traces the conditions which gave rise to a popularized white settler belief in globalized free market economics and the simultaneous reshaping of the settler state that neoliberalization requires. Tracing these shifts up until the 1990s, the chapter concludes by examining the period of the rapid expansion of tar sands extraction in the Athabasca river basin region. Race, racism and racialization are analyzed in relation to neoliberalism's operation in white settler colonial contexts as these relationships continue to naturalize, order, enable and rationalize settler colonial violence (Preston, 2013), and the racialization of space and spatialization of race (Lipitz, 2007). As many critical geographers and critical race scholars have suggested, (Razack, 2002; Edmonds, 2010; Gregory & Pred, 2007; Murdocca, 2010; Blomley, 2003), spaces are organized to sustain particular power relations and thus these spaces in turn help produce and replicate unequal power relations.

As discussed in the previous chapter, the Canadian white settler state was imagined, ideologically entrenched, and structurally made possible through the interconnected interests of imperial and private capital's exploitations of the natural

environment. Once the Canadian state was formalized through the Confederation of four provinces in 1867 and no longer under direct British colonial administration, these public/private partnerships continued, albeit in an altered settler colonial form, and have survived into the present day. Therefore, understanding neoliberalism's rise to ideological dominance in Canada in the 1970's and 1980's requires analysis of how neoliberal ideas and processes co-mingle and complement the settler colonial underpinnings of the nation-state itself. As both Swartz (2013) and Huber (2013) discuss, the rise of neoliberal hegemony in Anglo-American democracies was a union between "the logics of capital - freedom, property and entrepreneurialism" (Huber, p.xv) and energy-intensive living standards made possible through fossil fuels. I would add that ongoing white settler-colonial logic always intersects with the logic of capital in these contexts.

In discussing this neoliberal turn in Canadian economic social, and political discourse, it must be made clear that I do not mean to suggest that previous or divergent incarnations of capitalist thought and settler colonial state-craft, such as the Welfare-state or Keynesian economics, have been necessarily superior to, or more benevolent than the current one with regard to Indigenous peoples. These structures were also informed by the settler 'logic of elimination' (Wolfe, 1999) that sought to symbolically and physically eradicate Indigenous nations from the colonially occupied territories in order to secure access to the land. In the Canadian case, to maintain the imagined whiteness of the nation through racist, sexist and disableist citizenship, immigration and labour management systems, and other impositions of settler jurisprudence. As even the previous chapter's brief and general review of Canadian settler colonial history reveals,

corporate power has always shaped the settler colonial nation-state - whether owned by the Crown, the nation-state or by private corporations that require state facilitation of their business - even as approaches to and strategies of settler colonialism shift and change over time and between regions.

Rather than compare previous forms of governmentality to contemporary neoliberal governmentality, the previous chapter served to demonstrate the trajectories of settler colonialism that continue to sustain themselves through practices of non-Native normalization and identification. I seek here to examine the general emergence and ascendance of neoliberal ideology in Canada, and in settler/citizen common sense approaches to the extractive industries in the Athabasca region. Tracing the state's shifting role in facilitating the moves towards free market capitalism, and its practical amalgamation with the private sector, the shifting character of settler colonialism comes into view.

Racism, the U.S. New Deal Era, and the Decline of the Welfare State

Arguing that the New Deal era was the most dramatic one in its re-making of contemporary racism, author George Lipsitz (2009) notes that many New Deal policies excluded farm workers and domestics, both racialized minority sectors, through *the Wagner Act* and the *Social Security Act* (p.5). Furthermore, while *the Federal Housing Act (1934)* did bring home ownership within the reach of a larger number of citizens than ever before, “overtly racist categories in the Federal Housing Agency’s (FHA) ‘confidential’ city surveys and appraisers’ manuals channeled almost all of the loan money toward whites and away from communities of colour” (Lipsitz, 2009, p.5). New

Deal policies served to strengthen what Lipsitz calls “the possessive investment in whiteness” as workers in mass production industries were primarily white, and so the gains made by the labour movement post-WWII, including access to private health insurance, pensions and job security, all benefitted white workers followed by New Deal loans which were again channeled directly towards white Americans (ibid). Federal housing policies during this time helped racially restructure America. Lipsitz notes, “by channeling loans away from older inner-city neighborhoods and toward white home buyers moving into segregated suburbs, the FHA and private lenders after World War II aided and abetted segregation in U.S. residential neighborhoods” (ibid).

Thus, while the 1930s and 1940s New Deal era in the United States arguably created the conditions for a heavily oil dependent society, it also institutionally and structurally reorganized urban and suburban America along racialized class lines. These deliberate strategies of racialized population and spatial management all served to benefit white settler Americans; to politically, institutionally, legally, structurally and socially re-entrench white supremacy. George Lipsitz (2011) notes how this period in American history - another where race, class, colonialism and space are co-productive - mimic earlier policies, and ultimately forecast future ones:

A wide range of public actions protect the assets and advantages that whites have inherited from their ancestors, wealth originally accumulated during years when direct and overt discrimination in government policies, home scales, mortgage lending, education, and employment systematically channeled assets to whites. For example, at least forty-six million white adults today can trace the origins of their family wealth to

the Homestead Act of 1862. The bill gave away valuable acres of land for free to white families, but expressly precluded participation by Blacks. Seventy years later, the 1934 Federal Housing Act distributed federally insured home mortgages to whites in overtly and directly discriminatory fashion, building additional equity in the estates of some thirty-five million white families between 1934 and 1978 while systematically excluding Black families from those opportunities. (p.2)

The Homestead Act of 1862 didn't just grant 'free' land to whites and deny Blacks the same propertied advantage; it also stole land from and displaced Indigenous people while attempting to secure white settler access to territories. These policies would help entrench and enable the American settler nation-state itself.

Other white settler nation-states had similar approaches to settlement. Canada and Australia, for instance, had land grant policies which were closely aligned with the U.S.'s *Homestead Act of 1862*, and later with the racist New Deal era policies as well. *The Public Lands Act of 1860*, a statute of the then Province of Canada granted the Commissioner of Crown Lands the power to give free land grants to white settlers in Ontario, and later through several amendments and extensions, throughout the rest of Canada.

Policies such as *The Public Lands Act of 1860* paved the way for post-Depression era restructuring. This restructuring in the form of social services and public assistance (primarily for white populations) led to inflation in the United States and in Canada, which could be quite neatly explained by the new neoliberal theory of the 1970s: an increasingly powerful unionized labour movement had driven production costs up; the

state had intervened in the market well beyond its suggested role as a free market facilitator and had grown too large; state monopolies had developed due to the nationalization of many industries both inside the U.S. and globally (including oil and gas industries), thus discouraging the healthy competition needed for a strong capitalist economy; and entrepreneurial life had been threatened (Swartz, 2013).

In Canada, the Leduc oil field was ‘discovered’ in 1947, creating a massive shift in Alberta’s economy away from agriculture and towards oil (Carter and Zalik, 2016, p.55). This ‘discovery’ and the subsequent economic shifts were the result of and supported by provincial and federal investments in research and development (p.56). The Keynesian New Deal era in Anglo-American states had ‘interventionist’ and regulatory similarities with the general global trend of the 1950’s and 1960’s whereby oil exporting nation-states nationalized their crude oil assets (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013, p.24). Reserves were not, however nationalized. As Post-World War II Europe saw empires divest from many of their colonies, they found themselves economically struggling after the war and unable to bear the costs of fighting off the growing post-colonial independence movements which marked the geopolitics of much of the ‘global south’. Newly post-colonial nations then sought to assert sovereignty over their natural resources, and for those countries with oil supplies that were in demand, many nationalized these resources with the aim to take power back from the top seven private oil and gas companies who controlled the market. These seven corporations, referred to as “the Seven Sisters’ or “the majors” (all of whom were direct beneficiaries of the European colonial empires, or who directly benefitted from European colonialism as settlers in the new colonies) acted as a cartel of private corporations.

These companies, some of who served colonial Empires during the formal colonial period, arguably continued this role as neo-colonial administrators of oil extraction in the post-colonial period. Nationalization was thus a post-colonial strategy to take power back from “the majors” and to regain sovereignty over oil. For the American companies who dominated the global oil and gas market however, this post-colonial period was also one of ongoing settler colonialism within the U.S. (where they continued to extract crude, transport and refine crude oil), and was additionally a period of imperial capitalist expansion beyond U.S. borders. The seven companies who dominated the market were the Anglo-Persian Oil Company (or British Petroleum, now BP [U.K.]); Gulf Oil (American company based in Pennsylvania eventually merging with Standard Oil and becoming Chevron in the U.S.); Standard Oil of California (SoCal [U.S.]), Texaco (Chevron [U.S.]); Royal Dutch Shell (Netherlands/U.K.); Standard Oil of New Jersey (Esso [U.S.]); and Standard Oil Company of New York (ExxonMobil [U.S.]).

Nationalization challenged ‘the majors’ and greatly shifted the global geopolitics of the oil and gas sector. In Mexico, for instance, the nationalization of the oil industry took place in 1938 when foreign-owned firms were expropriated after massive mobilization of oil workers (Zalik, 2008, 182). Zalik writes,

Practically and symbolically, the Mexican expropriation demonstrated the ability of a southern oil exporter to control extraction without external interference for the purposes of national development. It marked a key moment in the twentieth-century link between industrial capacity and state sovereignty in the Global South. Importantly, it made manifest that the Mexican state- as representative of the will of its

residents under the notion of state sovereignty - would protect national energy resources from overexploitation, while defending those resources for the use of future generations of Mexicans. (p.182)

Here, national resource sovereignty is clearly about just that - protecting and defending state sovereignty in the face of private capital. As other oil exporting nation-states took up this strategy, they began organizing themselves in relation to the powerful private sector, creating organizations such as The Organization of the Petroleum Producing Countries (OPEC) in September of 1960 (OPEC, 2014). National oil companies (NOCs) had OPEC, and control over much of the world's oil reserves, and so eventually in response the private international oil companies (IOCs) created the International Energy Agency (IEA) in 1974 to collectivize their power as well (Bridge & Le Billon, 2013, p.23).

OPEC and the 'Oil Shock'

The Organization of the Petroleum Producing Countries (OPEC) was created in September of 1960 and came into prominence in the early 1970s. The founding members were the Islamic Republic of Iran, Iraq, Kuwait, Saudi Arabia and Venezuela, and its membership grew to ten member countries by 1969 (OPEC, n.d.). OPEC's statute claims that its purpose is to "coordinate and unify the petroleum policies of its Member Countries and ensure the stabilization of oil markets in order to secure an efficient, economic and regular supply of petroleum to consumers, a steady income to producers and a fair return on capital for those investing in the petroleum industry" (ibid). OPEC's

discourse around resource sovereignty may currently appear more palatable to IOCs than in the late 1960's and early 1970's however. During this period of post-colonial resource reclamation, OPEC's collectivity shattered the dominance of "the majors" and reorganized global oil markets.

These tensions surrounding the question of national resource sovereignty versus private capital marked the shift from the post-colonial and Keynesian period, into the neoliberal period. The notion that the Keynesian/New Deal era had decimated the global economy and the notion that a free market was necessary to cure the ills of state intervention were developed by "neoliberal norm entrepreneurs" (Swartz, 2013) and according to Swartz, contain the ontological and epistemological assumptions that have come to mark popular neoliberal norms in Canada, as in the other nation-states Swartz examines. These norms gained additional prominence and popularity in the wake of the 1973 'oil shock', also referred to as the "Arab" oil embargo (OPEC, 2014).

By 1973, OPEC held significant pricing control over global oil reserves, giving member countries a powerful political tool with which to leverage in international geopolitical negotiations of the time. Thus, when in 1973 the Syrian and Egyptian states attempted to take back lands that had been occupied by the relatively new settler colonial Israeli nation-state in the 1967 Six-Day war, OPEC responded to U.S. military support of Israel by placing an embargo on oil supplies to the U.S. and its allies, amongst other actions. As Israel bombed Syria and Egypt, equipped by the United States, Syria and Egypt were militarily supported by the then Soviet Union, feeding into long-standing tensions between the two super-powers. The OPEC embargo led to an 'oil crisis' in the U.S., and strict measures had to be put in place there to regulate oil consumption and

address the sky-rocketing price of petroleum. Canada was also greatly impacted, as Eastern Canada was almost entirely dependent on off-shore oil that passed through the U.S. and was thus subject to their pricing, even while the demand for tar sands oil increased as U.S. markets demanded more localized oil sources (Chastko, 2004, p.147-152). This was all taking place within an economic context of a global stock-market crash which was partly caused by U.S. non-compliance with the Bretton-Woods system of currency valuation (measuring currency value in gold). As the value of the U.S. dollar fell against the value of gold, oil producing states felt the economic hit with oil prices being measured in U.S. currency, leading OPEC to switch over to valuing oil based on gold, and not on the U.S. dollar. All of these global economic and political changes ultimately laid the groundwork for the rise of neo-liberal approaches to the structure of both the state the global free market system (ibid).

As in the United States, the 1973 ‘oil shock’, the end of the post-war prosperities of increased spending coupled with rising unemployment saw Canadian economists revisit the welfare state-structure and its relationship to the financial markets. This revisionary period created the opening for the “norm entrepreneurs” who presented the argument that the old ways had failed and in the absence of other strategies for moving forward and of effective opposition to it, neoliberalism saw its rise (Swarts, 2013, p.3). Stagflation (unemployment and inflation both rising simultaneously), was presented through ‘rhetorical and material persuasion and coercion’ (Swarts, 2013), as proof of this failure. Thus, neoliberal theory rose to dominance throughout the 1970s.

Swarts (2013) argues that neoliberalism (while an elite phenomenon) has been successful in normalizing its central tenets as necessary conditions for economic

development and refers to this process of “ideational and discursive construction” as a “political-economic imaginary” (p.3). The success of this imaginary has thus meant a popular revision of the role of the state in regulating the financial markets, in redistributing wealth throughout the national population, in regulating land use and its environmental impacts, and in providing a welfare state structure more generally.

While many contemporary scholars of neoliberalism such as Swartz (2013) and Huber (2013) study neoliberalism in settler colonial contexts like Canada and the United States, there is a striking absence of attention to the colonial violence that is a prerequisite to the settler state’s formation and a requirement of its continued existence. What is taken for granted in the theorization of neoliberalism is the settler state itself and thus the relationship between the two is overlooked, the settler state is left untroubled and theorizations of neoliberalism cannot account for its role in ongoing colonial structures. Just as the neoliberal context is the result of its successful normalization through “ideational and discursive construction” (Swartz, 2013), so too are settler colonialism and the white supremacy it depends upon (not to mention through direct violence, theft and genocide). These elisions signal the power of what Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2015) calls ‘white possessive logics’, which are ‘operationalized within discourses to circulate sets of meanings about ownership of the nation, as part of commonsense knowledge, decision making, and socially produced conventions’ (xii). In relation to racial extractivism, ‘white possessive logics’ are central to the claims that both the white settler state and private extractive corporations make to Indigenous lands. These logics enable to jurisdictional claims made by both public and private entities and are further entrenched and normalized through various

discursive strategies examined herein. Mark Rifkin (2013; 2014) discusses ‘settler common sense’ as ‘the ways the legal and political structures that enable non-Native access to Indigenous territories come to be lived as given, as simply unmarked, generic conditions of possibility for occupancy, association, history, and personhood’ (2013, p.323). Moreton-Robinson and Rifkin signal to the presence of racial, capitalist and colonial logics as foundational to the norms of settler colonial entitlement and taken-for-granted occupation.

Canadian Neoliberal Restructuring

In *Settler Common Sense: Queerness and Everyday Colonialism in the American Renaissance* Mark Rifkin (2013) argues the following,

In the current scholarly efforts to characterize settler colonialism, the contours of settlement often appear analytically as clear and coherent from the start, as a virtual totality, and in this way, the ongoing processes by which settler dominance actively is reconstituted as a set of actions, occupations, deferrals, and potentials slide from view (p.323).

Rifkin suggests attending to what he calls “settler common-sense”, in order to place settlement as a system of coercive incorporation and expropriation in full view. For Rifkin, part of what makes the hegemony of settler colonialism so powerful is its place within non-native ‘structures of feeling’ (Williams, 1954), its affective power within everyday non-native perspectives and identities. Taking up Raymond Williams’ term (1954), Rifkin’s approach to analyzing settler colonialism asks,

how emotions, sensations, psychic life take part in the (ongoing) process of realizing the exertion of non-Native authority over Indigenous peoples, governance, and territoriality in ways that *saturate* quotidian life but are not necessarily present to settlers as a set of political propositions or as a specifically imperial project of dispossession. (p.323)

Understanding settlement as a ‘structure of feeling’ (Williams, 1954) he argues, takes settler colonial studies beyond the view of settler colonialism as a structure that appears clear and coherent, leaving a large part of its mechanisms of reconstitution to slide from view (Rifkin 2013, p.323). While settler colonialism is structural and systemic, it is simultaneously discursive, symbolic, affective and, for many non-Natives (especially white settlers) it is part of everyday normalcy (p.324).

In analyzing the structures and systems of Canadian white settler colonialism and the discursive strategies of normalization on which they rely and from which they emerge, Rifkin’s notion of “settler common sense” and the saturation of white settler entitlement into the affective register of settler life is important. Though Rifkin largely overlooks this in his work, “settler common sense” is co-constituted with neoliberal hegemony and works well within the free market structures of late capitalism to frame the political economy of racial extractivism as an inevitable and almost natural reality. In the Athabasca region this is made clear as transnational oil and gas corporations attempt to work alongside and in varying degrees of consultation with Indigenous communities. These tenuous relationships, sometimes facilitated by federal and provincial legislation requiring forms of consultation or communication between the companies and Indigenous communities, reveal a multitude of colonial and racist assumptions about indigeneity,

Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies, and the power of historical and ongoing racializing knowledge production about Indigenous peoples by non-Indigenous scholars and “experts”.

Building on Patrick Wolfe’s (1999) argument that a ‘logic of elimination’ is the organizing principle of settler colonialism, Rifkin (2013) again suggests that this analysis “potentially sidesteps the question of how official governmental initiatives and framings become normalized as the setting for everyday non-Native being and action in ways that cannot be captured solely by reference to the ‘murderous activities of the frontier rabble’ [Wolfe, p.392-393]” (p.324) and suggests, as Moreton-Robinson (2015) does, that whiteness instantiates a property logic (p.325). How then can these governmental initiatives and framings which normalize settlement, and which produce and are produced by settler colonialism be kept ‘in view’ alongside the private sector initiatives and framings which contribute to these same processes? While Rifkin’s focus is not on private corporate power and its connections and interrelation to settler-state power under neoliberalism, it becomes difficult to imagine a contemporary settler-colonial context that is not dependent upon both settler common-sense *and* normalized neoliberalism (or neoliberal common sense).

In Alberta, commercial production of bitumen had begun in 1967 with the foreign owned, incorporated company Great Canadian Oil Sands Limited (GCOS), eighty percent of which was owned by Sun Oil of the U.S., now Suncor (Chastko, 2004, p.115). Sun Oil’s president had championed the project and lobbied for federal permissions from both the U.S. and Canadian governments to increase permitted production levels to a potentially profitable rate, and to refine the bitumen in Sun Oil refineries in Sarnia, ON,

and in the U.S. (Chastko, p.119-120). Once permissions were granted - to the dismay of competing U.S. owned oil companies who had leases in the Athabasca region - Sun Oil's Canadian experiment resulted in Fort McMurray's first bitumen extraction plant, piping the bitumen across Canada through the Interprovincial Pipe Line, and refining the first of the planned 45,000 barrels of bitumen extracted per day in Sarnia, ON (Suncor Energy, Inc., Milestones 60's).

