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In/Art: An Inquiry into Cultural Framing for the Twenty-first Century

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IN/ART
AN INQUIRY INTO CULTURAL FRAMING FOR THE
TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY

By

Evelyn Ann Armstrong

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction of the requirements for the degree
of Doctor of Philosophy

in

Philosophy, Aesthetics and Art Theory

Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts Portland, ME

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Accepted by the faculty of the Institute for Doctoral Studies in the Visual Arts in partial fulfillment of the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

Dissertation Director's Name, Ph.D.

Doctoral Committee

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Dr. Denise Carvalho

July 3, 2012

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That lyf so short,
the craft so long to learne,
Th'assay so hard, so sharp the conquerynge.

—Geoffery Chaucer *The Parliament of Fowls* 1.1, cf Hippocrates
(Elizabeth Knowles, ed., *The Oxford Dictionary of Quotations*, 5th edition
Oxford: Oxford University Press, 206-28).

To George

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ABSTRACT

Evelyn Ann Armstrong

**AN INQUIRY INTO CULTURAL FRAMING FOR
THE TWENTY-FIRST CENTURY**

My goal is to investigate the role of culture in the formation of knowledge and its relation to politics of history. I depart from the specific historical accounts of nation building in Canada, striving to demonstrate some of the ways in which different lines of inquiry are skewed from entering the bulk of the episteme that guides political praxis and its function in culture and society. I also critically underline how governmental policies justify spending on arts' grants, while dismissing specific cultural information and everyday practices that affect the underwriting of policies and the distribution of economic funds. For my research, I seek examples in the production of culture that sustain ideas of freedom, equality, and social justice, giving voice to minorities throughout history. I draw attention to the culture of Canada's Aboriginal communities that interconnect current and universal relations of time and space through folklore and societal function, exemplified by art practices, documentary film making, and story telling. This urges us to rethink the way we record, validate, and define knowledge, and how knowledge is transformed into political policies that sustain injustice in a government that claims itself just.

THESIS STATEMENT

The aim of this inquiry is to investigate everyday practices and beliefs that quantify less inclusive forms of knowledge. In arguing for dialogical ethics as a strategy that challenges essentialist feminist views and theories that mark women and minorities as “secondary sociological” and “anthropological universals,” I root my theoretical framework in the intersection between art and film practices in light of postcolonial and post-feminist theory. A pluralist political framework, following Chantal Mouffe’s interpretation of Antonio Gramsci’s political theory, supports an inquiry into inclusive communities with a focus on accountability in the struggle for justice of minorities, their rights to cultural specificity and inclusion. In a similar fashion, Paulo Freire’s theoretical model of a dialogical pedagogy offers the necessary validation for the sharing of knowledge. As I seek to raise cultural and socio-political awareness in a changing world, I support my research by a transdisciplinary methodology, proposed by Griselda Pollock, which is capable of addressing diverse theories and practices. As I seek art concepts and practices that might address political efficiency, in both culturally specific and experimentally inclusive approaches, I demonstrate how art becomes an evidence of agency in the articulation of socio-political injustices and inequalities among minority groups and Canadian Aboriginal women and men.

Acting on the belief that contemporary art is an encompassing borderless language, and that as so, it draws from and speaks to philosophy and theory, I

posit that in the process of understanding ourselves in the world, we depend on the liberating aesthetic ability of an open cultural dialogue that allows us to think creatively and critically. Moreover, in its capacity as a carrier of experience, I believe that the power of critical arts guides us in understanding the role of compassion and justice in our social system. In addition, from Val Plumwood's belief in the "environment as culture," I draw support for a dialogical ethics capable of rejecting an essentialist account of nature. In light of sociopolitical injustices and imperiled ecological systems, the discussions of art in this dissertation focus on strategies of intervention and engagement that pay attention to minority women and men, as well as ecological groups working to connect issues across time and cultures, affirming the need for a world rooted on ethical and ecological awareness.

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PART I: DESCRIBING THE INQUIRY

INTRODUCTION

This dissertation begins as an inquiry into postcolonial theory and as a framework against essentialist notions that problematize feminist political views, offering new insights on the condition of women and minorities in our global contemporary culture. Drawing on a postcolonial critique, I examine issues of difference and social positioning in a changing society and challenge retroactive policies that homogenize cultural diversity. Departing from postcolonial theory that expands on the pluralist framework in support of more inclusive communities, I argue for the need of continuous accountability in the struggle for justice of minorities, their rights to cultural specificity, inclusion, and validation, through the sharing of knowledge. Among my examples is how Canadian political rhetoric ignores, and in some places worsens, the conditions of minorities, especially with regard to Canada's First Nation peoples within their own communities. I also investigate how recent documentary film and intervention art address a still present gender-specific struggle experienced by women in many economic levels of society, fostering social awareness while exploring alternative perceptions and strategies of inclusion and validation. Opposing rigid consensual tendencies in political-ideological discourse, I propose exploring dialogical practices in art and education as creative methods of knowledge production, aiming at fostering new possibilities for interchange and agency between people and communities.

In light of five decades of powerful interventional feminist art that goes partly unacknowledged, particularly in light of recent accounts of relational aesthetics,¹ a key element in my discussion is the role of creativity within specific communities, focused on an artistic specificity that informs about these communities' cultural heritage, while broadening their relations with the outside world. My examination of cultural specificity presents knowledge as a contiguous interference with the culture at large, challenging it according to the rules of these communities. This, I claim is necessary to keep alive the idea that art is primarily a free and self determined initiative, one that inclusively transitions people's culture and communities by addition, not subtraction, and by embracing cultural heritage and social specificity. In my research, art's position is in constant self-redefinition, always on the side of the voiceless, despite a commodity-oriented rhetoric that mockingly simulates any of its original connection with identity or politics.

As I revisit questions of agency, drawing support from a Freirian position that focuses on the model of dialogical pedagogy and a critical purpose for art, whether inside or outside the institution, I concur with Chantal Mouffe that art does not need to be isolated to have efficiency. Moreover, from the view that art is an international language, as well as a carrier of experience,

I sustain that art can contribute to philosophy and theory in ways that expand their epistemological discourse within academia, re-invigorating the role of criticism as an organic aspect of culture. Based on these premises, I discuss art

as an interventional tool that can interact with the wide strand of global social and cultural movements and their epistemological discourses, rather than limiting art to a commodity or a canon of history. In efforts to affirm the need for an ethically and ecologically aware global society, art has a relevant critical role as a mediator for minorities' visibility and access, and to foster agency for an ecologically specific global society.

This thesis concludes that relational aesthetics should be about the relationship between people and ideas, not solely focused on social and cultural functionality and consumption. From the view that critical and political art, or any art that promotes intelligent reflection, illuminates creative production toward a more responsive and responsible global society, I argue that art plays an important role in the pursuit of voicing the voiceless, reminding us that individual expression matters, and that creative intervention can mobilize awareness for environmental responsibility and social justice.

In Chapter One, I examine the oppressive conditions of contemporary women in various societies, departing from their experiences in Canada's First Nations communities.² Although the formulation of multiculturalism, in Canada, undergirds a democratic project directed toward the fulfillment of social justice, Canadian pluralistic democracy is not impervious to contradiction. As I address conflicting issues, in terms of multicultural policies and theories of social justice, I turn the discussion toward cultural and political activism, originating in Aboriginal communities that reveal different socio-political realities.

Using this as a foundation for my critique on a reductive bureaucratized knowledge of the culture of minorities, I describe, in one example, how First Nations elders in British Columbia, Canada, argue for the recognition of “cultural differences” from the view that their knowledge claims are “embedded in different cultures over time;”³ and indeed, should not “come between Aboriginal peoples and Canadian Law.”⁴ In other examples, I explore the perception of multiculturalism through the lens of several First Nation artists who consider cultural and historical multiplicities across generations and focus on the interdependency of oral histories, knowledge, and wisdom, carried from past to present. This concept becomes more relevant when exploring their local art concepts and the relationships of the visible, legible, and material traces of knowledge embedded in the past, but also perceived as atemporal. In this sense, rather than merely addressing cultural material as objects of survival or commodity-oriented objects, such objects of art offer a place to contemplate the complexity of things that depend on knowledge, wisdom, and beliefs.