The province (through the Energy Resources Conservation Board) sought to protect the profitability of the small crude oil market while developing but safeguarding the bitumen market for the future; after all, crude oil brought in more provincial revenues from lease bonus payments, fees, rentals and royalties, as compared with bitumen (Chastko, 2004, p.124). Private capital, however, ultimately had more control over market forces and Alberta increased its bitumen quotas in 1968.

GCOS had a virtual monopoly over the extraction, refining and sale of heavy oil. The monopoly obviously angered the other Multi-National Corporations (MNC's) who had leases in the Athabasca, Peace River and Cold Lake regions, and were losing money holding onto reserves that they could not develop and market. Thus, the consortium of oil and gas MNC's in the region created Syncrude and together placed industry pressure on Alberta's provincial government. Syncrude threatened to increase U.S. shale development which would weaken the bitumen market unless their company was permitted to extract and refine bitumen from their leased Alberta lands (Chastko, 2004, p.121-122).

The Syncrude group however, was not able to begin full operations until 1978. OPEC's oil embargo not only shifted oil and gas markets globally, but also resulted in

major changes in government involvement and regulation of the industry. In the wake of the ‘oil crisis’ of 1973, the Canadian New Democratic Party (NDP) presented a bill to create a new Crown corporation, PetroCanada. As a minority Liberal government dependant on the NDP to remain in office, the bill passed into law and PetroCanada became the first Canadian national oil and gas company (Chastko, 2004). The Crown corporation followed many other oil producing nation-states at the time who were also undergoing programs of oil and gas nationalization. Seen as a way for governments to gain expertise in the industry and know what was occurring in the international oil and gas markets in order to better profit from them, and as a way to secure access to oil and gas, as well as the petrochemicals and lubricants in the wake of global uncertainties (OPEC’s new power in the global market), nationalization was championed as a way to protect resources from (primarily) U.S. MNCs and keep profits within Canada.

In the Canadian context where ongoing settler colonialism continues to underlie and structure the development of the tar sands, colonialism be centered as a fundamental analytic lens. Settler colonialism shaped the political economics of the 1970s when PetroCanada was created as a national Crown corporation, as the state’s claims to the resources were ultimately based on notions of the state’s jurisdiction on Indigenous lands, able to manage and facilitate the private ownership of those territories. In Canada and the U.S. the 1970’s were also a time of great mobilization on the part of Indigenous Nations who questioned the jurisdiction of the Canadian nation-state over the land itself. The assumption of legal jurisdiction over these territories has meant that the Canadian state has always relied upon the colonial narratives of the *Doctrine of Discovery* and *terra nullius* (as discussed in Chapter Two) that attempt to justify land left in the first place.

In creating a Crown corporation for tar sands extraction and production, the federal government sought to directly 'secure' a part of the market share for the Canadian nation-state, while also encouraging and facilitating private capital's investment in the industry. As the Canadian federal government's interest in the tar sands increased, Alberta's provincial government grew concerned about federal involvement in an industry that had previously been (for the most part) under the jurisdiction of the province, as described in the *Constitution Act of 1867 (Section 108)* that describes the ownership over lands and resources to be fully in the hands of the provinces. This period was marked by ongoing conflicts between the Alberta Provincial and Federal governments as disagreements over oil and gas royalties, corporate taxation and the re-distribution of rents paid dissuaded tar sands investors who instead looked to The Arctic and Hibernia projects in offshore Newfoundland (Chastko, 2004, 167). Simultaneously, as a symbol of Canadian nationalism, PetroCanada represented resource sovereignty in the context of post-'oil crisis' fears. Despite being a Crown corporation however, PetroCanada was eventually to act as any other private oil and gas company in the tar sands, competing directly with the transnational oil and gas corporations without infusions of public funds to secure acquisitions.

The economic stagflation of the early 1970s came after trade unions came under attack for collectively organizing and successfully raising wages and improving working conditions to levels that consumed corporate profits throughout the 1950s and 1960s (Gindin and Panitch, 2013). As industrial factories began laying off workers and looking to less expensive regions in which to produce their goods, high levels of unemployment were simultaneously coupled with high inflation rates. These rates, as Gindin and

Panitch (2013) note in their work *The Making of Global Capitalism: The Political Economy of American Empire*, were referred to as “the Volker shock”, a high interest rate shock which “disciplined labour” and lasted into the 1980s, weakening the democratic strength of the unions in both the U.S. and Canada. This strategy involved integrating the trade unions into neoliberal economics, and having them set class equality aside in favour of removing controls on capital and securing employment (this ‘security’ would always be an empty promise under neoliberal capitalism however, as profit margins rule economic order). Paul Volker Jr. was head of the U.S. federal reserve under U.S. Presidents Jimmy Carter and Ronald Reagan, and induced a crisis by pushing interest rates to 18%, and thus breaking the backs of the unions. These U.S. economic shifts directly affected the Canadian economy, as many corporations leading the Canadian industrial sector were American including U.S. auto manufacturers; the workers in these factories were thus subject to these same claw backs to their hard-won wages.

Stagflation created the social conditions for increasing anti-union sentiment, popular shifts in expectations of the state with regards to shrinking social services, the valorization of market-place competition and support for ‘laissez-faire’ approaches to governmentality that would once again (hopefully) strengthen the private sector and bring jobs back to middle and working class people in both the U.S. and Canada. By the mid-1970’s neoliberal ideology had found a receptive audience.

Nevertheless, during this period, the oil industry in Alberta received massive subsidies from both provincial and federal governments. By 1974 Alberta’s ‘Alberta Oil Sands Technology and Research Authority’ (AOSTRA) facilitated research and development for the industry so that they could operate at relatively low costs (Carter and

Zalik, 2016, p.56). As Carter and Zalik note, “provincial funding for AOSTRA spiked in the mid-1980’s to approximately \$74 million annually (AERI 2009a, 2009b). One recent estimate indicated that over one billion dollars of public money has been invested in research that led to the technology to mine for bitumen (Boychuk 2010)” (p.56-57).

The increasing personal debt levels of primarily white workers created a population deeply in debt, contradictorily concerned with pension investments in corporations which had participated in the breaking of the labour movement, and burdened with mortgages (which ultimately set the stage, according to Gindin and Panitch (2013), for the 2007/2008 economic ‘crisis’). By the mid-1980’s the U.S. and Canadian economies had recovered from “the Volker shock” through a series of neoliberal reforms, which, as Gindin and Panitch discuss was also required globally as U.S. capital became increasingly globalized. International finance, which was first developed in the post-WWII era (i.e. the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank), was expanded to facilitate this ‘new’ neoliberal global capitalism. Volker’s strategy of using interest rates to facilitate this shift to neoliberalism was ultimately a success.

Canadian Political Economy of the 1980s and 1990s

With Brian Mulroney’s election as Prime Minister in 1984, and his administration’s signing of the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in 1989, the move away from economic nationalism in Canada was cemented in favour of free trade. By 1994 the revised free-trade agreement was implemented (Laxer, 2015b, n.p.). For the development of the Alberta tar sands, the 1980’s and early 1990’s was a period of relative stagnation as global oil and gas corporations moved away from investing in the region, opting instead

to invest in parts of the world where less technical innovation and capital intensive extraction methods were available. Both Suncor and Syncrude had lost money through their heavy investments in developing tar sands extraction methods, and these examples served as cautionary tales to the industry (Nikiforuk, 2010 p.27). Investment and production did not pick up in the region until the mid-1990's when taxation procedures had been streamlined and the technical, environmental, research and innovation investment problems had been better managed by both levels of government (Chastko, 2007, p.197-198). Importantly, as discussed by Gordon Laxer (2015a;b), NAFTA did contain a specific proportionality clause (article 605) addressing Canadian oil exports to "member states" (the U.S. and Mexico, the latter of which had its own nationalized oil industry and rejected the proportionality clause, thereby making this particular section solely about Canadian-U.S. trade).

The proportionality clause is described by Laxer, who essentially states that "if the government of any NAFTA member country takes action that cuts the availability of energy for export to another NAFTA member country, it must continue to export the same proportion of total 'supply' that it has over the previous three years" (2015b, n.p.). Laxer goes on to state that the clause specifies that if a member government "cuts energy available for export to another member country, it must also cut the supply of that energy domestically to the same extent" (ibid). Originating from the pre-NAFTA Canada – U.S. Free Trade Agreement (FTA) the clause was retained when Mexico was added and the agreement altered (though, again, Mexico rejected this particular clause). The article also makes clear that exporters can't disrupt "normal channels of supply" or "normal proportions among specific energy" goods (ibid). This means that Canada could not for

example, substitute light crude for a heavier variety and “domestic supply” counts include any oil imported into Canada, not just what is produced here (ibid). Laxer writes,

The 1980s neoliberal thinking on energy that underlay the Canada – U.S. FTA was this: it's good if a corporation decides to supply Market A rather than Market B, for profit reasons, but it's bad if governments protect residents by ensuring that Market A is served for energy security, energy sovereignty or ecological reasons. Energy exports can rise or fall through changes made by the "market," but elected officials cannot intervene to provide energy security to citizens who elect them. (2015b, n.p.)

Laxer's concern with the proportionality clause centers around its inflexibility in relation to “energy sovereignty”, or the white settler state's ability to directly control or regulate the oil export market and thus provide Canadian citizens with “energy security”. Informed by a staple theory approach to political economy, this critique ignores questions of Indigenous jurisdiction in favour of a focus on preserving Canadian sovereignty within a neoliberal context. While Laxer rightly sees NAFTA and the proportionality clause in particular as restrictive and as severely limiting to Canadian sovereignty, the question of Canada's dubious claims to sovereignty and to jurisdiction over bitumen extraction in the first place are side-stepped if not completely ignored.

The proportionality clause was ultimately designed to benefit the transnational oil and gas companies through a less interventionist approach to government involvement. United by shared interests in increased free market activity in Canada (and in Alberta), this period of neoliberal entrenchment was one where free market capitalism was actively

facilitated by a unique form of state-craft that can be referred to as neoliberal governmentality. As a normalized framework for understanding the economy, the role of the state, and of the market, neoliberal governmentality of this period signaled a shift towards the de-regulation of the oil and gas industry and the environmental protections, for instance, which, again had hindered the potential for future rapid high volume bitumen extraction projects. For PetroCanada, it meant that the nationalization goals of the company were marginalized and the company was no longer used as a tool for policy development (Fossum, 1997, p.238). Competing on the free market with other oil and gas companies, PetroCanada survived as a government-owned company only until the early 1990's when shares in the company were sold publically. By 2004 the Canadian state had sold all its shares in the company (Fossum, 1997, p.236).

With the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) in place by the mid-1990s, federal and provincial finances were further redirected towards supporting the private sector through reductions in royalty fees (from 30 per cent to one per cent), massive cuts to corporate taxation and through the public funding of oil and gas research and innovation (Nikiforuk, 2010, p.27-28). The mid-1990s ushered in the period of high-volume rapid extraction that continues into the present, as increasing numbers of oil and gas competitors invested in the tar sands under conditions of virtually unregulated, unhindered, non-taxable 'resource' plundering. While governance systems shifted to account for the burgeoning investment and economic activity in the sector and region, so did the neoliberal discourses, which narrated what has become the largest industrial project on earth (Nikiforuk, p.22; Adkin and Stares, 2016).

As the dissolution of the welfare state progressed at a rapid pace, it meant that services previously provided by various levels of government (services won by organized political protest and by no means willingly granted to the populace) could now be selectively taken up by private corporations seeking to gain social license for their extractive projects. What was expected of the nation-state in the way of social security and even ‘public’ infrastructure gave way to private sponsorships and charitable donations which tied these much-needed supports, facilities and services directly to the extractive sector. For the oil and gas industry in Northern Alberta, bitumen extraction could be discursively sold to the public as crucial to funding key aspects of the settler society they had come to expect, private funding coupled with high personal debt levels would fill the gaps left by the dwindling welfare state. For instance, the Oil Sands Community Alliance (OSCA) was formed in 2013 “with approximately 25 industry members, OSCA pursues innovative solutions that help to build thriving communities” (Oil Sands Community Alliance [OSCA], 2016). As an example of this neoliberal approach to privately funded public services and infrastructure, the organization lists four “focus areas”: Aboriginal Community Relations; Community Well-Being; Infrastructure; and Workforce (ibid).

The OSCA emerged from “two decades of collaboration by the Oil Sands Developers Group (OSDG) and prior to that, the Regional Issues Working Group” and aims to ensure “continued regional prosperity and community well-being by proactively responding to changes that arise from development in the Alberta’s Oil Sands region” (ibid). The OSCA’s website lists twenty “member” transnational oil companies who purportedly work together on engagement between industry and “community leaders” to

strategically fund and embed local public infrastructure with the visible markers of transnational oil companies. The task of gaining the social license to operate, particularly on a scale as mammoth as this, has required an evolving tool kit of neoliberal tools.

‘The Staple Economy’ and White Settler Colonialism

The notion that the Canadian economy is so utterly dependent upon the oil and gas industry that the industry cannot be exposed to open public critique or opposition has led many political economists to reignite discussions of a Canadian staple economy, discussed in chapter two. Theorised as emerging from the nation-state’s mercantilist roots and into today’s neoliberal capitalist economy, the theory was championed by Charles Innis and W.A. Mackintosh in the 1920s and 1930s and suggests that staple goods such as fur, cod, lumber, and other raw “resources” (initially extracted from Canada and shipped to the British and French metropolises for manufacturing and sales) created an economy of economic dependence on the staple resource itself, and on the ‘motherland’, which left the developing settler economy weak. Though this was the pattern of extraction for most colonies during and leading up to the European industrial revolution, those exporting economies which failed to diversify and prevent “leakages” - lost processing and production opportunities - were named “staples economies” by Innis (1930; 1946). The theory is applied to the contemporary period as Canada continues to export ‘natural resources’ to be refined, used in manufacturing and further processed outside its borders (Watkins, 1963, 2007; McNally, 1981).

McNally's (1981) Marxist analysis and critique of Innis's staple theory focuses on the ways in which (based on Adam Smith's theorization) Innis' work on the fur trade (1956), the cod fisheries (1954) and the staples economy more generally all deprioritize the social relations of production. This is largely due to the fact that Innis' theorization of Canadian political economy centered on trade patterns, the form of commerce and the character of the material being extracted – what McNally calls “theoretical commodity fetishism” (p.56). Innis' staple theory suggests that the staple material being traded (fur, cod, lumber or in the case of this study, bitumen), structures the trade patterns, economic systems, and general character of the colony (Innis in McNally, 1981, p.40). Innis saw trade and commerce as overtaking colonial relations as geographic expansion of capitalist growth took place – wiping out or overtaking colonial social relations in its path (see Innis, 1956, p.257; McNally, 1981, p.39). This conceptualization is critiqued by McNally (1981) who ultimately argues that “Innis' staple theory had no common ground with Marx's historical materialism. His staple theory is built upon precisely the kind of theoretical commodity fetishism that Marx attacked” (p.56).

McNally's (1981) critique justifiably points to limitations existing in Innis' theorization and in the work of more contemporary political economists taking up staple theory. Seeing staple theory as a distraction from meaningful class analysis, what this critique leaves undisturbed are the realities of ongoing colonial relations; it ignores the specific white settler colonial social relations within and co-produced alongside capitalist social relations; it leaves the settler state as a taken-for-granted given; it evicts race from the analysis of these social relations, economic processes and structures and histories.

Despite these critiques, many Canadian political economists continue to engage with Innis' staple theory to analyze the contemporary oil and gas sector and its role within the Canadian economy and social relations (see Haley, 2011; Laxer, 2013; Cohen, 2013; Watkins, 2007; Stanford, 2008; Howlett & Brownsey, 2008) . More contemporary expansions upon and engagements with staple theory suggest that the late capitalist political economy of the Canadian white settler state remains fundamentally structured by staples like bitumen and by other mined materials in particular. Notably absent in the vast majority of these engagements with staple theory are analysis of the ongoing colonial relations and their reliance on and interconnections to race thinking as key factors involved in the structuring of the Canadian political economy (exceptions to this include Mills & Sweeney, 2013; Watkins, 1977).

The Canadian white settler state exports the vast majority of its oil and gas to the “new” metropole- the United States - where it is refined, petro-chemicals are derived and sold, and where other economic “leakages” are said to occur (see for instance, Watkins, 2007; Griffin and Cohen, 2013; Laxer, 2013). These scholars argue that these continuing “leakages” are the source of economic insecurity and that the Canadian nation-state and its citizens are ultimately missing out on perhaps the majority of the benefits that could come from tar sands extraction. Ultimately concerned with maximizing the economic benefits of oil and gas extraction for Canadian citizens, this framework of staple theory and dependency theory assumes the jurisdiction of the settler state and the conversion of Indigenous territories into natural resources ultimately owned by the nation and its citizens. Leaving the white settler state undisturbed in its right to exist, and in its legal

and political position of dominance ultimately supports “the agenda of colonial settlement” (Pasternak, 2014, p.5). As Kulchyski (2016) argues,

the settler colonial nation-state of Canada depends upon and aggressively supports changing the forms of wealth that Indigenous people had and have into forms amenable to the accumulation of capital, which in turn enables extracting that wealth for the benefit of southern, “white” and, especially, elites social fragments. What is called inequality is not an accidental by-product of this process, or the result of a few misguided policies, but is a core, foundational, structural feature of contemporary Canadian society, supported by an integrated set of legal, political, cultural, social, and economic systems. (p.97)

The structural feature that Kulchyski refers to is white settler colonialism and the logics on which it relies. Communicated through discursive strategies such as formal legislation, the notion that Indigenous lands constitute national “resources” and potential capital that the Canadian state ultimately administers, underlies all myths of settler entitlement.

These discursive strategies which attempt to normalize the settler state’s jurisdiction and its right to administrate private corporate access to lands and ‘resources’ diffuse into all areas of settler life and settler governmentality. This means that neoliberal settler discourse marks cultural productions, a wide variety of media and sources of information, and sites and forms of governance and capitalist influence. One significant site of this discourse is of course legislation itself. To legislate in this context is to

convert these co-productive logics of white settler colonialism and neoliberalism into law
- laws which are then enforced through the mechanisms of the state.

Chapter Four: Contemporary Neoliberal Discourse and Selling the Mega-Project

Neoliberalism has reconfigured white settler entitlement while continuing trajectories of previous forms of white settler colonialism. This unique character transformation involves changes in the ways and means that settler colonialism and white supremacy are executed and reproduced and can best be described as a normalization process, whereby free market ideology deeply anchors settler claims to Indigenous lands in the rhetoric of individualism, private property and capital power that is state-supported (see Altamirano-Jimenez, 2013; Barnett, Clarke, Cloke & Malpass, 2008; Davila, 2014; Hall, 2011; Harvey, 2005). The racialized dynamics of accessing the cheap labour needed to expand the industry in the region, and the immigration and labour policies needed to facilitate this will be briefly examined here alongside contemporary popular national discourses of the Alberta oil sands. Popular discourses of labour shortages, economic and energy ‘crises’, and the need for national job security are all examples of themes used to market the tar sands within Canada and to promote it as a national resource requiring domestic and international labour supplies. As examples of the discursive strategies employed within this neoliberal context to protect the free market and the oil and gas industry in particular, they also signal to the racialized labour relations and colonial politics of human labour central to racial extractivism (Sharma, 2006; Walia, 2010; Taylor et al., 2007; Taylor & Friedel, 2011; de Guerre, 2009; Goldring et al., 2009; Huber, 2013; Labban, 2014).

These naturalizing discourses simultaneously serve to further racialize the Canadian nation as white, while erasing the existence of Indigenous peoples and

discursively (and sometimes physically) ejecting non-white citizens from the settler nation-state's claimed territories once their labour value has been extracted or deemed unwanted by the state and its industry partners. This chapter will examine these discursive strategies of contemporary extractivist colonialism in addition to the neoliberal concepts of the 'Social License to Operate' and 'Corporate Social Responsibility' often used by those in the tar sands industry (see Canadian Businesses for Social Responsibility, 2009; Corocan, 2014). These discursive strategies work in tandem with Environmental Assessment Processes and with the confidential Impact Benefit Agreements (IBAs) that oil companies make with (or impose upon) Indigenous communities. The latter are often divided on the terms of these agreements and are unable to access the details and content of similar agreements signed with other Indigenous communities (McCreary, Mills, St-Armand, 2016; Bowness & Hudson, 2014; Zalik, 2016). Already chronically underfunded and overburdened with lawsuits against extractive companies, these communities are often left with few economic options and find themselves in weak bargaining positions as they negotiate with some of the wealthiest corporations on the planet. These neoliberal strategies are supported by the Canadian state's neglect of the Duty to Consult, a legal duty affirmed through five separate Supreme Court of Canada decisions (Canada, Duty to Consult, 2013; Sossin, 2010; Treacy, Campbell, Dickson, 2006). Next the chapter will examine public marketing campaigns executed by organizations such as the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) and 'Ethical Oil', as well as by oil companies themselves, all designed to market tar sands extraction as profitable and innovative, as central to Canadian national identity, and even as humanitarian (Takach, 2013; Taylor, Friedel,

2011). Finally, the chapter concludes with a discussion of racial extractivism and the tar sands industry's reliance upon racialized foreign labour, facilitated through the Temporary Foreign Worker Program (Rajkumar, Berkowitz, Vosko, Preston and Latham, 2012; Taylor, McGray, Watt-Malcolm, 2007; Walia, 2010). White settler colonialism and racial extractivism as processes and structures are informed by logics of white supremacy that consistently devalue the lives of Indigenous, Black and people of colour as the TFW Program in the context of tar sands extraction on Indigenous lands so clearly reveals.

Buying the 'Social License to Operate' and 'Corporate Social Responsibility'

The concepts of the 'social license to operate' and 'corporate social responsibility' have emerged as part of extractive industries' common neoliberal lexicon. I understand these terms as direct results of the withdrawal of the state from many forms of social service provision and public infrastructure investment and of its intimate cooperation with private corporations and the global capitalist market system. As Canadian settler communities developed expectations for standards of living and service provision based on the welfare state structure, the defunding of that structure has meant that private corporations are able to insert themselves and 'rescue' communities in need while securing access to 'resources' and or future capital. This is not to suggest that the state and private extractive companies are working independently of one another; on the contrary these shifts and changes have come about through a relation of co-production and intimacy (Zalik, 2015).

Presented as forms of corporate charity, these investments in particular communities of strategic importance create conditions of public dependence upon the private sector that can help secure the ‘social license’ needed for many corporations to operate. The development of charitable foundations that facilitate the corporate sponsorship of sporting and other social events; corporate funded scholarships and research funding; summer camps, and elementary and secondary school teaching materials - even public health education and research campaigns - all embed a variety of capital-driven corporations into the everyday of contemporary white settler colonial life. As extractive companies become associated with social ‘good’, particularly within the local communities where extractive-sector workers live, the social, political and environmental costs of their operations are obscured from view.

While this perspective on the corporate tools for gaining ‘social license’ may seem overly pessimistic in nature, others argue that these tools are in fact responses to organized opposition to late capitalism and are pessimistic for quite different reasons. For instance, neoliberal journalist Terence Corocan (2014) of the *National Post* argues that the need for tar sands pipeline projects like Enbridge’s Northern Gateway pipeline and the Keystone XL pipeline to gain ‘social license’ “has become something of a social license to kill growth and jobs” (Corocan, n.p.). Corocan argues that these measures of seeking social license hinder the free market and act as additional, vague, and ultimately stifling licensing measures which were cautioned against by one of neoliberalism’s visionaries, Milton Friedman. Cited in Corocan’s article, Friedman stated in 1970 that ‘social responsibility’ discourse,

helps to strengthen the already too prevalent view that the pursuit of profits is wicked and immoral and must be curbed and controlled by external forces. Once this view is adopted, the external forces that curb the market will not be the social consciences, however highly developed, of the pontificating executives; it will be the iron fist of Government bureaucrats. (Friedman in Corocan 2014).

What Friedman failed to recognize however, is that with neoliberalism normalized in white settler society, the ‘iron fist of Government bureaucrats’ which he characterized as crushing the potential of the unhindered free market, would in fact be the helping hand of that market forty years later. Late capitalism has seen the restructuring of the settler state in the image desired by the market, and so the conditions of today’s ‘social licensing’ are unique. Corocan’s (2014) argument is that while industry consultants may benefit from this new form of corporate social responsibility (CSR) (pushed for - he argues - by the consultants themselves, NGOs and activists), the free market does not, and thus corporations do not. In opposition to this logic however, the CSR discourse - including gaining the social license to operate - does not pose any fundamental threats to the free market; nor do they disrupt any of the foundational logics which make neoliberal global capitalism possible. CSR discourses and actions further embed specific brands and more general neoliberal logics within the everyday lives of many settlers, consumers, and workers and within the white settler state itself - though many Indigenous communities remain critical of this new approach to a long-standing process of white settler colonialism. CSR discourses serve as key tools in the attempted justification of ongoing

white settler colonialism and in the erasure of Indigenous relationships to land, water and life, laws, forms of governance, and nationhood.

Embedding neoliberal and white settler colonial logics within the everyday requires evolving tools, approaches and discursive strategies to reiterate the same messaging in new ways, over and over again. One strategy used by Suncor, perhaps the most locally entrenched company in Fort McMurray, is its their presence within the municipal infrastructure and the Regional Municipality of Wood Buffalo (RMWB). Suncor has produced ‘educational materials’ for the local public school system, free summer camp programming and free online learning tools for kids and youth promoting the industry and its interests. The company embeds itsself within the everyday infrastructure and culture of the settler community through various means, and thereby guarantees itself a social license to operate. Its self-directed sense of corporate social responsibility is obviously always in the best interest of their investors, as are all ‘social’ endeavors undertaken by transnational oil corporations. These processes of embedding corporate branding within communities where a perceived social license to operate enables more profitable extraction are strategic tools of neoliberal capitalism.

Impact Benefit Agreements (IBAs) are additional tools at the disposal of oil companies seeking to embed themselves within the fiber of local communities where oil and gas extraction, transportation and refining are active. Such agreements simultaneously ensure confidential deals with Indigenous communities whose traditional territories are the very source of their money.

Government Strategies of Corporate Support and Nationalist Discourse

In Canada, the state facilitates regulatory processes whereby formal licenses to operate are virtually guaranteed through a social and environmental impact assessment process (SEIA). SEIA is an international requirement for financing that is administered by both the provincial and federal governments. Additionally, the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act, 2012* (CEAA) which heavily constrains public participation (Zalik, 2015, p.2447-2448) legislates this neoliberal process. Supported internally by the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) and other industry run lobby groups and organizations, the regulatory processes for social, environmental, and jurisdictional approvals rarely place significant barriers to tar sands extraction, or to the expansion of existing tar sands projects. Mass mobilization, in the case of the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline project for instance, has proven the most effective way to intervene in the expansion of the tar sands industry and infrastructure (Adkin and Stendie, 2016). Regulatory processes can, however, be used strategically to stall projects, and as forums for Indigenous communities to express non-consent (even while the Crown always has the last word under settler colonial law despite its weak fiduciary duty).

McCreary, Mills and St-Armand (2016) discuss the strategic use of some of these environmental assessment (EA) processes to advance Indigenous communities' employment aims. The authors argue that with an overall increase in private negotiations between corporations and Indigenous communities, as neoliberalization shifts from state administered regulatory processes (and the costs associated with them) onto private companies and Indigenous communities themselves, "participation in EA

processes provides Aboriginal peoples a space to negotiate language around employment commitments and leverage to secure Aboriginal employment provisions in impact benefit agreements with project proponents” (p.212).

Several studies of the Canadian social and environmental regulatory process demonstrate how weak these systems are in their ability to actually address environmental concerns over climate change and the immensely carbon-intensive process of extracting and transporting bitumen (Zalik, 2015, 2016; McCreary, Mills, St-Armand, 2016; Lim, 2016). The failure of these processes of public participation and social and environmental review and regulation are not surprising as they are heavily influenced by oil and gas lobby groups like the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP). CAPP is also one of the primary sources of the oil and gas industry’s neoliberal discourse whose missions “on behalf of the Canadian upstream oil and gas industry, is to advocate for and enable economic competitiveness and safe, environmentally and socially responsible performance” (CAPP, ‘About Us’ 2015). CAPP defines their primary role as the following:

Working closely with our members, governments, communities and stakeholders, CAPP analyzes key oil and gas issues and represents member interests nationally in all of Canada's provinces and territories. We also strive to achieve consensus on industry codes of practice and operating guidelines that meet or exceed government standards. (ibid).

Representing a wide variety of companies that produce, develop and explore for natural gas and crude oil in Canada, CAPP’s membership produces approximately 90 per cent of Canada’s natural gas and crude oil and they boast, generate revenues of about \$120

billion a year (ibid). They also generate a massive amount of advertising, sponsored and often unmarked ‘Advertorials’ that aim to disguise paid ads as real news, sometimes without any visible disclaimer (Linnitt, 2014). They produce television commercials, newspaper and magazine ads, online ads, and have an extensive social media presence. They have trade marked the phrase “Responsible Canadian Energy” and produce annual reports on the industry and its narratives on the relationships with and impacts on people, air, water and land (CAPP, RCE 2015). The programs mission statement clearly states that its first goal is competitiveness (profits) and its second goal is “public confidence” (where the power of discourse and money align) (ibid).

In 2010 CAPP launched a multi-million-dollar branding campaign focused on the industry’s links to Canadians across the country called “Oil Sands Today”. One print advertisement attempted to link basic social service provisions to oil and gas industry revenues and to tar sands extraction more specifically with text stating “What do the Oil Sands mean to all Canadians? Want the answer in hospitals, schools, doctors or teachers?” (CAPP, Oils Sands Today, 2010). This text was accompanied by the image of a white child writing in a notebook, in front of a blackboard signaling to the public education system that the industry claims to indirectly fund through rents and industry taxation (see Image 11). With significant social media presence, the campaign sponsored a Walrus magazine panel discussions across the country and, as Simon Houpt of the *Globe and Mail* ‘Report on Business’ notes, this marketing scheme was echoed by the Harper government’s \$16.5 million advertising campaign on “responsible resource development” (Houpt, 2014).

What do the Oil Sands mean to all Canadians?
Want the answer in **hospitals, schools, doctors or teachers?**

Harnessing the oil sands will mean \$311 billion in revenue for the federal government over the next 25 years.* Money that can help pay for doctors, teachers, hospitals, schools and other things we value as Canadians. Our energy builds Canadian communities.

Energy at work for all Canadians.
A message from Canada's Oil Sands Producers. oilsandstoday.ca
The Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) represents member companies that produce over 90 per cent of Canada's natural gas and crude oil, including Canada's Oil Sands Producers.
*Source: CAPP 2011 Study 124

CAPP
CANADIAN ASSOCIATION OF PETROLEUM PRODUCERS

Image 11. CAPP advertisement, Oil Sands Today, 2010. From CAPP, 2010.

Individual companies also partook in similar rebranding campaigns, advertising tar sands oil and oil development as ‘responsible’ and ‘innovative’ by suggesting that the industry contributes to the production of things like prostheses and touch-screen tablets - all of which contain petrochemicals (Haupt, 2014). Cenovus, (formerly part of Encana Corporation) ran these types of advertisements in cinemas, printed full page advertisements in popular magazines such as Reader’s Digest, Today’s Parent, Chatelaine and others, focused on publications specifically aimed at Canadian women (ibid; Cenovus, ‘About Us’, n.d.). For this target audience, Cenovus chose to feature ultrasound machines in their ads as examples of the important contributions that the oil and gas industry were making to medical technology (again because they contain

petrochemicals). Ironically, petrochemicals and the associated toxins released into the air and ground water as particulate matter are directly linked to negative prenatal and neonatal health outcomes, as several studies have documented (Kelly et al. 2010, Frank et al., 2014). In 2010 with a team of other scientists, for instance, Professor David Schindler (Killam Memorial Professor of Ecology at the University of Alberta) published a study of air and water pollution from Alberta's oil sands extractive industries and its effects on the Athabasca River watershed. The 2010 study stated that "the oil sands industry releases the 13 elements considered priority pollutants (PPE) under the US Environmental Protection Agency's Clean Water Act, via air and water, to the Athabasca River and its watershed" (Kelly et al. 2010, p.16178). Cenovus's advertising campaign suggests instead that petrochemicals and petroleum products are so central to the development and production of new technologies that they contribute substantially to fetal and maternal health, as the oil and gas industry is about "more than fuel" (Cenovus, More Than Fuel, n.d.), (see Image 12). The industry's advertising strategies and discursive techniques shift attention from the increasingly well-known reality of environmental degradation linked specifically to tar sands extraction and to the oil and gas industry and burning of hydrocarbons more generally.

As many Indigenous people are intimately aware, petrochemicals are by no means the champions of fetal and maternal health in the Athabasca, Cold Lake and Peace River regions. Those communities who live downstream from the oil and gas industry's primary points of extraction are losing people to aggressive and rare cancers at unusually high rates (Candler et al. 2011). The Mikisew Cree First Nation and the Athabasca

Chipewyan First Nation have documented such occurrences and voiced their concerns over the environmental racism their communities face (ibid).

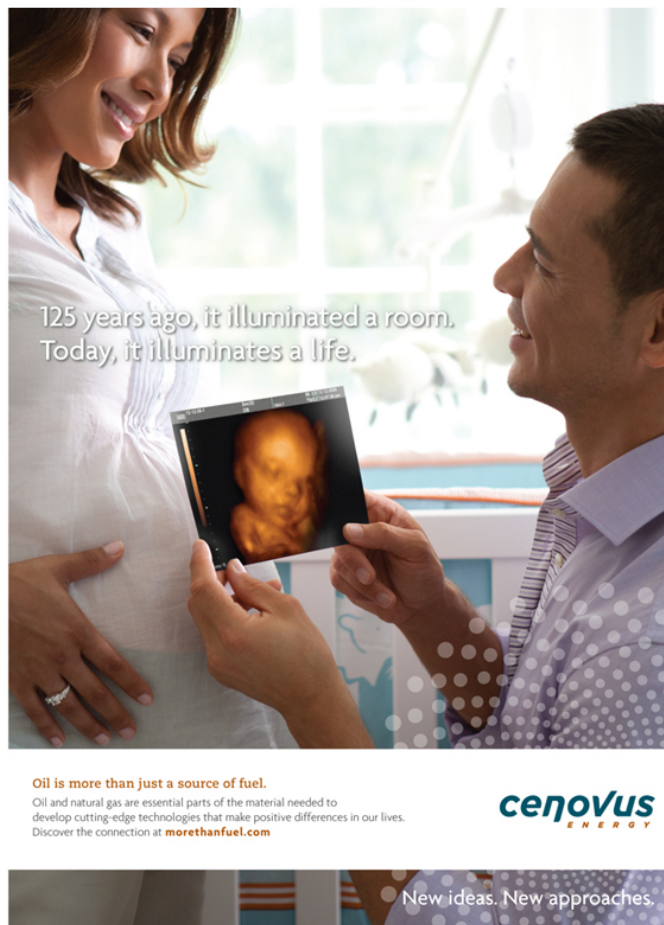


Image 12. Cenovus ‘More than Fuel’ ultrasound advertisement, From Cenovus, n.d.

Perhaps the most common messaging promoted by the industry and by both provincial and federal governments has been the rise in nationalistic discourse aimed at connecting tar sands extraction and production to ‘Canadianness’ itself. Like the imagery of the incubator promoted by Cenovus in 2010, their 2012 campaign was entitled “Canadian Ideas at Work” and attempted to position the energy-intensive bitumen

extracting process of steam-assisted gravity drainage “within a Canadian tradition of innovation and frontier exploration, from the railway to the Canadarm” (Houpt, 2014; Cenovus, Canadian Ideas At Work, n.d.). This is perhaps a fair comparison, as “frontier exploration” - including the building of the Canadian National Railways (CNR) and the tar sands mega-projects - continue forms of violent white settler colonialism that rely upon racialized cheap and flexible labour sources.

In a white settler state like Canada, processes to convert all lands, water and life into forms of capital or property through colonial means of commodification are crucial and happen through mercantilist and capitalist legal, political and social relations. These efforts to re-form relationships to land and to life (including non-human life) are present in all four types of ‘security’ I will discuss below, but the discursive approach to this project involves re-scripting the land as capital (as natural resource), and understanding property as a norm and a right of humanity. This notion is deeply embedded within liberal ideology and is part of a set of ideas entrenched in Western Europe throughout the enlightenment period and into the contemporary one, moving around the globe through colonial and capitalist circuits of knowledge production and exchange. Indeed, as Stuart Hall succinctly described in his 2011 article, ‘The Neo-liberal Revolution’, classic liberal economic and political theory came to dominate in England through a series of historical events including, but not limited to the following:

...the enclosures of common land, the agrarian revolution, the expansion of markets (in land, labour, agriculture and commodities) and the rise of the first commercial-consumer society in the eighteenth century. These developments arose on the back of British successes in war, naval

supremacy over continental rivals, the expansion of trade, especially with the East, the conquest of India and the high point in the colonial slave plantation economies, producing - often in conditions of un-free labour, violence and systemic degradation - commodities and profits for the metropolitan market... (p.708)

These conditions produced the now almost common sense ideals of freedom (in terms of the sale of goods between buyer and seller), equality (in terms of the free will of both buyer and seller), property, and 'Bentham' (i.e. possessive individualism and self-interest) (Hall 2011, p.709). These concepts developed into the 19th century and the industrial revolution, whereby "the 'disciplines' of waged labour, the factory system, the triumph of free trade, urbanization and the industrial slum, had Britain become the 'workshop of the world'" (ibid). As Canada supplied Britain with fur, cod, lumber and other raw staple goods for manufacturing in the metropole, these ideals formed central tenets in the development of the settler colony and its developing national identity as a white settler state (Innis 1930, 1946; Watkins 1963). With these liberal ideals greatly influencing approaches to colonization in the 'New World' and in Canada specifically, they also brought with them the inherent contradictions of liberalism. Hall describes these as "...progress, but simultaneously the need to contain any 'threat from below'; tolerance, reform, moderation and representative government for the English race, colonial governmentality, discipline, violence and authority for recalcitrant 'other' native peoples abroad; emancipation *and* subjugation" (2011, p.710).