In the second part of Chapter One, I expand the pluralist framework, drawing from Chantal Mouffe’s interpretation of Antonio Gramsci’s political theory, which supports political pluralism and sustains the rights of expression of community and minority groups.⁵ Moreover, Mouffe’s position upholds the idea of multiplicity in identity, in a post-feminist social world, because it rejects “...any kind of essentialism—either of the totality or of the elements—of any kind of fixed identity.”⁶ As I seek to locate an argument for agency in a post-

feminist global world, I embrace Paulo Freire's ethical pedagogy, which supports my belief that a "voice" is a dynamic element that nourishes didactic and objective views to foment cultural actions and relationships between people and the world.⁷ The Freirian position of identity, focused on the model of a "spontaneously dialogical manner," directs discursive practices toward the realm of critical awareness that way substantiating questions of agency.⁸

In Chapter Two, I address a pluralistic framework that supports my explorations of postcolonial theory and issues regarding ethics and social justice. Beginning with an inquiry into regulating questions of citizenship in Canada that center on the British North America Act (BNA) of 1867, I re-emphasize troubling issues of the *Indian Act*, the later consolidated *Indian Act* of 1876, and complications arising from the later Bill-C 31. Following a brief explanation of nationalist foundations that are grounded in the legacy of British parliamentary democracy and philosophic reforms of the Enlightenment, I revisit the special case of cultural and political plurality in Canada. Arguing for recognition of multiplicity and the possibilities for social fulfillment in a pluralistic democracy, I focus on the historical trajectory of what citizenship and equality mean in the dimension of Canadian law. My main interest is to locate just where and when legal developments limit individual rights, and where and when women's rights are conferred.

As I research the grounds for political and social antagonisms, I stress important amendments to the BNA Act, especially that section which confers

“personhood” on Canadian women. This radical amendment not only eliminates discriminatory gendered language embedded in the laws that form the Canadian Confederation, it also guarantees women a political voice, the right to a university education, and entrance into the professions.⁹ This important amendment also breaks down class barriers to extend voting rights across the boundaries of class, race, and religion.¹⁰ In addressing social issues arising from political activism in the 1960s, I address social inequalities and social activism that compelled the federal government to implement significant legislative action aimed toward social justice and equality for all Canadians.

For example, in attempts to deal with problems of linguistic differences, the Official Languages Act was implemented in 1969. Along with that came a policy of multiculturalism designed to assure cultural freedom of all Canadians. A labour relations guideline to insure equality in the work force was legislated and eventually, substantial recommendations made by the Royal Commission on the Status of Women were implemented. However, social fulfillment is far from the reality. In spite of good intentions, original problems keep coming up to challenge the Canadian dream for a just society.

Additionally, when the Liberal Political Party of Canada swept into power in the mid years of the twentieth century, its philosophic and charismatic leader, Pierre Elliot Trudeau, proclaimed that Canada “must be a just society.”¹¹ Acting on that pronouncement, in 1982 the BNA Act was replaced with the Canadian Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. However, in order to bring

basic human rights for Canada's First Nations' people within the Charter, substantial sections of the *Indian Act* that refuse Aboriginal and treaty rights, still need adequate attention. Although some amendments have been implemented, many issues inside and outside the *Indian Act* remain unresolved and continue to heat legal and academic discourses.¹²

In Chapter Three, I revisit the themes taken up in the preceding chapters. As I explore the relationship between art, authorship, and the interlinking subject positioning and agency that intervention art and environmental activism entail, I discuss at length the importance of multiplicity as an ongoing process capable of opening critical dialogue in the complexity of a changing world. Following Paulo Freire's belief that an authentic life is immersed in action that introduces "...men and women to a critical form of thinking about their world [and]...the role of people in the world and with the world as transforming rather than adaptive beings,"¹³ I emphasize the transformative role in art with a focus on critical art in the realm of cultural action. For example, I stress the importance of critical art practices that bring voices to the margins, in order to challenge and confront stigmatizing differences in apparently contradictory worlds. In other examples, I discuss developments in both independent film production and video art, as I look at a number of cinematic productions that express experiential views from culture to culture.