By the late 19th century these ideals (and contradictions) shifted under the pressures of labour unions and the rise of the Keynesian welfare state and, as previously

discussed in Chapter Three, eventually became the targets of neoliberal reform. The renaissance of classical liberalism, albeit changed under the global conditions of the 20th and early 21st centuries, have meant transformations in a rhetoric that is already deeply entrenched within the colonial, settler colonial and post-colonial worlds.

In translating these ideas to different discursive forms and a different historical moment, neo-liberalism performs a massive work of trans-coding while remaining in sight of the lexicon on which it draws. It can do its dis-articulating and rearticulating work because these ideas have long been inscribed in social practices and institutions and sedimented into the ‘habitus’ of everyday life, common sense and popular consciousness - ‘traces without an inventory’. (Hall 2011, p.711)

While in the Canadian context this ‘common sense’ may not be the ‘common sense’ of many Indigenous peoples, it does fit with the neoliberal logic of much of the white settler population who, generally speaking, see private property as a normal sign of personal success and security. While private property remains a divisive and manipulative tool under conditions of continuing white settler colonialism, the privatization of reserve lands is presented to Indigenous communities as an opportunity for ‘progress’, economic ‘development’ and equalization with the settler population. Much like the assimilative goals expressed in *The White Paper, 1969*, attempts to market cultural genocide policy as economic development and progress are nothing new. The former Conservative majority government of Canada presented policies such as the *First Nations Property Ownership Act* (proposed in 2009 but not passed) which many Indigenous communities in Canada continue to fight against both through the court system and outside it through the

revitalization and continuation of traditional economic systems and relationships. The First Nations Property Ownership Initiative (FNPOI) is designed to convert reserve lands into private property owned by individuals and introduces a seismic shift in Indigenous legislation that would open up reserve land to non-Indigenous buyers and developers (Wingrove, 2012). The FNPOI has been further promoted through the government's 2012 Federal Budget Bill C-45, which advanced legislation required to turn this neoliberal settlement strategy into law. This legislation will be discussed further later in Chapter Five, however it is significant that the discursive tools of this neoliberal logic work to rationalize the further erosion of Indigenous collective rights and land access. According to a 2010 resolution by the Assembly of First Nations (AFN), land privatisation would 'impose the coloniser's model on our Peoples' (AFN in Wingrove, 2012). The AFN resolution describes property ownership as 'a concept that is in direct contradiction to first nation sacred responsibilities and distinct relationship to our territories' (ibid). This settlement strategy is only one of the destructive elements of Bill C-45 which is being resisted by Indigenous peoples and their allies through the #IdleNoMore movement, a movement that emerged in many ways as a response to the bill (Kino-nda-niimi Collective, 2014). That neoliberalism figures individual private property as a fundamental and necessary element of human progress, inevitably leads (within the structures of white settler colonialism) to an attack on collective rights and Indigenous self-determination and jurisdiction.

The discursive tools of classical liberalism and contemporary neoliberalism, which are again deeply inscribed in settler populations and the foundational ideals of the settler state, continue to structure everyday life in Canada. Normalized, this rhetoric

requires a critical approach that includes the explicit naming of neoliberalism, as naming it as such is as Hall (2011) states “politically necessary to give the resistance to its onward march content, focus and a cutting edge” (p.706). This same argument has been made for the term settler colonialism and its political potential to disrupt colonial norms, which are deeply embedded within settler states (Smith, 2010). Thus, when we critically approach extractive projects - such as the tar sands colossus - the language used to describe it and market it signals both of these historical and rhetorical politics.

Security discourse is often used in relation to the tar sands to signal a racialized image of the Canadian nation as essentially white (but ‘welcoming’ of particular multicultural others), and of other oil producing nations outside of the United States and Britain as non-white, and thus as ‘insecure’. According to these narratives, non-white oil exporters use their revenues to fund terrorism or corrupt and depraved dictatorships, as is demonstrated through the popular conservative lobbyist and public commentator Ezra Levant’s notion of ‘Ethical oil’ (Levant, 2011). As orientalist colonial knowledge production underlies the very notion of the contemporary ‘terrorist’, an almost-instant set of images deeply embedded within the colonial psyche appears in the form of a racialized Arab enemy of the white settler national community, a foreign non-white threat (Puar, 2007). This logic and rhetoric links oil and gas politics to anti-immigration movements, and in the context of U.S. settler colonialism “allows the United States to defend the logics of slavery and genocide as these practices enable it to stay ‘strong enough’ to fight these constant wars” (Smith, 2010, para.5). In the Canadian context, this orientalist logic combines with the genocidal logic of colonialism to justify the use of these counter-terrorism and national security measures targeting Indigenous leaders and environmental

groups, and racialized communities. Levant's 2011 book *Ethical Oil: The Case for Canada's Oil Sands*; and the Ethical Oil Institute (an oil industry lobby group with a strong online presence) constructs tar sands bitumen as the "'Fair Trade' choice in oil" in opposition to "conflict" oil from "politically oppressive" and "environmentally reckless regimes" (Ethical Oil, n.d.). Ethical Oil the organization goes on to valorize what they deem "ethical oil" practices, and argues that countries that produce "ethical oil" "protect the rights of women, workers, Indigenous peoples and other minorities including gays and lesbians" (ibid). In describing "conflict oil regimes" they remind their audience "some Conflict Oil regimes even support terrorism" (ibid) (see Figure 14).



Image 13. Ethical Oil advertisement "Conflict Oil vs. Ethical Oil". From EthicalOil.org, n.d.

Thus, while EthicalOil.org uses the depoliticized image of an Indigenous woman happily working in the tar sands (see Image 14), they can simultaneously represent Indigenous

claims to jurisdiction over the land and Indigenous resistance to extractive industries thereby ignoring their jurisdiction as forms of terrorism ‘at home’, justifying increased state and private security and surveillance.

Ethical Oil.org’s “Conflict Oil vs. Ethical Oil” campaign uses racist tropes to present an image of a white, ethical, carbon rich Canada that exists in opposition to the racialized, terrorist funding regimes of Other oil exporting nation-states. Under these conditions, Indigenous protectors and environmental resistance efforts become the terrorists ‘at home’, while overseas competition is characterized as ‘Conflict oil’, the foreign threat that justifies both wars abroad and further securitization ‘at home’. Racialization is particularly important to these discursive strategies, as they rely on normalized and almost automatic ideas and symbols of race to ‘fill in the blanks’ of these supposed threats. Additionally, race works to place the white settler subject at the invisible center of these discussions -acting as the universal citizen/subject in need of protection from both the internal threat, and from the external threat. Tar sands commodities have been characterized by the settler government and its private industry partners as features of ‘Canadianness’. As national commodities, tar sands extraction and transportation projects become national causes, ones that have the potential to incorporate wealth, security and solid ‘ethics’ firmly into the very identities of Canadian settlers themselves. Understanding what logics of white supremacy are operating in this context of mega-extraction permits settlers in particular, to better understand some of the contemporary mechanisms of white settler colonialism and their relation to its continuance. As the discursive tools used to produce and re-produce these mechanisms

shift over time and space, forms of vigilant critical reading are required to decipher when and where white settler colonial logics and processes hide and thrive.

These racist depictions work in tandem with their more recent campaign “OPEC Hates Gays” (see Image 15), which represents white Canada as a liberal paradise for gay people, a homonational safe haven. Oppositionally of course, all racialized oil producers are characterized as brutally homophobic, repressive and backward.



Image 14. Ethical Oil advertisement ‘OPEC Hates Gays’. From Ethical Oil, 2016.

Based on the EthicalOil.com logo, this image depicts a rainbow coloured oil drop to symbolize ‘Canadian’ tar sands oil being extracted from a country that protects and ensures same-sex rights as opposed to oil producing nations who do not have such legislation and protections in place for lesbian, gay, bi-sexual, trans and queer (LGBTQ) citizens. As Kouri-Towe (2011) explains,

Homonationalism couples the idea of normative claims from homosexual subjects into state inclusion with mobilizations of liberal and normative

sexual minorities as exceptional subjects in the state in opposition to queer deviants. Put more simply, homonationalism is the process where some queers (mostly upper-middle-class and rich gay men and women) gain acceptance and status in Canadian (or American) society through consumerism, economic mobility, and the securing of individual rights, such as gay marriage. By appealing to the rights of the individual (rather than collective rights) and turning to the state for inclusion instead of mobilizing in opposition to the state, we have entered into an era where some queers have gained admission into the dominant social, political, and economic order. (n.p.)

Within these white settler colonial contexts, homonationalism also functions to reinforce and reiterate ongoing colonial violence through these discourses of neoliberal inclusion (Puar, 2007; Kouri-Towe, n.d.). Inclusion in this case, however, is limited and conditional upon one's ability to mimic white settler, capitalist, heteronormative, nationalist ideals. In this case, EthicalOil.org is using homonationalist discourse in order to produce an image of non-Canadian oil producers as the enemies of the white settler nation-state. Another organization relying on homonationalist discourse to promote the Alberta tar sands is the Canada Oil Sands Community (a group advocating for the industry primarily through social media). A poster created by the group's founder, Robbie Picard drew mainstream media attention when published online promoting Canada's "hot lesbians" as evidence of Canadian benevolence in contrast to Saudi Arabia's anti-LGBTQ legislation (see Image 16) (Gerson, 2016; Morgensen, 2011). The advertisement is geared towards those who see lesbians as 'hot', not at lesbians

themselves or at those potentially investing in the tar sands regardless of sexual orientation. It specifically encourages the sexual objectification of queer women by (presumably) straight men. The advertisement is directed at the ‘ideal’ Canadian subject: the straight, white, male tar sands consumer who is positioned oppositionally to racialized Orientalist subjects who “don’t think lesbians are hot”, a statement meant to emasculate ultimately through a homophobic gesture suggesting that Saudi Arabians are not properly heterosexual (Gerson, 2016).



Image 15. Canada Oil Sands Community, ‘Hot Lesbians’. From Gerson, 2016.

These two campaigns demonstrate the intersectional power of race, sexuality, neoliberal ideology, nationalism and capitalist ‘resource’ extraction within a white settler context, and operationalize this intersection at the service of the tar sands industry. Relying on

Orientalist tropes of the racialized and homophobic and/or homosexual terrorist Other, these campaigns are inherently violent as they reinforce a racialized, sexualized and gendered hierarchy of human value, all at the service of racial extractivism.

Marketing Canada as the benevolent nation protecting “women, workers, Indigenous peoples and other minorities including gays and lesbians” (Ethical Oil, n.d.), the daily violence experienced by many of these groups under the neoliberal Canadian state are completely overlooked and erased. This discourse prevails even while the Canadian state continues to attract global condemnation for its treatment of Indigenous communities and Indigenous women and girls in particular, and its total lack of accountability for those injustices (see, for instance, the report released in 2014 by, James Anaya, the UN Special Rapporteur on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples [United Nations, 2015]; and Amnesty International’s No More Stolen Sisters campaign [Amnesty, 2014]). Discourses of a benevolent Canada and a benevolent oil and gas industry create a counter-narrative whereby those opposing racial extractivism are characterized by the oil and gas industry, its private security contractors and by the Alberta provincial and Canadian federal governments as dangerous national security threats, and while there has been a shift in discursive strategies used by the current Federal Liberal party, and Alberta Provincial NDP (as opposed to the previous ruling Conservative party at both levels of government), investment in and partnership with the oil industry remains strong.

Discourses of Ethical and Secure Investment

As a normalizing discursive process that seeks to secure access to capital (land), these strategies are present in both legislative discourses and in the forms of surveillance and

criminalization discussed herein. Additionally, settler colonial logic informs the financial discourses that attempt to represent Canada as a ‘secure’ place to invest money. This representational practice is perhaps the sole responsibility of the former Conservative government’s Ministry of Natural Resources Canada - a bureaucratic institution that dealt with resources already under provincial jurisdiction. Essentially, this ministry generated the ‘spin’ required to support the oil and gas industry, mining industry and other major extractive sectors. It provides a centralized site for the development and management of discourse on the extractive industries in Canada and works closely with the private sector to identify which messaging is most needed and effective. For example, an April 2015 press release from the ministry states that at the Bloomberg Future of Energy Summit in New York, Greg Rickford, Canada’s then Minister of Natural Resources

...reinforced Canada’s support for a continental approach to enhancing energy security, economic growth and the environment. Canada represents a secure, reliable and responsible producer and supplier of energy to the world. During his address, Minister Rickford emphasized Canada’s economic fundamentals and the Harper Government’s actions creating one of the world’s most favourable investment climates by lowering taxes and opening new markets through free trade agreements. (MNR, 2015)

The press release goes on to boast, “there are already 70 pipelines delivering oil and gas across the Canada–U.S. border every day —safely and reliably. Canada's overall tax rate on new business investment is the lowest in the G7” (ibid). This very selective information about energy and investment security, low corporate tax rates and the safety of oil and gas pipelines delivers the neoliberal settler colonial agenda while drawing

attention away from the social, political and environmental costs of these projects. These discourses externalise the costs and impacts of environmental degradation –including oil spills, impacts on human, animal and environmental health, and on Indigenous sovereignty and jurisdiction, as these fall fundamentally outside the realm of economic calculation when promoting investment.

These very real ‘insecurities’ do exist for investors in the Canadian oil and gas sector and appear whenever companies or the provincial and/or federal governments end up in lengthy court battles with Indigenous communities who resist the encroachment of extractive industries on their lands (causing major delays in productivity or project execution); when protests to these projects often lead to judicial interference on the road to efficient extraction; or when pressure for more public participation in extractive projects requires lengthy (and costly) consultation processes (even if these are mere public relations strategies and cannot lead to any impactful public input or to the right of communities to oppose the project in question). As potential risk factors are calculated by the industry’s insurers, it is also valuable information for investors.

These concerns reveal why activism geared towards investors is particularly effective within neoliberal settler states. While fossil fuel divestment campaigns are gaining more traction beyond university campuses, similar work geared directly at the companies working in the tar sands is coming under increasing national security scrutiny. As the language of anti-terrorism increasingly includes any actions with the potential to disrupt the Canadian economy or energy sector specifically (see for example the *Jobs and Growth Act, 2012* - also known as Bill C-31 discussed in the following chapter), the mobilization of this terminology and associated legal regimes are used to target those

supplying this information to potential or current investors in the sector. Under the guise of protecting the energy sector from “eco-terrorism”, this rhetoric produces a home-grown version of the racialized terrorist that casts a net so wide that it includes almost any Indigenous person speaking out publicly against the former Harper government’s pro-extraction regime.

Racial Extractivism and the Temporary Foreign Worker Program

The Federal Government’s Temporary Foreign Worker program and its provincially administered sister-program, Alberta’s Provincial Nominee program exist in order to facilitate access to a flexible labour supply required for various industries (Curry, 2017; Hipwell et. al, 2002). For the oil and gas industry in the Athabasca region to operate profitably, access to a relatively cheap and flexible labour supply is needed. In relation to the lower paying jobs, reports of worker abuse have been documented and have resulted in proposed changes to the program including for stronger government protections (Curry, 2017). Continually working to promote a free market logic and racial extractivism, unhindered access to traditional Indigenous territories is needed as are low-wage unskilled labourers, whose necessary work is undervalued in order to off-set some of the costs of high-wage unionized skilled labour. Oil and gas industry working in the region and the many industries interrelated to it are represented by lobby groups¹² who work with provincial and federal governments to shape legislation in their favour. These industry representatives hold significant power in relation to the Alberta and Canadian governments as the capital they generate returns to those governments by way of rents,

taxation, job creation, and foreign investment in the region, and by way of more general economic stimulation via the many inter-related industries connected to tar sands extraction. Therefore, lobby groups such as CAPP work to structure the institutions of the white settler state and the flow of migration (particularly of racialized low-wage workers).

As a Crown corporation, the Canadian National Railway company (CNR) (which was privatized in 1995) was an essential tool of white settlement and racial extractivism by way of transportation. The railway's tracks were laid primarily by 17 000 male Chinese labourers who performed the most dangerous work, were denied basic human rights or livable working conditions, and whose families were eventually subject to head taxes and then the Exclusion Act of 1923, barring Chinese citizens from even entering Canada. By comparison, temporary foreign workers (TFWs) today cannot apply for Canadian permanent residency or Canadian citizenship (Government of Canada, CIC, 2015). As a 2013 Canadian Union of Public Employees (CUPE) statement describes,

Most temporary foreign workers in Canada under an LMO do not have access to immigration and citizenship. Only workers under the Live In Caregiver stream and those covered by some collective agreements have access to a pathway to landed status. The opportunity for landed status is important for workers who become more than just “temporary” and so that the worker can move more easily between employers once in Canada.

(CUPE, 2013)

The statement goes on to note that, “Canada is the only country in the world that allows employers complete control over which workers can come and work in Canada. The only

other country to do this was Apartheid South Africa” (ibid). The program - revamped by the Federal government in 2013 - revoked temporary foreign workers’ access to employment insurance even though they continue to pay into these program (ibid), and while the current federal government continues to revamp the program, migrant labour programs have historically remained structurally exploitative in nature. Like the workers who built the Canadian railway system, these TFWs are subject to a completely different set of labour conditions than those with Canadian citizenship or permanent residency (Government of Canada, CIC, 2015).

As a process, racialization works to naturalize this inequality by suggesting that these workers are essentially ‘different’, not the ideal tax-paying Canadians who are entitled to protections and rights, but non-white Others who are lucky to have access to the jobs in the first place. These messages work to racialize TFWs and ‘whiten’ Canada’s self-image; help keep tar sands extraction profitable; and secure a massive labour supply that is flexible or easy to lay-off and deport when the market is slow. As Harsha Walia (2010) writes,

In Canada, migrant worker programmes involve being tied to the importing employer; low wages, often below the official minimum, and long hours with no overtime pay; dangerous working conditions; crowded and unhealthy accommodation; denial of access to public healthcare and employment insurance, despite paying into the programmes; and being virtually held captive by employers or contractors who seize identification documents. (p. 72)

She goes on to describe how their very precarious and fleeting legal status creates conditions of extreme vulnerability, where abuse is common, and where “any assertion of their rights leads not only to contract termination but also deportation. Migrant workers thus represent the ‘perfect workforce’ in an era of evolving global capital-labour relations: commodified and exploitable; flexible and expendable” (ibid). As many scholars of migration and labour have observed private corporations work closely with public legislators to craft a labour market system that fits perfectly within Canadian white settler colonial neoliberalism, and particularly well in service of the oil and gas industry (Lenard and Straehle, 2012; Sharma, 2012, Labban, 2014).

The Temporary Foreign Worker program and its provincially administered sister-program, Alberta’s Provincial Nominee program require close relationships between the private and public sectors in order to administer these programs and have them serve a fluctuating economy and global oil and gas market. Private industry labour policies and discourses also target Indigenous communities in their own particular ways and are crucial components of neoliberal white settler colonialism, which uses free market logic to attempt securing unhindered access to traditional Indigenous territories. Certainly, through the embedding of oil and gas corporations and their targeted discourses within the daily lives of these communities, (and with particular messaging aimed at most non-Native communities throughout Canada) the discursive strategies of contemporary neoliberal white settler colonialism are further normalized. This normalized discursive power is combined with the racialized criminalization of dissent to tar sands extraction and the pipeline networks the industry requires, and with the securitization of the industry

in Canada, ultimately representing a distinct but familiar platform for white settler colonial violence to present itself (Monaghan & Walby, 2012; Pannetta, 2015).

These workers, locally referred to as TFWs, are essential to the industry's survival and profitability and require yet another type of neoliberal discourse to facilitate the normalization and acceptance of this type of exploitative labour. Those seeking work inside Canadian borders, whose home governments work in cooperation with the industry and the Canadian government, are provided temporary cross-border mobility to supply the mega- project with a source of flexible labour that can be imported and exported at the will of the oil corporations. TFWs are seen as a relatively cheap labour supply, easy to lay off or deport, and willing to do lower paid unskilled labour in the industry and in the surrounding service sectors (de Guerre, 2009; Perry, 2014). The current Employment Minister Patty Hajdu, who had previously stated that she felt that the program should be shut down, recently stated, "I don't share the perspective that it should be shut down. I think it definitely needs to be improved," and added that her government had met with "a number of temporary foreign workers who had found themselves in very precarious positions, so I am very seized of the issue" (Hajdu in Curry, 2017).

As an essential part of racial extractivism, TFWs serve as part of the racialized low wage labour force that is required for profitable 'resource extraction', while simultaneously serving as a scapegoat population whose presence can inspire discourses of racial crisis and the requisite assertions of white Canadian national identity that follow. Unlike the exalted white settler subjects portrayed by Thobani (2007), the crisis narratives that arise in response to the presence of TFWs is part of the

larger crisis of immigration, or a racial crisis. She notes that the ultimate threat that these racialized workers pose is a racial one, “threatening the erosion of white supremacy” through enfranchisement (Thobani, 2007, p.72). Therefore, business discourse surrounding TWFs centers around the importance of accessing their labour for the sake of the national tar sands economy but also on ensuring that they leave once it is no longer needed. This remains the case even with a Liberal federal government whose official discourse appears less conservative than the previous government, but whose policies and practices have proven to be extremely similar and very supportive of tar sands extraction and the TFW program. Like the discourses of “ethical oil” and secure foreign investment, or benevolent tar sands extraction and industrial innovation, all of these discursive approaches facilitate the maintenance of profitability of a system of racial extractivism that functions on a massive and destructive scale.

Chapter Five: Neoliberal Security, Securitization¹³ and Surveillance

In the Athabasca region, transnational oil and gas companies work closely with the federal and provincial governments and other stakeholders (including private security firms) to contain and manage dissent to ‘resource’ extraction and to the ‘resourceification’ of Indigenous lands. As pipeline routes, oil tankers, rail lines and refineries exist and extend into regions far from the Athabasca, Cold Lake and Peace River area, managing dissent to tar sands extraction becomes a global endeavor that also facilitates and works towards global investor confidence in these mass—scale extraction projects. Oil and gas companies, the federal and many provincial and territorial governments encourage Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in Canada to view the industry as an empowering opportunity for nation-building and individual economic progress. Oil and gas industry advocates like Ezra Levant have used discourses of ‘ethical oil’ (Levant, 2011), for instance, are used to make neoliberal racial extractivism more palatable within the context of white neoliberal multiculturalism. These discourses operate by linking racialized foreign oil to terrorism and then compare these discourses to a contrived fantasy of ‘ethical’ oil and gas extraction, regardless of the fact that it is primarily the exact same transnational companies operating in both contexts (Andragi, 2011; Walsh, 2014; Neal, 2012; Dillon, 2007; Agathangelou et al., 2008; Razack, 2008; Pasternak et al., 2013).

Having traced the rise of neoliberalism, its discursive tools, and its impacts on the oil and gas industry in Canada and in the Athabasca region more specifically, this chapter now turns to the questions of security, securitization and criminalization that emerge from

that context and which come to mark contemporary politics and discourses of extraction and ongoing settlement. What does security mean in this neoliberal, white settler colonial context? Furthermore, what do these state and private corporate discourses of securitization tell us about contemporary racial extractivism? These questions will first be explored through the brief examination of two pieces of legislation and one proposed piece of legislation that aim to address various forms of extractive security and insecurity, and that in some cases result in the criminalization of opposition to tar sands extraction. These are the former Conservative federal government's *Jobs and Growth Act (2012)*; *Bill C-51 or the Anti-terrorism Act (2015)*; and *the First Nations Property Ownership Act (proposed in 2009)*. Next, private oil and gas company surveillance practices and their relationship to state surveillance networks will be analyzed as central tools of neoliberal security and racial extractivism in the tar sands. Surveillance practices go hand in hand with the criminalization of those surveilled, and for Indigenous peoples who are massively over-represented in the Canadian prison system, criminalization and incarceration serve the white settler colonial imperative of Indigenous elimination (see Razack, 2015). One additional strategy used to address white settler anxieties to secure unrestricted access to Indigenous land is through the depoliticization of Indigenous communities and leaders, a discursive strategy highlighted during the wake of the Idle No More movement through campaign to discredit former Attawapiskat Chief Theresa Spence. As she posed a significant and powerful threat to the Canadian white settler state's continued project of Indigenous elimination, the financial records of her band office came under strict review and scrutiny in order to delegitimize her as a political leader. Depoliticization operates discursively when Indigenous communities are

described as cultural entities and not as politically empowered nations capable of self-government, self-determination, and as the legitimate holders of jurisdictional authority on and across Turtle Island.

Chapter Three traced how neoliberal free market norms were primarily born in the U.S. context as a backlash to the empowerment of the principally white, male settler labour movement and the increasing pressures it placed on the private sector to take responsibility for work place safety and to respect newly developed labour standards. As companies saw their labour and production costs rise domestically they sought to deregulate labour markets and open their businesses up to a global marketplace where an international division of labour could greatly increase profits and where post-war ravaged Europe and many newly post-colonial nation-states would surely invite the arrival of U.S. capital. The geopolitics of the post-World War II period gave the United States and its business leaders the leverage they needed to craft the global financial institutions necessary to facilitate such a global capitalist economy, and thus the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and World Bank were designed and established. Intimately tied to the U.S. economy and political climate, the Canadian state (amongst others) followed suit in neoliberal development and began processes of deregulation and privatization, which facilitated the rise of global capitalism into the 1970s. These conditions, in conjunction with the 'oil shock' of the early 1970's, created narratives of crisis and energy scarcity thus facilitating the rooting of a popular logic of global free market economics. While these narratives were resisted, and continue to be resisted, the hegemonic power of this popular logic and its systemic and institutional embedding have proved to be resilient and dominating.

Working in conjunction with the logic of white settler colonialism, neoliberalism in the Canadian context has, since its inception, been deeply enmeshed with and inseparable from colonialism. As co-produced norms and beliefs now widely held by white settlers, notions of rights, entitlements and expectations of both the state and of the private sector are grounded in the individualized, competitive, privatized, and propertied notions of neoliberal thought. Additionally, this nexus of neoliberalism and white settler colonialism produced and continues to produce particular conceptions of what it means to be a Canadian citizen, and what national identity looks like, involves and requires. Of course, many critical race scholars have stressed how whiteness is central to these conceptions of the ideal, “exalted subject” (Thobani, 2007), the ‘old stock’ Canadian (Edwards, 2015), or “*Canadian-Canadian*” (Mackey, 1999, p.3) citizen, and thus how race, racism and racialization intersect with other sources of power in producing the settler nation-state and its subjects (also see Razack, 2002; Razack et al., 2010; Walcott, 1997; McKittrick, 2006).

Neoliberal discursive strategies in Canada link the power of free market rhetoric with the white settler colonial language of a multicultural Canada that is open for ‘secure’ and ‘ethical’ extractive business. For the oil and gas sector, and for the tar sands extractors and related industries in particular, this myth of the white fraternity of nations has helped market Canadian bitumen as ‘ethical’ oil, despite its energy, water and carbon intensive extraction methods and its decimation of huge parts of Treaty 8 and Treaty 6 territories. This neoliberal rhetoric is what I will refer to here as securing through discursive strategy. This strategy attempts to secure access to land as capital through symbolic tactics aimed at promoting industry interests and normalizing these interests as

economically necessary, amongst other things. These symbolic tactics are examined here in the advertisements and promotional materials of organizations like Ethical Oil, the Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP), by federal Ministers promoting investment in the industry, and by political economists who themselves ultimately reproduce the logics that underpin these discursive strategies. As part of a white “fraternity” (Anderson, 1983, p.203) of rich, secular nation states, the image and persona of current Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau operates skillfully within the context of sustained neoliberal capitalism and ongoing white settler colonialism. Combining the aims of racial extractivism with the image of a youthful white liberal (who even has Haida imagery tattooed on his body), anxieties about his father’s assimilationist approach to indigeneity in Canada are quelled and a more contemporary neoliberal and consumable approach to the same project is achieved. While Justin Trudeau’s administration pushes forward on pipelines projects such as the Kinder Morgan Trans Mountain pipeline, (which crosses into unceded Indigenous territories and has been actively resisted by Indigenous communities along the pipeline route), racial extractivism remains intact under an updated neoliberal symbolic and discursive order.

David Harvey (2005) writes, “Neoliberalism has, in short, become hegemonic as a mode of discourse. It has pervasive effects on ways of thought to the point where it has become incorporated into the common-sense way many of us interpret, live in, and understand the world” (p.3). Neoliberal logics form part of contemporary settler “structures of feeling” (Williams, 1977) that shape one’s perceptions of reality, of oneself, and of the land one lives on and in relation to. As hegemonic relationships then, both neoliberalism and white settler colonialism remain powerful due partially to their

abilities to reiterate themselves to the point of normalization. Through everyday non-Native norms, imagery, discourses, symbols and indeed feelings, the comfort that comes with the repeated and familiar messaging risks foreclosing the potential for comfort with or attachment to that which is ‘unfamiliar’ - Indigenous sovereignty, jurisdiction and territoriality, for instance. While white settler comfort with and attachment to Indigenous authority is not and should not be the aim of decolonization movements, or of Indigenous resurgence, white settler norms, habits and identities cannot remain tied to the theft and commodification of Indigenous land and life. Legislation that facilitates its systemic and structural survival is a key element in the continued embedding of colonial violence. The former Conservative federal government’s *Jobs and Growth Act* (2012) provides a clear example of this tool of colonial violence and of the types of resistance it elicits, such as the Idle No More Movement and Indigenous peoples’ assertions of jurisdiction over their lands.

The Jobs and Growth Act (2012)

The Conservative federal government’s 2012 omnibus budget bill, Bill C-45, later called the *Jobs and Growth Act* (2012) massively weakened and in many ways cases did away with environmental protection measures standing in the way of oil and gas extraction and pipeline routes. Significant in its far-reaching scope, the bill is over 500 pages long and amends over sixty pieces of legislation including *the Indian Act* all at once (Foote, 2012). In order to better facilitate the privatization and leasing of collectively held reserve lands, for instance, the *Indian Act* (1985) was amended through this omnibus bill

without consultation with Indigenous peoples. Furthermore, the *Jobs and Growth Act* removed environmental protections for thousands of waterways throughout Canada through its amendments to the *Navigable Waters Protection Act*.

Division 8., section 4 of the Act states the following:

39.1 A designation is valid if it is made to Her Majesty, is assented to by a majority of the electors of the band voting at a referendum held in accordance with the regulations, is recommended to the Minister by the council of the band and is accepted by the Minister. (...)

40. A proposed absolute surrender that is assented to by the band in accordance with section 39 shall be certified on oath by the superintendent or other officer who attended the meeting and by the chief or a member of the council of the band and then submitted to the Governor in Council for acceptance or refusal. (...)

40.1 (1) A proposed designation that is assented to in accordance with section 39.1 shall be certified on oath by an officer of the Department and by the chief or a member of the council of the band. (...)

(2) On the recommendation of the council of the band, the proposed designation shall be submitted to the Minister who may accept or reject it.

(Government of Canada, 2012, *Jobs and Growth Act*, p.208)

This section was vehemently opposed by Indigenous communities who recognized the amendment as a violation of their treaty rights to collectively held reserve lands as it did away with the requirement that a majority of the majority vote in favour of “a proposed absolute surrender” before such a motion is able to be passed. This amendment made it easier for those wishing to sell or lease collectively held lands to private companies or parties to do so. In response to this, and to the *Act*'s amendments to *the Navigable Waters Protection Act*, Indigenous peoples on Turtle Island rallied with their allies worldwide against further destruction of the land, water and to Indigenous communities and their inherent jurisdiction through the #IdleNoMore movement. As then NDP MP Anne Minh-Thu Quach noted in the House of Commons: ‘Before this bill, all waterways in Canada were automatically protected by the government, which was responsible for the common good. From now on, less than 1% of our waterways will be protected.’ (Minh-Thu Quach, 2012). Water protection remains a major concern for Indigenous Nations across Turtle Island, and particularly for those in the Athabasca region whose water sources are threatened at the extraction sites, such as the Athabasca Chipewyan First Nation (ACFN) who have called for health and environmental monitoring of tar sands projects for decades (Vasey et. al., 2013). Because tar sands extraction also uses mass amounts of water in the process of separating the oil from the clay and sand, mass water withdrawals have altered the water cycle of the Athabasca River basin (Black, D’Arcy, Russell, and Weis 2014, 2014, p.9). Additionally, the steamed bitumen from in situ extraction pollutes the water tables, and tailings ponds containing chemicals such as corrosive naphthenic acid and cancer-causing alkyl-substituted polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbon, leach and runoff into the earth (ibid, see also Kelly et al., 2010; Kelly et al.,

2009). Again, Part 4, Division 18 of the *Jobs and Growth Act* (2012) simply removed any and all protective mechanisms from thousands of rivers, streams and waterways and effectively transferring all discretionary power regarding industrial activities (such as pipeline projects) that transverse, disrupt or interfere with waterways up to private corporations themselves.

This neoliberal settler legislation created a sense of great urgency among many to halt these contemporary settlement practices, to longstanding practices of environmental racism and to re-envision relations between Indigenous communities and the wider non-Indigenous Canadian public. Aided by social media and by Twitter in particular, and in response to the omnibus budget bill, #IdleNoMore was born – a diffuse and flexible call to action. The movement's name #IdleNoMore was coined by four women in Saskatchewan (Jessica Gordon, Sheelah McLean, Sylvia McAdams and Nina Wilsonfeld) resisting the bill (Charleyboy, 2013). Soon after, the name was taken up by Attawapiskat First Nation Chief Theresa Spence who began a hunger strike on 11 December 2012 to mobilize against the federal government's numerous ongoing treaty violations, Bill C-45, and the neglect and chronic underfunding of Indigenous communities like Attawapiskat First Nation.

Those living on reserve at Attawapiskat First Nation regularly live under boil-water orders (Levasseur and Marcoux, 2014), in substandard overcrowded housing and without proper health care or education systems in place, while De Beers mines diamonds from their traditional lands. Chief Spence, who survived her hunger strike on fish broth and medicinal tea for over forty-four days, was demanding a meeting between Indigenous leaders, the Governor General (who represents the Crown) and the Prime Minister. This

meeting was never granted (Smith, 2013), and ultimately Chief Spence was advised to end her hunger strike while the #IdleNoMore movement continued on in multiple forms (see Kino-nda-niimi Collective [ed.], 2014). The *Jobs and Growth Act (2012)* legislatively removed many of the regulatory mechanisms put in place by previous settler governments to protect water in particular, a main cause of concern for Indigenous communities in the Athabasca River Basin and all along the west and international pipelines routes that transport bitumen to refineries and onto markets. Water is threatened across Turtle Island as a direct result of ‘resource’ extraction projects, as the notion of environmental racism suggests, racialized communities bear the brunt of the negative and harmful effects of this. In Canada, over 150 First Nation communities live under official water advisories (a number which has climbed over the last ten years) (Levasseur and Marcoux, 2014), many rely on bottled water and under boil water advisories. Bathing their children in potentially toxic water, eating fish and meat that have also been contaminated by polluted water, many Indigenous communities fear for their lives and futures as attempts to continue practices of fishing, hunting and living in relation to traditional territories all come under threat due to water pollution (see Murdocca, 2010). *The Jobs and Growth Act 2012* is a tool of systemic and structural white settler colonialism and serves continued processes of settler colonial rule that commonsensically deny Indigenous jurisdiction and respect of land, water and life. This neoliberal legislation facilitates free market access to Indigenous territories and furthers processes of commodification. Its role in removing environmental protective measures as part of a larger trend of deregulation and blatant disrespect for the earth represent yet another site of the denial of Indigenous jurisdiction and the promotion of private capital.

However, the legislation also failed, as white settler colonialism always does, to erase that jurisdictional power or to quell Indigenous political resistance to this form of colonial violence. Indeed, Indigenous-led resistance to the Act and to what is represented was strong, sustained, and asserted Indigenous authority in spaces beyond Canadian borders, having rippling global effects. The power of the Idle No More movement and its assertions of Indigenous authority and strength in turn elicited a sense of fear and threat that was used by the coercive arm of the settler state, its police, RCMP, national security and spy agencies to gain additional resources and powers through further legislation discussed in the following section. *The Anti-terrorism Act (2015)* sought (amongst many other things) to ‘securitize’ the oil and gas industry, and further criminalize opposition to it.

Bill C-51, Anti-terrorism Act (2015)

In addition to the *Jobs and Growth Act* (2012), the oil and gas industry and the tar sands extraction projects in particular are further supported through the more recent Bill C-51, now known as the *Anti-terrorism Act (2015)* - legislation which identifies “activity that undermines the security of Canada” as anything that interferes with the economic or financial stability of Canada or with the country’s critical infrastructure (Parliament of Canada, 2015; McCarthy, 2015). *The Anti-terrorism Act (2015)* gave the Canadian Security and Intelligence Service (CSIS) increased capacity to take measures to reduce what it perceives to be threats to the security of Canada and became law on June 18th, 2015 under the then majority Conservative government (Parliament of Canada, 2015).

The *Anti-terrorism Act (2015)* contains broad changes to the criminal code, to sentencing laws and to official definitions of terrorism which embolden national security forces and their partners across scales of law enforcement, to expand their notions of ‘threat’ against the oil and gas industry, for instance. The full title of the *Act* is ‘*An Act To Enact The Security Of Canada Information Sharing Act And The Secure Air Travel Act, To Amend The Criminal Code, The Canadian Security Intelligence Service Act And The Immigration And Refugee Protection Act And To Make Related And Consequential Amendments To Other Acts*’. In its opening ‘Interpretations’ section which provides definitions of key terms used throughout the legislation, “activity that undermines the security of Canada ” is defined as follows:

...any activity, including any of the following activities, if it undermines the sovereignty, security or territorial integrity of Canada or the lives or the security of the people of Canada: (a) interference with the capability of the Government of Canada in relation to intelligence, defence, border operations, public safety, the administration of justice, diplomatic or consular relations, or the economic or financial stability of Canada; (b) changing or unduly influencing a government in Canada by force or unlawful means; (c) espionage, sabotage or covert foreign influenced activities; (d) terrorism; (e) proliferation of nuclear, chemical, radiological or biological weapons; (f) *interference with critical infrastructure*; (g) interference with the global information infrastructure, as defined in section 273.61 of the National Defence Act; (h) an activity that causes serious harm to a person or their property because of that person ’s

association with Canada; and (i) an activity that takes place in Canada and undermines the security of another state. For greater certainty, it does not include advocacy, protest, dissent and artistic expression. (Government of Canada, *Anti-terrorism Act*, p.2) emphasis added)

When ‘security’ is understood to include and even centralize economic or financial stability or protection in a white settler state, ensuring profitability, easy access to extractable ‘resources’ and their delivery to the market, this ultimately means protecting colonial land grabs. Ensuring the uninterrupted stripping and ‘resourceification’ of Indigenous lands here means using the coercive force of the state as part of a neoliberal partnership with private corporations as a united force against Indigenous sovereignty and in this case, coalitional environmental activism as well. The oil and gas industry in Canada and their interests cannot be read as separate from the aims of legislation like the *Anti-terrorism Act (2015)*. In fact, leaked RCMP documents accessed by Greenpeace further reveal the settler state’s intimate security and intelligence relationship to the oil and gas industry.