While the history of multiculturalism in Canada is useful in describing broad cultural interests that insure rights of cultural expression, when it comes to

acknowledging individual histories, from the view of agency and identity politics, the situation is complex and often limiting. For example, in consideration of multicultural fictions and themes that control and oppose the liberation of people, Freire's dictum speaks to transcend "limit-situations" in the name of "voice."¹⁴ For instance, Deepa Mehta's feature film, *Heaven on Earth*, speaks to situations, in some arranged marriages, which silence voice and compromise the safety of women. In other examples, I trace the search for freedom of expression through documentary productions such as Bonnie Sherr's film, *Not A Love Story*, that speaks to basic human rights violations; Rebecca Bellmore's video installation, *The Named and the Unnamed*, which is a commentary about violence toward women; and, Ileana Pietrobruno's recent film, *Girlfriend Experience*, that provides a provocative look at the contemporary sex trade. While these accounts carry a pessimistic view of sexual, racial, and ethnic identity, the films themselves provide an ethical focus, through critical cinematic art practices that challenge and transcend "limit-situations" that otherwise hold people back.¹⁵

In the last part of Chapter Three, I turn the discussion toward the intellectual and ethical focus in art practices located within environmental activism. Focusing on strategies of art intervention, I draw attention to minority men and women and ecological groups working to connect stories and issues across cultures and across time.

Although my focus on postcolonial theory undergrids an understanding of the complexities of subject positioning in a post-feminist society, I take

inspiration from Alain Badiou's assertion that the world needs "a philosophy fit for the unfolding years of the twenty-first century."¹⁶ Specifically, Badiou goes along with the idea that multiplicities that exist in individual stories and multicultural perspectives appear in "...the rational intertwining of the singularity of the event and of truth."¹⁷ Indeed, his philosophical position supports my quest for truth in art through "multi-presentational" situations as he concurs that interconnecting networks appear "in every situation, natural, neutral, or historical:"¹⁸ Moreover, when brought to light in an analysis of the production of critical art and cultural dialogue, Badiou's philosophy offers a place to link the singular and specific information in art, with wider experimental and inclusive conditions to interconnect with knowledge and wisdom throughout time.¹⁹

This dissertation is mainly intended to approach critical art as a way to think about the interconnected relationship between people, the world, and the unfolding flow of time. As I strongly believe that we exist in a world of interconnecting ecological networks—linking everything we do in life to an embodied aesthetic within a greater whole—I embrace Val Plumwood's dictum that we ought to view our changing world as an interactive "environment of culture."²⁰ Moreover, following James Lovelock's controversial scientific theory that develops the idea of a whole interconnected "Living Earth" moving through evolving and changing differences,²¹ I find additional support for my own views on the necessity of an ethical and ecological approach to understanding cultural differences in a global and changing world. I also adhere to D. W. Winnicott's

identity theory in which the idea of creative agency enfolds within the environment in which the person, community and nature intersect.²²

CHAPTER ONE

The impetus for the Inquiry: Concerning Basic Human Rights

The impetus for this inquiry encircles a deep concern for urgent issues that we confront everyday. One example is that in the First Nations' communities in Canada, the *Indian Act* denies Aboriginal peoples' basic human rights. While the Canadian *Indian Act* is an administrative document that pertains to issues involving Canada's First Peoples, in minorities of matrilineal/matrifocal societies, where important decisions are made by women and where women have the full responsibility of organizing and providing for the welfare of children, colonial patriarchal values orchestrate class, race, and ethnic discrimination.²³

Specifically, the Constitution Act of 1867 grants the Canadian Federal Parliament legal authority over Aboriginal peoples;²⁴ however, it is the consolidated *Indian Act* of 1876 which subjects Canada's Aboriginal peoples as wards of the Federal government. More to the point, the *Indian Act* grants the colonial government absolute control over their livelihood, their education, and their lands:

...In 1876, the first consolidated *Indian Act* reflected the government's preoccupation with land management, First Nations' membership and local government, and the ultimate goal of assimilation of Canada's Aboriginal population...despite numerous changes...the 1876 framework has been preserved fundamentally intact.²⁵