Greenpeace obtained the leaked RCMP intelligence assessment in February of 2015. Entitled, ‘Criminal Threats to the Canadian Petroleum Industry’ the report states, There is a growing, highly organized and well-financed anti-Canada petroleum movement that consists of peaceful activists, militants and violent extremists who are opposed to society’s reliance on fossil fuels [...] If violent environmental extremists engage in unlawful activity, it jeopardizes the health and safety of its participants, the general public and the natural environment. (Bronskill, 2015)

The report is stamped “protected/Canadian eyes only” and is dated January 24, 2014 - therefore preceding the January 30th, 2015 introduction of Bill C-51 (later the *Anti-terrorism Act*). Though this report characterizes these threats as ‘criminal’, the report demonstrated the specific concern of Canadian security intelligence in protecting the industry, and as Monaghan and Walby (2015) discuss, security intelligence in Canada is always interconnected with anti-terrorism intelligence networks.

While the *Anti-terrorism Act (2015)* and the legislative debates surrounding it mobilize the Islamophobic archetype of the non-white terrorist within the popular imaginations of the Canadian public, these imagined threats are then transferred onto images of environmental and Indigenous activists who have the potential to disrupt the marketability and profitability of current and future tar sands projects. This transference is part of what Monaghan and Walby (2012) discuss in their analysis of the creation of contemporary ‘terror identities’ within Canadian security intelligence. The authors trace the restructuring of the Canadian anti-terror intelligence networks in the period leading up to the 2010 Winter Olympics, the G8/G20 meetings, and the scheduled but ultimately cancelled Northern American Leaders Summit (2012). This restructuring resulted in the creation of Integrated Security Units (ISUs) and the Integrated Threat Assessment Centre (ITAC), which were modeled after ‘fusion centers’ in the United States (Monaghan and Walby, p. 132). These integrated intelligence mechanisms and institutions ultimately led to the creation of new knowledge construction practices that have resulted in the new category of security threat, ‘Multi Issue Extremism’ (MIE) (p.134). Monaghan and Walby state,

Early intelligence briefs are concerned with financial security and Al-Qaeda-inspired terror groups. However, ITAC-coordinated Threat Assessments expend their focus to target MIEs, described as activist groups, indigenous groups, environmentalists and others who are publicly critical of government policy [...] Specifically, intelligence agencies have blurred the categories of terrorism, extremism and activism into an aggregate threat matrix. This blurring of threat categories expands the purview of security intelligence agencies, leading to net-widening where a greater diversity of actions are governed through surveillance processes and criminal law. (ibid)

These reconfigured security institutions and systems are even better supported, funded and empowered through legislation like the *Anti-terrorism Act (2015)* and further support the agenda of colonial settlement that must consistently reassert itself through coercive measures.

Securing through Privatization, Surveillance and Criminalization

The agenda of colonial settlement is maintained through legislation and governmental policies rooted in colonial settlement and continues to structure contemporary attempts at Indigenous land dispossessions as evidenced through the *First Nations Property Ownership Act* (FNPOA) which was proposed in 2009 by the former Conservative majority government and is currently under review by a Liberal majority government (Pasternak, 2015). Part of increasing the oil and gas industry's profitability in Canada is increasing the industry's ability to transport the 'resource' to market. Legislation like the

FNPOA uses settler colonial neoliberal discourse to promote the notion of land ‘modernization’ and attempts to “individualize and municipalize the quasi-communal land holdings of reserves” (Pasternak, 2015, p.179). Shiri Pasternak describes this as the “key disciplinary technique of propertization” (2015, p.181) which supports white settler colonial extractive efforts by privatizing land and converting it into capital to be commercialized, individualized, and diversified into multiple derivative extractives. It attempts to strip the land of Indigenous communal, cultural, political, spiritual and governmental power while being promoted to some Indigenous communities as the possibility of temporary relief from poverty.

While land privatization may appear as a strategic exit from the *Indian Act* for some, and while choosing clean drinking water or adequate housing for one’s community in exchange for communal land rights, this proposal can hardly be described as a free ‘choice’. As Pasternak (2015) discusses, some Indigenous leaders see that “the lack of fee simple -- or private property rights -- on reserves had deprived communities of access to home mortgages, therefore credit, and ultimately, access to the market economy” (p.179). The neoliberal logic that suggests that there exists some level economic playing field whereby we all have equal access to the market economy is both powerful and normalized, as previously discussed. The liberal myth of equality in the eyes of the law and the neoliberal myth of equality in the eyes of the free market completely obscure the systemic and institutional violence that in white settler states are disproportionately experienced by Indigenous and Black people, and by people of colour. Stemming from ongoing colonial encounters that disregard Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies

including diverse legal and political systems, no free market system exists that could possibly account for and recognize Indigenous jurisdiction.

The FNPOA first presented itself through the work of Tom Flanagan's (2010) book *Beyond the Indian Act: Restoring Aboriginal Property Rights*, which he co-authored with Christopher Alcantara and André Le Dressay in 2010. The book represents another significant contribution by Flanagan made to the attempted undermining of Indigenous jurisdiction, sovereignty and self-determination in Canada (Pasternak, 2015, p.183). Prior to the book's publication however, Flanagan (2009) authored a report for the Canadian Defense & Foreign Affairs Institute (CDFAI) suggesting that violent and extra-legal resistance to industrial projects would come from any of the five following sources: individual saboteurs, eco-terrorists, mainstream environmentalists, First Nation, and the Métis people (2009). Considered in conservative circles to be an expert on Indigenous peoples in Canada, Flanagan's report 'Resource Industries and Security Issues in Northern Alberta' contains a sizable section on the Treaty 8 region and on Métis settlements in Alberta. It is important to note that the CDFAI board of directors (as of 2012) includes: a leading oil and gas lawyer; a former Enbridge and TransCanada Pipelines Limited executive; a Royal Bank executive; Vice President of the Calgary Petroleum Club; a Senator and of course, several members of the Canadian Armed Forces (CDFIA, 2012). The connections between the oil sands industry and the Canadian military are direct and strong, both historically and contemporarily. These parties draw on the supposed expertise of Tom Flanagan who promotes the notion of an Indigenous terrorist threat. It is therefore hardly surprising that Indigenous leaders and activists have been targeted by national intelligence and security organizations, and in 2012 a new

counter-terrorism unit located in Alberta was developed (only four years after the report's publication).

There is nothing new about what Flanagan (2009) suggests in his report, as Indigenous people in Canada have long been characterized as 'savage warriors' posing a threat to white settlers. Lorenzo Veracini (2011) discusses the notion of the 'Indian problem' as key part of the transferist rationale of settler colonialism and of the 'Indigenous incarceration/criminalization/institutionalization' transfer strategy in particular (p.45-46). Veracini has argued that settler colonial formations can be summarized 'as domination for the purpose of transfer' (p.34), as 'all settler projects are foundationally premised on fantasies of ultimately 'cleansing' the settler body politic of its (Indigenous and exogenous) alterities' (p.33). Linking this fantasy back to anxieties over sovereignty, Veracini writes, 'treating the indigenous 'problem' as a welfare matter...[or with] calls to 'close the (socioeconomic) gap' between indigenous and non-indigenous constituencies are premised on indigenous dysfunction, not sovereign entitlement' (p.46). Flanagan's report warns of 'Caledonia-style' blockades and occupations organized by 'warrior societies' (2009, p.8), linking the theft of Six Nation's land by housing developers and settlers to the disregard for treaty rights in the Treaty 8 area and throughout unceded territories in British Columbia by oil companies. Flanagan (2009) writes,

A nightmare scenario from the standpoint of resource industries in northern Alberta would be a linkage between warrior societies and eco-terrorists. Members of warrior societies would brandish firearms and take public possession of geographical sites, while eco-terrorists would operate

clandestinely, firebombing targets over a wide range of territory. The two processes could energize each other, leading in the extreme case to loss of life and a shutdown of industry over a wide area. (p.9)

This dramatic future possibility is presented by Flanagan, along with summaries of key pieces of legislation and selective historical accounts of existing treaties and relevant case law in order to paint a concise picture of future threats to the oil sands industry. Ultimately though, the report suggests:

If two or more of the five categories of people described above – saboteurs, eco-terrorists, mainstream environmentalists, Treaty 8 First Nations, and Métis – came together in a single movement, they could become a serious obstacle to development, given that innumerable roads, pipelines, and physical installations are widely spread across the huge, thinly settled, lightly policed territory of northern Alberta and adjacent areas of British Columbia and Saskatchewan. But such a convergent movement is unlikely to emerge, because of pronounced differences of interest and lifestyle among the potential opponents of development. (Flanagan, 2009, p.12)

Thus, promoting division and non-cooperation between these ‘opponents of development’ is presented as the best way to ensure the ‘security’ of the oil sands. Again, as Monaghan and Walby (2015) discuss, the emergence of a threat category such as “Multi Issue Extremism” and the development of an Integrated Threat Assessment Centre all help facilitate the execution of this approach to securitization, discussed by Flanagan in 2009. Enshrined in law through the *Anti-terrorism Act (2015)*, this approach to surveillance and

criminalization in order to secure investment in this ‘national resource’ is further evidence of the white settler state’s deep cooperation with the oil and gas industry and central role in the maintenance and neoliberal reiterations of racial extractivism.

Pipelines and Protectors

Despite the 2015 changes in government, both in Alberta’s provincial election of an NDP government (ending a 43 year-long stretch of Conservative rule in the province), and the federal election of the Liberal party (ousting the Conservative Harper government), little has changed legislatively to signal a significant amendment in relations between the oil and gas industry and government. While the Alberta provincial NDP party called for a review of royalties pricing, for instance, their study found that virtually no changes were required and the status quo should remain (Zalik, 2016). Additionally, the public/private security partnerships that support the oil and gas industry remain stronger than ever both within the colonial borders of Canada and throughout Turtle Island¹⁴. These intimate relationships come into clear view whenever there is collective opposition to proposed pipeline routes, as was the case in collective opposition to the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline project (which was successfully defeated) (see Figure 16).



Image 16. Anti-Enbridge image by Andy Everson (Kwakwaka'wakw), n.d.

Established in 1993, the Canada Energy Pipeline Association (CEPA) represents pipeline companies operating in Canada. CEPA boasts that there are currently 117,000 kilometers of pipeline in Canada (CEPA, Final Report, 2015; see Image 17). The number one cause of pipeline ruptures and leaks is corrosion (ibid), and with an ageing pipeline infrastructure and the use of older pipelines to transport bitumen eastward (as is the case with Enbridge's Line 9 project), there is growing public concern over pipeline safety and growing opposition to the construction of new pipelines.

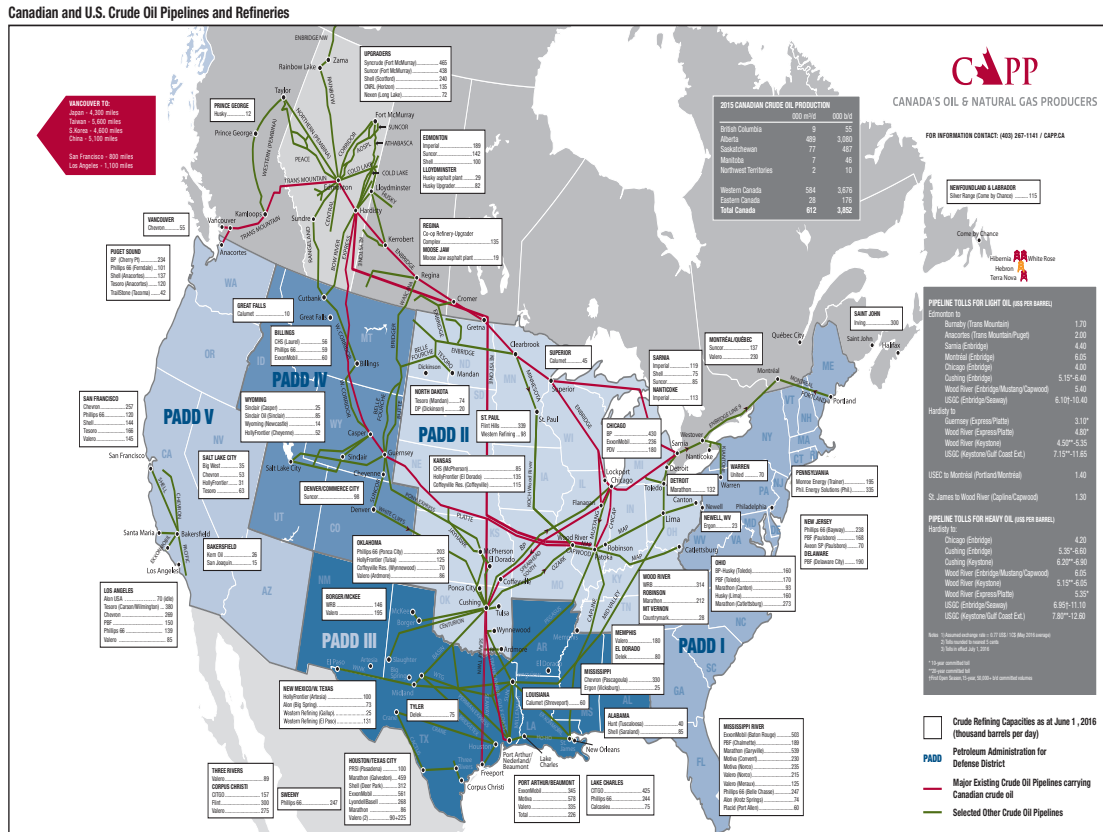


Image 17. CAPP, Canada and U.S. Crude Oil Pipelines and Refineries map, 2016.

This opposition has proven powerful as major transnationally funded projects such as the Keystone XL and the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline projects, both proposing to transport tar sands oil, were successfully halted. Because the majority of the Keystone XL pipeline route traveled through the U.S., opposition to it was concentrated across the colonial border. In the Canadian context more opposition focused on Enbridge’s Northern Gateway Pipeline project which would have moved tar sands oil from the Edmonton, Alberta area by way of a massive pipeline covering 1,170 kilometers to Kitimat, British Columbia. It would then be transported to Asia-Pacific markets by supertankers weaving around small islands off the coast (Enbridge, 2012; Keller, 2012; Adkin, 2016, p.418-419). Enbridge Inc.’s Northern Gateway project received widespread

criticism from environmental groups, concerned settler populations and Indigenous communities along the pipeline route and elsewhere. The Yinka Dene Alliance, for instance, is a coalition of five Indigenous nations who opposed the proposed pipeline project, which they believe poses significant threats to the environment and to our communal futures.

In response to organized objections to Enbridge's plans, and also to attacks on sour gas pipeline wells since the late 1990's, and to more general objections to Alberta's oil sands industry, in June 2012 the Canadian government established a new Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)-led anti-terrorism unit in Alberta – the K Division Integrated National Security Enforcement Team (INSET) (RCMP, 2012). Many critics of the oil sands industry see the creation of K Division INSET as a criminalizing response to organized Indigenous objections to the Enbridge pipeline project and to the industry more generally. The perceived threat of coalitions between primarily non-native led environmental groups and Indigenous communities has elicited crisis discourses of anti-terrorism, and radical extremism amongst pro-industry scholars such as Flanagan (2009), government officials and industry representatives (Clarke, T., 2008; Tait, 2012; CBC, 2012, June 6).

Divisive strategies designed to avoid this 'nightmare scenario' include Enbridge's confidential 'equity deals' like those offered to Band council members of individual Nations (not to tribal councils or hereditary Chiefs). These deals create a climate of mistrust amongst and between various Indigenous nations in negotiation with oil and gas companies (and pipeline companies) as they are confidential by design - thus pay-offs differ nation to nation, band member to band member, along the planned pipeline routes.

These deals, framed as part of the process of gaining social license for a project, are in fact divisive neoliberal tools of individualization that disrupt collective systems of Indigenous governance and alliances between different Indigenous nations. These private strategies of division are complemented by the state's security and surveillance programs, which share their information directly with those private 'negotiators' and agents of the industry.

According to *The Toronto Star* a national RCMP surveillance program monitoring First Nations that ran between 2007 and 2010 (Lukacs and Groves, 2012). It "shared [...] intelligence reports about First Nations with the private sector, including energy companies" (ibid). Enbridge did not disclose whether or not they have been exchanging information with the RCMP. In response to the cooperation of environmentalist groups opposing the pipeline project and the Yinka Dene Alliance, Lukacs and Groves (2012) found that the RCMP has "gathered intelligence from unspecified 'industry reports,' newspapers and websites, and Facebook and Flickr photo accounts" (ibid). The reporters found that private meetings between First Nations and environmental organizations in November of 2011 were monitored. The Yinka Dene Alliance was mentioned in the security reports as posing a threat to Enbridge's Northern Gateway project, and thus on June 6, 2012 the RCMP announced the creation of the Alberta Integrated National Security Enforcement Team (INSET) K Division, a new counter-terrorism unit. While the Federal Court of Appeal overturned the federal government's approval of the Northern Gateway pipeline due to insufficient consultation with Indigenous communities (and undoubtedly due to the mass mobilization of activists and Indigenous protectors against the project).

K Division is described as playing a ‘critical role at the forefront of Canada’s Counter-terrorism strategy’ (RCMP, 2012). Designed to protect the oil sands industry, including “400,000 kilometers of pipeline; more than 176,000 operating oil and gas wells; eight oil sands mines; five upgraders; and 250 in situ oil extraction facilities, according to the Energy Resources Conservation Board.” (Tait, 2012), K Division represents the consolidation of national security intelligence gathering and coercive force, for the purposes of securing critical economic infrastructure. Guised in the language of counter-terrorism, this governmental arm of the oil and gas industry is able to re-define terrorism for its own purposes, targeting Indigenous people like Clayton Thomas-Muller, who describes his work as his right as an Indigenous person.

I feel very strongly that the work I do is just and is on the right side of history, so I really don’t pay any attention to the Harper government’s tactics to try to criminalize the work I am involved in which uplifts democracy, transparency, equity and the UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous People. Specifically, the right of indigenous people to say no to harmful developments that threaten their way of life. (Thomas-Muller in Barrera, Oct 21, 2014)

The RCMP had Thomas-Muller under surveillance since at least July 2010 when surveillance was increased in response to opposition to the Enbridge Northern Gateway Pipeline (ibid). More evidence of this type of intimate surveillance was revealed in The RCMP’s “Suspicious Incidents Report”, which indicated that members of the Indigenous Environmental Network were also surveilled, along with many others (Barrera, Oct 17, 2014). As criminology scholar Jeffrey Monaghan states regarding the report,

When you read the document closely it shows an intimate surveillance [...] (The documents) show the breadth of and the normalization of the regular systematic surveillance of protest groups, of people who criticize government policy and critics of energy policy. You have national security bureaucracies, agencies, focused on domestic protest groups and it has nothing to do with terror, but with the energy economy. (ibid)

Monaghan's analysis of the report, much like his and Walby's (2012) assessment of Canadian anti-terror intelligence networks and their creation of new "terror identities" reveal the character of frightening changes in the state's coercive security apparatus. These changes also reveal the convergence of racial, neoliberal, and settler colonial logics materialized through a well funded, privately supported and publically legislated and enforced security system.