In the years following the Canadian Confederation, agents acting on the behalf of the Department of Indian Affairs enforce terms of the *Indian Act*; indeed, terms of the act define who qualifies and who is denied identity. With subjugation under the *Indian Act* residency on allotted “reserve” lands is also imposed.²⁶ It is important to note that the head of the department, Duncan Campbell Scott, rigidly interprets the *Indian Act* as an official policy for assimilation: “Our objective,” he states, “is to continue until there is not a single Indian that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question.”²⁷ According to John Tootoosis, a First Nations’ elder, Scott was bent on “...pressing the children of nature into the larger society.”²⁸

In 1920, under Scott’s direction, it becomes mandatory for all Canada’s Aboriginal children to attend Residential Schools. This move not only isolates the children from their culture and their families, it effectively removes them from their language groups. Indeed, under strict guidelines of a Eurowestern²⁹ education system, a great deal of attention is paid to forcibly prohibit Canada’s Aboriginal children from speaking their own language. Thus, upon returning to their families, for a brief respite from Residential School, conversation with family members and with the elders of the group is compromised.³⁰

Up until the mid years of the twentieth century, subjugation under the *Indian Act* is imposed throughout Canada. Residency in reserve communities is mandatory, Eurowestern education is enforced, and the colonizing society imposes a new aesthetic to clash with ancient traditions of the aboriginal societies.

The transfer, from basic nomadic existence, to settlement (on reserve) is generally seen by social theorists (of the day) as an important moment in the evolutionary progress of “civilization;” indeed, to the emigrant settler society it provides an advantageous opportunity to lay claim to vast parcels of land: but to the dispossessed, the transition represents a confliction that disrupts existing political traditions to create interference, on a daily basis, with ancient cultural mores.

Nevertheless, “reserve life” means living with family and band members and observing traditional customs.³¹ On the other hand, it means having to bend to harsh rules and conflicting ideologies imposed from the position of the Eurowestern worldview. For example, the *Indian Act* enforces the Eurowestern patriarchal convention of legally defining “...Indians [as] adult males and any wives were considered the dependants of such males.”³² As many groups follow matrilineal/matrifocal traditions, these rules enforce the paternal line to deny women parental and individual rights. Indeed, from terms that define who might be listed as a band member to rules directing where band members might reside, the transition from living “free” on the land to “confinement” on a government allotment generate cultural rearrangements on a grand scale.

For example, where the Eurowestern view of the land means private ownership and opportunities for individual economic development, the Native view of the world is to share the resources of the land. Moreover, the Native view is to learn ancient cultural ways and means of living in harmony to the land, in accordance with nature, and from the elders of the group.³³ Through the

performance of ancient cultural rituals, songs, and stories deeply embedded in the past, cultural information is brought forward and passed from seven generations and projected seven generations forward. This tradition, not only affirms group cohesion, it insures the continuity of the community. Additionally, as each generation adds a generation, this well known tradition articulates the concept of time immemorial and the unfolding of the infinite from a cultural view that is different, but no less valid than the Eurocentric view. However, with Eurowestern theories on economic efficiency imposed and Eurowestern institutionalized education compulsory, a Eurowestern political-ideology infiltrates all areas of family and cultural life. In spite of resistance, Aboriginal languages are lost and countless ancient cultural traditions vanished.

While “applied” anthropology contributes a vast body of information about Aboriginal peoples — before and after colonization — from the first peoples’ perspective it hardly stands as knowledge. Indeed, by myriad accounts, early researchers had only limited contact with native informants, which amount to misinformation or vast suppositions on the part of the non-native researchers. In Canada, facts of diverse language groups and extensive cultural areas, isolated by difficult geography, conjoin to create cultural analysis mainly for Eurowestern convenience through classification: “Like all generic phrases, they invariably disguise diversity for the sake of convenience.”³⁴ In response to colonial cultural classification, Mary Aski-piyewiskwew Longman, for example, notes that it is a

framing of representation that ignores evidence of cultural products of knowledge; indeed, from this view, it defines nothing more than Eurowestern ideologies.³⁵