Private security firms such as GardaWorld, one of the top security firms working in the tar sands and the largest privately owned security company in the world, gather intelligence on perceived threats to their client's assets and business operations and work with all levels of government. Companies like this, often working for extractive industries who face opposition from local Indigenous communities, environmental and human rights organizations and activists, specialize in gathering information through a wide variety of surveillance practices and in coordinating the exchange of information with other security and intelligence organizations in order to provide the most thorough and complete security profiles possible. Taking Monaghan and Walby's (2012) analysis of changes to the Canadian state's systemic surveillance practices and increasingly broad

categorizing of ‘terror identities’, this cooperation is troubling and potentially impossible to properly oversee to ensure that basic rights to privacy are protected for those targeted.

In their 2016 annual report, GardaWorld boasts about the rise of government outsourcing of security services and lists Canada Border Services Agency as one such government agency now relying on GardaWorld’s private services:

The Immigration and Refugee Protection Act (IRPA) stipulates whether an individual is inadmissible to Canada. The Canada Border Services Agency (CBSA) is responsible for investigating IRPA offenses, and has the power to arrest, detain, and remove permanent residents and foreign nationals who are found to be inadmissible to Canada.

-Care and control of detainees

-Safe and secure transportation of detainees

-Escorting detainees through the departure process

(GardaWorld, Annual Report, 2016, p. 5)

As an obvious beneficiary of neoliberal restructuring GardaWorld’s operating profit is 235 million dollars this year, with a profit increase of 16.3% in 2016 all within the ongoing context of global financial recession. Transnationally they offer “risk mitigation services in complex, high threat and emerging markets” and boast that “from the oil fields of Iraq, Kurdistan, Yemen, Libya, Nigeria, Algeria and Somalia we are a trusted security partner” (GardaWorld, ‘Extractives International Security Services’, 2016). Their informational online video shows multiple images of white male employees posing with

local racialized children and/or women and reference the charitable work they do in some areas of operation (see Image 20, Image 21).



Image 18. Screenshot from GardaWorld video, 2016.

Part of GardaWorld's corporate image relies upon the very same Orientalist discourse that Ethical Oil's campaigns do, that of the safe, secure, humanitarian white saviour in opposition to the racialized terrorist Other or the racialized victim in need of white salvation, education and rescue (Preston, 2013; Andragi, 2011). These images depict a well-known narrative of white humanitarianism, as whiteness exists and is reaffirmed in relation to 'the Other', the racialized bodies serve to centralize and glorify the primary figure in the image, the white saviour. Other images from their promotional and informational video feature a GardaWorld employee protected by a white bulletproof vest while racialized locals are not, clearly demonstrating the differential value of racialized human life via white supremacy (see Image 20).



Image 19. Screenshot from GardaWorld video, 2016.

This same image is also used to advertise the private security company's Corporate Social Responsibility statement as the image is able to communicate so many normalized narratives about whiteness and moral superiority, paternalistic humanitarianism, respectable whiteness and its global reach. The images reveal a great deal about what constitutes humanitarianism in the neoliberal era, where the attraction of transnational capital goes hand in hand with a claim of humanitarianism, even while the 'human' has already been epistemologically entrenched along racialized lines.

As organizations like 'Ethical Oil' promote the image of the Alberta tar sands as 'fair trade oil' by relying on racist characterizations of Middle Eastern and African oil producing nation-states, the very same corporations working in those locations are those extracting oil in Canada. Those same corporations whose power is reinforced by federal legislation such as the *Jobs and Growth Act (2012)*, the *First Nations Property*

Ownership Act (proposed in 2009), and the *Anti-terrorism Act (2015)* have found full state support and cooperation for their extractive projects.

Legislation such as that described in this chapter entrenches neoliberal white settler logics and discursive structures into law. It formalizes the process of dispossession and emboldens the private sector's will to profit and extract from Indigenous territories, with or without their consent. It works to strengthen the coercive arm of the settler state in its ability to criminalize opposition to these projects and to target organized movements of Indigenous self-determination, governance and resurgence, always working in cooperation with the oil and gas industry's own private security firms. Furthermore, these types of legislation create new pathways for racial extractivism by attempting to weaken Indigenous collective rights and normalize neoliberal discourse.

An additional tool at the disposal of both the private oil and gas companies (and the security companies, pipeline, rail and trucking transportation companies, public relations consultants, etc. who work with them) is the discursive strategies of depoliticization and pacification mentioned at the beginning of this chapter (Dafnos, 2013). These strategies require that Indigenous nations are viewed and treated as cultural organizations and not as political, sovereign governments. Indigenous depoliticization aids the oil and gas industry in the Athabasca region by presenting these communities as either primarily 'cultural' and consumable, as part of an imaginary Canadian national identity that is not based on British and French cultures but is unique to the white settler colonial nation-state. Though I do not examine this discursive strategy at length in this dissertation, it is worth mentioning as it appears in a variety of forms including through

neoliberal audit culture, which continually targets Indigenous governments to reinforce a stereotype of racial inferiority and economic incompetence thus requiring the benevolent patriarchal white settler state. Another way that the discursive strategy of Indigenous depoliticization operates, is through oil and gas industry representations of Indigenous communities as ‘partners’ and ‘stakeholders’ who hold little to no political power in oil and gas land leasing, pipeline assessments and approvals or in processes of ‘public consultation’ over extractive projects. Represented as cultural communities requiring limited and symbolic recognition, but no real say in the processes of ‘resource’ extraction in Canada, these politics of representation within oil and gas operations reveal the strategy of depoliticization that attempts to ‘recognize’ the existence of Indigenous peoples while simultaneously building and maintaining a system that affords them extremely limited political power beyond what they are able to assert in lengthy colonial court processes, in the streets and on contested lands through direct action and protest (Cain & Krogman, 2010; Zalik, 2016).

This chapter has addressed some of the primary contemporary neoliberal and white settler colonial techniques of securing access to Indigenous lands in the regions where bitumen is being extracted. These include attempts to secure investment in the sector through discursive strategies that embed notions of hassle-free access to ‘resources’. In order to attract foreign investment in the tar sands extraction industry, Canada is marketed as open for business and unhindered by questions of Indigenous jurisdiction. Several pieces of Canadian federal legislation which support these aims have also been briefly analyzed as exemplary of the neoliberal cooperation between the settler state and private sector to further facilitate ‘secure investment’. These include the

Jobs and Growth Act (2012); Bill C-51 or the Anti-terrorism Act (2015); and proposed the First Nations Property Ownership Act (proposed in 2009). As the oil and gas industry continues to work alongside the Alberta provincial and the Liberal federal governments overseeing tar sands extraction, they engage in surveillance practices that result in the criminalization of Indigenous activists and community members who vocally and actively oppose tar sands extraction. Surveillance practices are always accompanied by discursive strategies that attempt to justify these measures, and convert Indigenous laws, obligations, political positions and claims into security threats and/or into depoliticized and dehistoricized notions of culture.

While these techniques of security, surveillance, criminalization and pacification are by no means exhaustive, they represent important manifestations of contemporary white settler colonialism within a neoliberal context of racial extractivism. Securing access to land and ‘resources’ through discursive means requires normalizing the colonial project and building it into the everyday common sense rationalizations of settlers, migrants, governments and private corporations (and under this logic, ideally into the common-sense rationalizations of Indigenous peoples themselves).

I have provided an analysis of some of the changes in the Canadian national security and intelligence systems and their relationships to private oil and gas producers within the context of racial extractivism. For Indigenous activists and leaders resisting tar sands extraction and pipeline networks, these security and surveillance techniques directly target them and any relationships they develop with non-Indigenous environmental groups, allies and/or activists. The expansion of threat categories paired with new anti-terror legislation has meant the direct criminalization of these protector

communities and the (attempted) silencing of many voices that would otherwise resist mega-extraction projects. To be criminalized and silenced in the midst of life or death industrial expansion and racial extractivism is a hallmark of this historical moment. These battles are not only life or death because of climate change, but also because they literally and immediately mean life or death for the Indigenous peoples who come up against a policing, military, private security and national security systems whose forms of violence are supported by white settler colonial legal systems.

Conclusion

Decolonial and Indigenous theory arising from a wide variety of colonial contexts have argued that white settler colonialism, in the territories currently claimed by the Canadian state, need not be a permanent or ongoing structure; that ideas that are foundational to its existence and continuation need not be popularly accepted as common sense; that epistemic and ontological foundations on which this structure depends need not survive or reproduce themselves anew. They suggest that freedom is in fact not just the absence of something (such as colonial structures), but instead requires fresh thinking (Alfred, 2009, 29). Kahnawá:ke Mohawk scholar Taiaiake Alfred (2009), writing to an Indigenous (or Onkwehonwe) audience, discusses this need for fresh thinking by “drawing on the old spirit” in order to “create something new for ourselves and think through the reality of the present to design an appropriate strategy, use fresh tactics, and acquire new skills” (ibid). Alfred understands survival as “bending and swaying but not breaking, adapting and accommodating without compromising what is core to one’s being’ and freedom as an experience for those who are ‘emboldened by challenges and who sacrifice for the truth...’” (ibid). In order to think freshly then, to think outside of and beyond the constraints and limitations of colonial order, non-Indigenous people (especially those who experience white privilege within the context of systemic white supremacy) must first recognize, deconstruct and reveal the violence inherent in normalized structures of white settler colonialism, something that Indigenous people have known and done for centuries.

Survival for Indigenous people may include “bending and swaying but not breaking” (Alfred, 2009, 29), but the continued status-quo for white settler colonialism

and its attendant processes or racial extractivism ultimately result in the elimination of the conditions possible to sustain life. These processes and the logics that inform them risk decimating humanity in its entirety and severely damaging the planet as a whole, primarily through global warming and the environmental destruction resulting from racial extractivism and the burning of fossil fuels. The mass scale extraction of bitumen in the Athabasca region is one example of this.

Tar Sands extraction occurs on a massive industrial scale difficult to convey with words. The Athabasca, Peace River and Cold Lake regions where tar sands are extracted are enormous. The land, the air, the water, the animal and plant life are being severely polluted, and irrevocably disrupted and the land depleted of its naturally occurring elements at alarming rates, and without the consent of Indigenous communities in the region. Ontologically speaking, these Indigenous communities are of this land, intrinsically interconnected to it, to the elements and to other life forms arising from it, unlike white settlers, migrants, and diasporic populations. The land matters, and white settler colonialism is about possessing and commodifying that same sacred land.



Image 20. Tar Sands Healing Walk and Suncor pollution. Photo by Preston, J., 2014.

Forcing itself upon northern Turtle Island and its many Indigenous nations, white settler colonialism in Canada has required not only physical violence and systematic attempts at Indigenous genocide, but also widespread epistemological and ontological violence that dehumanizes, that hierarchically orders and commodifies life and reduces it to spiritually vacant capital. As theorised by Black liberation theorist Cedric Robinson in 1983, racial capitalism emerged from the pre-capitalist economies of European empires who relied upon racial taxonomies starting in the 14th Century to explain aspects human difference in ways which benefitted the ruling classes. Racial taxonomies also functioned at the service of denying recognition of Indigenous jurisdiction over their territories and communities and attempted to justify the forms of genocide required to access the land and convert it into commodity. In the Athabasca region, this first occurred through an assumption of British Crown sovereignty over the region and its leasing to the Hudson's Bay Company for fur extraction. This approach to white possession of Indigenous

territories shifted by the time the Geological Survey of Canada recorded the presence of bituminous sands in the region, and communicated this to the central government. The ‘discovery’ of oil encouraged the pre-Confederation settler state-in-the-making to seriously consider a Treaty process aimed at ultimate land cessation, as the government also sought increasing amounts of land for settlers.

By locating ‘racialism’ as both pre-capitalist and central to the modern world system, Cedric Robinson’s (1983) work foregrounds the trajectories of racial ordering in Western epistemologies where slavery, violence, colonialism, imperialism and genocide were (and are) rationalized. Tracing the Black Radical Tradition and its long history of recognizing the racial nature of Western powers and resisting them, including in Black-led liberation movements, Robinson’s development of the concept of racial capitalism continues to illuminate the racial calculus that structures contemporary capitalism. This concept centers race as an organizing principle of the economic order (though the two become co-constitutive) and thus, when one examines extractivism within contemporary neoliberal settler societies like Canada, race is absolutely already present along with colonialism, determining the value of bodies and of the land itself.

As this dissertation has argued, racial extractivism (as a conceptual tool at the service of decolonization) positions race and colonialism as central to the rationalization of extractivist projects under neoliberalism, and underpins how these epistemologies are written into the economic structure and social relations of production and consumption. Racial extractivism acknowledges the multitude of ways in which colonial histories and reiterations of race-based epistemologies inform discursive practices used by the oil and gas industry, for example, and by the Canadian white settler government in promoting

and managing 'resource' extraction. These discursive practices are also present in the North American and Canadian popular media's dissemination of a normalized neoliberal ideology and Western culture. By examining the tar sands mega projects in Canada as a site of racial extractivism in a white settler context, racial and colonial relations and structures are revealed as foundational and central to the Canadian nation-state and to extractive industries more generally, where the latter are often otherwise presented as common sense, necessary and even apolitical realities of our time. While these taxonomies have changed over time, and continue to change today, processes of racialization have provided an ontological and epistemological justification for the development and implementation of systems, institutions and broader social and political structures that systemically privileged and empowered white, property owning, male subjects.

While David Goldberg (1993) locates the development of the concept of race in the sixteenth century, he claims that it reaches "intellectual and material maturity" (p.3) in the seventeenth century's Enlightenment period. Robinson's (1983) study of racial capitalism extends further back into 'European' history and traces the development of racial categories used to describe differences within European metropolises, prior to their application and reinvention through colonial excursions outside of them. Both studies find that the period where there was copious knowledge production about race, the promotion of white supremacy, and extension of racial taxonomies into all areas of social and political life came about in the eighteenth century. Initially working at the service of these Western European empires, European colonialism and mercantilist economics expanded the reach and impact of these racial taxonomies employed to justify the trans-

Atlantic slave trade and supply colonies with indentured labourers (many from Asian colonies) and enslaved African labourers. Racial taxonomies also functioned to deny Indigenous forms of jurisdiction and sovereignty over their territories and communities, and attempted to justify forms of genocide required to access the land, convert it into commodity. The first chapter addressed some of the key theoretical and methodological tools and approaches informing this dissertation, including Robinson's notion of racial capitalism, intersectional theory and various theories of settler colonialism. It also addressed the role of discourse in reiterating and reproducing racial extractivism and white settler colonialism in Canada, while the second chapter examined this early colonial period beginning with a discussion of the Doctrine of Discovery, and the epistemological and ontological underpinnings of white settler colonialism that formed the foundation for the Canadian settler state.

The horrific endurance of racial capitalism reveals its insidious ability to transform itself, to shift and change with the social and political conditions it functions within and produces. The very foundational racial concepts that supported mercantilism in the 18th century also underpinned the 19th century European transition into a capitalist economy and state-centric political structures - trends which extended to European colonies as well. In white settler colonial contexts like the Canadian one, the formation of new nation-states drew from the racially constructed colonial identities but simultaneously incorporated the "logic of elimination" (Wolfe, 1999; 2006) required to advance the fallacy of white entitlement to Indigenous lands and life. As requirements of a new white settler state, laws, institutions and systems grounded in racist epistemology and ontology became deeply entrenched within national mythologies and identities, and

as racial capitalism shape-shifted itself again, this time into its more contemporary neoliberal form by the 1970s, the discursive strategies of white settler colonialism shifted too. Chapter Three traced this transitional period and its relationship to the oil and gas industry's operations in the Athabasca region.

The co-productive powers of neoliberalism and white settler colonialism emerged in their own unique ways in the Canadian context and have required new discursive mechanisms to continually reassert notions of white entitlement and jurisdiction. A form of free market colonialism/capitalism emerged by the 1970s where public and private policies and partnerships are not only required (along with tools and systems to ensure global investment and secure contexts for “resource” extraction) but they began to blend into the new norms of contemporary white settler colonialism. Chapter Four examined the discursive strategies of contemporary neoliberal white settler colonialism and racial extractivism in relation to the extraction of bitumen in the Athabasca region. By examining concepts such as the social licence to operate, corporate social responsibility, impact benefit agreements and environmental regulatory processes, this chapter looked at the normalization of white settler entitlement to Indigenous land and life in a neoliberal context.

The enduring fragility of white settler possession reappears at every site of ‘resource’ extraction, with every settler claim to private property, with every border crossing, and at every uninvited point of non-Indigenous presence on Turtle Island. Chapter Five examined the desires for security that emerge from this context and the material and structural results of such anxieties, primarily through the surveillance and criminalization of Indigenous land and water protectors and their allies. Federal

legislation such as the *Anti-terrorism Act (2015)* discussed in Chapter Five for instance, supports this process and thus the state works in close relationship with oil and gas corporations and their private security firms to ‘secure’ the tar sands and white possession. The only promises that white settler colonialism can safely hold for its future however, are the promises of failure and continued disgrace. As Aimé Césaire (1972) describes,

...colonization, I repeat, dehumanizes even the most civilized man; that colonial activity, colonial enterprise, colonial conquest, which is based on contempt for the native and justified by that contempt, inevitably tends to change him who undertakes it; that the colonizer, who in order to ease his conscience gets into the habit of seeing the other man as *an animal*, accustoms himself to treating him like an animal, and tends objectively to transform *himself* into an animal. It is this result, this boomerang effect of colonization that I wanted to point out. (p.41)

Césaire goes on to quote Carl Siger’s (1907) description of “the new countries” (the colonies) where according to his *Essai sur la colonisation*, those from the metropole had “a vast field for individual, violent activities” that would never be permissible within metropolitan countries, therefore facilitating “greater freedom to develop and, consequently, to affirm their worth” (Singer in Césaire, p.41). This affirmation via atrocity is what forged the white settler subject and nation-state, and what simultaneously required the production of a racialized Indigenous subjectivity. Therefore, the colony became the zone of exception where violence could be unleashed ‘freely’ (unlike within metropolitan countries) in order to produce and affirm, in the Canadian context, a new

white settler subject and a new home (nation-state) for that subject – both founded upon brutality and delusions of *terra nullius*. As Aileen Moreton-Robinson (2015) points out in reference to white settler colonial Australia,

white possession as configured through the logic of capital functions sociodiscursively to inform and shape subjectivity and the law. Cook, as the embodiment of patriarchal white sovereignty willed away the sovereignty of Indigenous peoples by placing them in and of nature as propertyless subjects to claim the land as *terra nullius*. (xxiii)

The patriarchal white sovereignty that could ‘will away’ Indigenous sovereignty or jurisdiction in Australia is strikingly similar to expressions of white settler entitlement in Canada. Making Indigenous populations simultaneously invisible and hyper-visible for the purpose of assimilation or elimination took unique forms in different white settler states. In Canada, various state strategies have been developed and implemented over time in attempts to achieve this contradictory yet persistent strategy of racialization.

David Theo Goldberg (1993) argues that liberalism “plays a foundational part in this process of normalizing and naturalizing racial dynamics and racist exclusions” (p.1), and states that “[a]s modernity’s definitive doctrine of self and society, or morality and politics, liberalism serves to legitimate ideologically and to rationalize politico-economically prevailing sets of racialized conditions and racist exclusions” (ibid). Neoliberalism extends these processes of rationalization and normalization into late-capitalism’s fold, encouraging individualized, market-based responses to socio-political problems, systems and structures. Neoliberalism downloads systemic power dynamics onto individual bodies as personal failure and/or personal success, requiring individuals

to justify, maintain and defend its accountability-avoiding structure, or to become the enemy of ‘freedom’ (the free market).

This dissertation has presented the analytic tool of racial extractivism to understand how race and colonialism inform the practices and structures of ‘resource’ extraction in Canada. Nevertheless, Indigenous life and a multitude of decolonizing and anti-colonial systems of governance, law, kinship, intimacy and relationality survive and deeply unsettle the entitlement fallacies of the neoliberal nation-state and its extractive partners. In the Athabasca region, much of this work has been done by young Indigenous women like Crystal Lameman (Beaver Lake Cree), Melina Laboucan-Massimo (Lubicon Cree), Eriel Deranger (Athabasca Chipewyan) and others who, along with their communities, tenaciously fight against multinational oil and gas companies and white settler colonial governments all for the benefit and survival of future generations. These battles become necessary when Indigenous people’s ways of life and the planet itself are directly threatened by extractive industries. Communal and collective reasons to resist tar sands extraction are, of course, diverse for Indigenous peoples and for non-Indigenous peoples.

For non-Indigenous people in Canada, relationships to the settler state and extractive industries vary depending on proximity to whiteness, degree of wealth and income level, family histories, the continuities of colonial violence around the globe, relationships to borders and movement, or legal status in relation to the state (see Jafri, 2012; Byrd, 2011; Corntassel, Dhamoon & Snelgrove, 2014, Dhamoon, 2009). The intersectional forms of power that inform these relationships to the state and to Canadian national identity mean that there is no homogenous national community despite the

discursive tools of the state that seek to narrate one. For instance, Race, racialization and in particular racialized indigeneity deeply inform the heterogeneity of experiences of Canadian national identity, partially because the white settler national identity is a racial construction informed by racial taxonomies and colonial logics of possession and entitlement.

Canadian national identity and its idealized white subjects are deeply invested in ideas of innocence, which re-script a violent settler colonial past and present as peacefully negotiated with Indigenous populations. Canadian past and present are narrated as characteristic of Canadian traditions of white pioneering perseverance and industrial innovation over nature and harsh elements, while Indigenous survivance and struggles against white settler colonialism and 'resource' extraction are conveniently excluded. This ideal exists despite the clearly racialized nature of ideal citizenship in Canada, which sees white bodies as full persons and Indigenous, Black and non-white racialized bodies as subpersons (Mills 1997; 2007). This valuation exists alongside a national pride in multiculturalism that is able to discursively obscure widespread structural racism. Structural racism is evident in the vastly disproportionate numbers of incarcerated Indigenous people as compared to any other group in Canada; abysmal living conditions on many Northern reserves (many of which do not have access to clean drinking water, affordable food or adequate housing); the massive number of missing and murdered Indigenous women whose deaths and disappearances have long been deprioritized by the state; immigration and border control policies; approaches to migrant and temporary foreign labourers; and elsewhere. For racialized diasporic people who are not Indigenous to this land, the relationships to white settler colonialism differ,

sometimes dramatically, as interconnected colonial histories have complex relationships to the white settler state and white settlers, to other diasporic groups, and to Indigenous communities (many of whom have also been displaced, relocated and spatially managed by a colonial state).

The liberal universal subject (a white, property-holding, heterosexual male subject) has been critiqued on the basis of its exclusionary sex and gender, sexuality, race and class positions. With this imaginary and impossible subject as the basis for popularized notions of the universal human figure, all notions of humanness, humanity, equality and subjectivity arising from it are fallacies of liberalism, and, since the 1970s, of its free market espousing neoliberal descendant. As Charles Mills (1997) argues in his work *the Racial Contract*, white supremacist racial taxonomies continue to act as the basis for contemporary notions of democracy, rights and responsibilities in relation to liberal democratic nation-states, such as Canada and the United States. Mills' work documents the deeply racialized ideologies that informed the Papal Bulls, the *Doctrine of Discovery* and other foundational legal political texts of the 'New World', including justification for the enslavement of millions of African people bought and sold globally as part of the Trans-Atlantic slave trade and at the service of European empires. While Mills' critique is specifically focused on social contract theory developed in seventeenth century England, many other key aspects of Western epistemology have been critiqued along similar lines, including its notions of Western scientific truths.

In the context of contemporary neoliberalism, this universal individual subject has the right and the duty to compete in the free market for better life chances. Stripped of history and context, white settler colonialism lives on in this form of neoliberal norms

and rules. The universal individual subject becomes the figure of the white settler subject who is automatically entitled to Indigenous land and life in the abstracted form of commodities and wealth produced from the dispossession of Indigenous people. Understood as capital through the epistemological lens of neoliberal modernity, land, water and all life are theoretically stripped of their interconnections and are left divided and commodified, ultimately managed by sovereign settler colonial power and the private corporations with whom the state works so closely.

This racial and hierarchical valuation of human life is deeply entrenched within Western European thought, which emerged from the Enlightenment period and became operationalized in the ‘New World’ colonies to justify land theft. Indeed, the *Doctrine of Discovery* and the notion of *terra nullius* attempt to devalue and erase Indigenous jurisdiction and life. As is clear in the case of Treaties Six and Eight, which include the oil-rich Athabasca region, the occupying white settler state forced itself upon Indigenous nations in order to remove them from the land and claim jurisdiction through racist settler colonial logics. Little has changed in this regard, in that the white settler colonial state continues to rely on these logics to justify its existence, even while it expresses these logics through new normalized neoliberal discourse. Private property, the notion of free market competition as freedom, and the role of the state in facilitating private corporations in their extractive projects all reveal the continued role of racial extractivism in contemporary colonial violence. “Thinking freshly” thus requires non-Indigenous peoples to recognize their diverse relationships to and involvement within racial extractivism and white settler colonial structures. Beyond recognizing white settler colonialism at work, there must be a divestment from notions of Canadian jurisdiction

that continue to give life to colonial trajectories. Ultimately for a meaningful acknowledgment, respect for and support of Indigenous jurisdiction to be possible for non-Indigenous inhabitants of Turtle Island, burning down the white settler colonial social contract (including its notions of private property ‘resource’ extraction) is necessary.

An MBA student from the Alberta School of Business contacted me recently in response to an article on Alberta’s tar sands that I wrote in 2012, and which was published in 2013. He wanted to share “some constructive criticism and thoughts” on the connection I drew between tar sands extraction and white settler colonialism (“MBA student”, personal communication, October 13, 2016). The student’s comments represent a very typical white response to the acknowledgement of structural racism and ongoing colonialism in relation to economics and ‘resource’ extraction, and so I’ve chosen to deconstruct some of his comments here in order to illustrate a typical expression of white “settler common sense” (Rifkin, 2013; 2014), or of “white possessiveness” (Moreton-Robinson, 2015). The MBA student states,

I was offended by the concept that natural reasource [sic] development [sic] could be considered as "white" colonialism [sic]. Canada is my only country and its land and opportunity belongs to everyone else in the country same way that it belongs to me. I feel like I am on the same side as native americans, and we work towards the same goals. The article does not present a balanced argument in that it does not so much as mention the benefits that first nations have incurred. The article is misleading when it implies that native american own the lands in

question, when the lands are typically held by the Crown and Native Americans only have to be consulted on decisions that may affect their aboriginal rights. The Crown must act "honorably" in consultations and addressing the concerns, but that does not mean they have to do exactly what the native americans demand through consultations. ("MBA student", personal communication, October 13, 2016)

The student takes personal offence at the suggestion that his positionality as a white settler requires that he recognize and respect Indigenous jurisdiction and relationships to the land. The liberal fallacy and neoliberal application of 'equality' are central to the student's position, whereby no power relations appear to influence or affect equal competition and equal 'rights' within the free market. Additionally, a reassertion of the Crown's jurisdiction over Indigenous territories re-centers white settler colonial legal and political structures, marginalizing and eclipsing Indigenous epistemologies and ontologies including, governance structures and protocols. The Crown's sovereignty serves as proof of his own right to "land and opportunity", an assertion of personal entitlement and anxiety-quelling justification for tar sands extraction, and all other practices of 'resource' extraction. The MBA student notes the limitations that Crown sovereignty places on Indigenous communities, requiring honourable consultation but not consent, an important point when considering the massive power imbalances structures into racial capitalism and white settler colonial legal and political systems. Yet despite this, he feels like he is "on the same side" as "native americans" [sic], another common white neoliberal sentiment. Being "on the same side" as Indigenous people while defending the *Doctrine of Discovery* through the assertion of Crown sovereignty; while

asserting the inherent rights of white settlers to ignore treaty agreements and to extract at will; while defending systems that silence Indigenous communities and structurally guarantee their inability to ever say no; while denying any impacts of structural racism and white settler colonialism in “natural resource development” are all symptoms of what Moreton-Robinson (2016) calls “white possession”. These comments are not exceptional, shocking or unusual and are instead indicative of enduring, yet anxious, processes and structures of white settler colonialism. They are indicative of the internalization of white supremacy felt by so many white settlers in Canada - the anxious sense of entitlement to land that is not ours to claim, own, and possess. For racialized diasporic people who are not Indigenous to this land, the relationships to white settler colonialism differ, sometimes dramatically as interconnected colonial histories have brought them into complex relationships both to the white settler state and white settlers, to other diasporic groups, and to Indigenous communities (many of whom have also been displaced, relocated and spatially managed by one or more colonial and or imperial states).

As a white, queer, woman scholar raised with these same white settler colonial ‘common sense’ relationships to ‘Canada’ and the land, and who has had the privilege of reading and engaging with the work of so many brilliant anti-racist, anti-colonial and Indigenous scholars, I have come to learn that it must be the everyday work of white settlers to end this cycle of entitlement and white supremacist normalization within their communities, families and daily lives. This is the work that must happen now more than ever as climate change quickly brings humanity to its end point; as far-right white neoliberal forces seize increasing amounts of power (as evidenced through the election of

Donald Trump in the U.S.); as the massive mobilization of anti-Black racism and anti-colonial movements put the lives of Indigenous people, Black people and other people of colour at risk of violent white backlash, as pipelines and racial extractivism continue to tear through Indigenous lands without their consent, threatening water, land and life. Now is the time for white settlers to wake up from the delusions of neoliberal white settler colonialism, and to learn to recognize its contemporary forms and tools of reiteration and reproduction.

My aim with this dissertation has been to closely examine the contemporary iterations of white settler colonialism at play in tar sands extraction, and ultimately to contribute in some tiny way to the project of ending white supremacist, capitalist, patriarchal, heteronormative settler colonialism. This process however, has primarily been one of my own learning and unlearning, guided by the amazing scholars, water and earth protectors, activists and teachers who have patiently and generously shared their wisdom primarily through written work. Because the form that this project has taken is one tailored to academic audiences and institutional structures, my hope is that this work can take on new forms and mediums, and can reach audiences beyond academia as well to become a means that contributes to decolonization and anti-racism. Along these lines, further examinations of racial extractivism in Canada and elsewhere are required as each context of extraction carries with it its own history, its own socio-political dynamics and complexities, and its own unique manifestations of racial extractivism. Additionally, the co-production of racial extractivism with heteropatriarchy and other forms of white settler colonial power require further attention and analysis that were beyond the scope of this study. As long as the white settler state's jurisdiction remains unexamined, these

dynamics are bound to repeat themselves, under new governments and utilizing new discursive strategies to normalize the violence of ongoing colonialism. Racism will continue to epistemologically and ontologically underpin these new iterations, and so future research and activism must consciously disrupt this trajectory. I have presented the concept of racial extractivism as one theoretical lens that may serve this type of analysis in relation to normalized practices of understanding the earth as capital (as property), and of white settlers as particularly entitled to it due to a racialized denial of Indigenous jurisdiction.

¹Images play several roles throughout the dissertation. They are used to provide visual representations of the Athabasca region (Images 1-5), and also to provide historical representations of the region by the white settler government during the nineteenth century. These images include photographs and advertisements promoting white settlement in the ‘Canadian West’ and informing Indigenous communities of treaty negotiations (Images 6-11). Images are also used to provide examples of contemporary representations of tar sands extraction that promote the industry and its partners (Images 12-16). These images are analyzed and engaged with more directly as discursive strategies at the service of racial extractivism. A later set of images includes artwork produced for the resistance movement and water protectors (Images 17, 18), a contemporary map of pipelines and refineries across Canada and the U.S. (Image 19), and screenshots from a security company’s video advertising their oil and gas asset protection services (Images 20,21), the latter of which is analyzed more closely to examine how race functions in the construction and consumption of these images. The final image is a photographic representation of tar sands extraction and a Suncor site taken during the final 2014 Tar Sands Healing Walk (Image 22).

² I use the term Indigenous throughout to refer the first peoples of ‘Turtle Island’ as opposed to the term Indian (resulting from the colonial misidentification of ‘The New World’ for India), or Aboriginal (which is an umbrella term used primarily by the Canadian state to refer to First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples as articulated in the *Indian Act*).

³ What I refer to herein as the Athabasca region includes the Athabasca, Peace River and Cold Lake regions, see Image 2.

⁴ Bitumen is the naturally occurring tar-like substance mixed with sand from which oil may be derived. It is the ‘unconventional’ oil source found in the Athabasca region. I also use the term tar sands to refer to bitumen throughout the dissertation. Though this term is no longer used by the oil and gas industry themselves, tar sands accurately signals towards the ‘unclean’ or environmentally damaging and energy intensive extraction process required to extract, transport and refine bitumen.

⁵ The biopolitical or biopolitics refers to Michel Foucault’s theorizations on modernity’s unique turn towards the body (and population) as a key locus of power and meaning. Foucault lectured on the dominant political shifts from sovereign power to power over life and a focus on population as the emergence of biopower (1997). He later lectured on biopolitics in relation to liberalism and later neoliberalism in his 1978-1979 lectures at the Collège de France (Foucault, 2004). See also Dillon, 2007; Labban, 2014. Lemm & Vatter, 2014). In relation to settler colonial contexts specifically, see Morgensen, 2011b; Ahluwalia, 2010; Crosby & Monaghan, 2012).

⁶ I use the terms ‘white settler state’, and ‘white settler colonialism’ throughout to draw attention to the roles that whiteness and white supremacist racism play in structuring and informing virtually all aspects of settler colonialism in the Canadian context and in the formation and reformation of the nation-state. Predicated on myths of white entitlement to Indigenous lands, the Canadian nation-state’s sense of sovereignty and identity are deeply interconnected with racist notions of *terra nullius* and the *Doctrine of Discovery* which aimed to justify settler colonial occupation, violence and settlement. While these concepts will be discussed further throughout, it is worth noting here that the work that the term ‘*white* settler colonialism’ is able to do in the Canadian context surpasses the concept of ‘settler

colonialism' in its ability to address the central role that race and racism play within this particular settler colonial context.

⁷ I refer to 'resource' extraction in single quotation marks throughout this dissertation in order to trouble its normalization within neoliberal discourse as it necessarily imposes a capitalist framework and European epistemology and ontology onto land and life. Concepts such as 'natural resources', or 'natural capital' relegate all matter and life into pure commodities and require a complete disregard for Indigenous ontologies and epistemologies which, generally speaking, recognize life as sacred and require relationships of reciprocity and respect.

⁸ I use the term historicisation here to signal a process of historical contextualization that seeks to challenge dominant white settler colonial narratives of 'resource' extraction and settlement that dismiss Indigenous jurisdiction and colonial power dynamics. This historicisation seeks to contextualize historical events and narrations of "natural resource discovery" and early white settlement within the larger socio-political contexts of racial and colonial knowledge production. These include (but are not limited to) expressions of imagined white settler colonial entitlement to Indigenous lands and life that pre-dated the extraction of bitumen, but that none-the-less informed approaches to and justifications for the eventual rise of racial extractivism in the region. Additionally, it examines the macro-level socio-political economic shifts from mercantilist structures of extraction, to the rise and dominance of racial capitalism and then neoliberal economic order in Canada, simultaneously tracing the discursive trajectories of white settler colonial epistemology and ontology that co-produced these economic conditions

⁹ The long-narrated myth of Canadian settlement as occurring in a context of largely unoccupied and ‘empty’ landscapes has been traced and analyzed by many Indigenous and non-Indigenous scholars. See Lawrence, 2003; Lawrence, 2009; Alfred, 2005; Banivanua-Mar & Edmonds, 2010; Edmonds, 2010; Razack, 2002; Reid, 2010, etc.

¹⁰ For a more in-depth study of these forms of regulation in relation to Indigenous peoples in the U.S. in particular, see Rifkin, 2010.

¹¹ Rentier state literature in the Canadian context includes engagements with Harold Innis’ theory of the ‘staples economy’ whereby the export of raw commodities characterises the economic dependency of the state. Innis’ ideas have influenced studies of Canadian political economy including contemporary ones which examine tar sands extraction as yet another example of the ‘staples economy’ and of the potential for Canadian ‘Dutch Disease’ (Watkins, 1963; Stanford, 2013).

¹² Examples of industry lobby groups include Canadian Association of Petroleum Producers (CAPP) and the Canadian Energy Pipeline Association (CEPA).

¹³ The term securitization is itself a neoliberal financial term developed in the 1970s and which came into general use through the proliferation of neoliberal financialization. To securitize both assets and debts is to promote their movement within the market by pooling or grouping them together to create a new consolidated financial instrument, which is more predictable for investors. The repayment of loans, and capital gained through interest payments in a ‘secured’ fund is more appealing to investors seeking dividends or profits (‘securitization’, OED 2015). Securitization often refers to the grouping of mortgages, for instance, and is understood to be the result of ‘financial engineering’. This financial rhetoric takes up the language of security, defined in the Oxford English Dictionary as “the state or

condition of being or feeling secure” (‘security’, OED 2015). These ‘feelings’ have thus been applied to capital, used within neoliberal discourse to link feelings of security to something that can be bought and sold on global financial markets.

¹⁴ South of the colonial border in the U.S. several significant battles over pipeline routes are taking place as well: the Keystone XL pipeline was defeated but with the recent U.S. election of pro-racial extraction conservative Donald Trump, the project is being revived; and the Dakota Access Pipeline (DAPL) which aims to primarily transport fracked oil through Sioux territories is currently being challenged by Indigenous water protectors and their allies on a mass scale not seen since the American Indian Movement’s 1973 actions at Wounded Knee reservation, in what is currently known as South Dakota. Standing Rock was recently the site of a massive mobilization of Indigenous nations across Turtle Island, joining together to reject the violence being inflicted on the earth by extractive industries, and by the oil and gas industry specifically. While the actions at Standing Rock were specifically aimed at stopping the construction of the DAPL, they are also serving to educate people across Turtle Island about the extensive pipeline networks that already exist, the planned expansion of existing routes and development of new ones, all on Indigenous lands.

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