One notable exception can be found in the ethnographic accounts recorded by James Alexander Teit. The main body of his material was collected for the Jesup North Pacific Expedition and carried out under the direction of Franz Boas.³⁶ Teit married Lucy Artko of the ‘NLaka’pamux First Nations, a group located in the southern interior of British Columbia, Canada. Accordingly, Teit was fluent in several local languages, to the extent that he enjoyed the trust of his native informants; thus, he was able to access otherwise closely guarded cultural information, “shamanic procedures,” and specific cultural rituals belonging only to women of the group.³⁷ Teit also recorded voices and songs on wax cylinders to reveal traces of wisdom and knowledge embedded in culture over time; many of these songs and stories explain “water mysteries,” mythical information about the origins of the land, and historical accounts of sacred connections to the land.³⁸

As Dara Culhane and others indicate, First Nations’ claims “...to living in an organized society, with borders and laws, of having owned, then and now, their lands and territories,” have had to meet tests, qualifications, and categories set by the colonizers.³⁹ To be sure, Aboriginal peoples throughout Canada contest these methods of division and differentiation; indeed, through many important turns, the courts provide “...a space for Aboriginal peoples to articulate their understanding of their own distinct cultures and their unique relationship to the land.”⁴⁰

The Indian elders in British Columbia question why they must subject their relationship to the land to a non-Indian court’s strict scrutiny:

why they must explain their use of the land to obtain 'rights' abstractly defined by others. They believe that the Indians have rights to their land because their people go back with the land thousands of years. What they do not understand is how the Crown acquired its 'rights' the their land⁴¹

—Lawyer Louise Mandell, 1987, *Native Culture on Trial*.

Such grounds the landmark trial of *Delgamuukw v. The Queen*, heard in British Columbia during 1987-1991.⁴²

The Crown argues that oral accounts of traditional relationships can only come under the “Hearsay Rule;” legally, reliance upon words and experiences is inadmissible as evidence in a court of law. The countering argument, from lawyers representing the Gitksan Wet’suwet’en, press for the acknowledgement of facts embedded in ancient cultural knowledge that is passed through generation to generation over time:

The Statement of Claim filed by the Gitksan and Wet’suwet’en” said expressions of ownership come through the *adaawk*, *kungax*, songs and ceremonial regalia; confirmation of ownership comes through totem poles erected to give those expressions a material base...⁴³

In this groundbreaking trial, Chief Justice McEachern agreed to hear the personal testimony of eighteen First Nations’ chiefs; and from this important case, several fundamental themes now set precedent in Canadian law.

Some themes follow the right to speak, others acknowledge cultural information resting in material objects of creativity, and still others affirm that individual stories can move from the realm of myth and musings to enter the realm of objective knowledge and critical fact. Moreover, this important case recognizes the fact that First Nations men and women can be “expert” observers

of their own cultural traditions; and, the fact that, although relationships with the world are different from Eurowestern views, they are no less valid. Paradoxically, as numerous court cases in Canada proceed, Culhane points out that they provide “...an opportunity for non-Aboriginal peoples to learn, and begin to develop an understanding of Aboriginal cultures on their own terms.”⁴⁴

However, in spite of significant court victories, policies of the colonizing government keep surfacing to confirm that the diktats imposed on the First Nations peoples “...have had profound impacts on the self-images of Native men and women, respectively, and on their relationship with each other.”⁴⁵ From facts of gender discrimination and sanctions against women’s culture, edicts that exclude women from voting in band elections, or partaking in band business, undermine women’s efficiency in group affairs.⁴⁶ For example, under foundational governing policies of the *Indian Act*, gender discrimination is set against women:

... a woman who married outside her band was required to enroll in the band of her husband. If she married a non-Indian, her status was taken away by law. Ironically, a non-Native woman who married an Indian man became a status Indian in her husband’s band.⁴⁷

To paraphrase Laura Peers, when it comes to maintaining identity as women and exercising influence women had in the past, regional history and ethnography tends to down play the importance of women’s contributions.⁴⁸ In addition, basic human rights and freedoms such as parental rights and equality issues, not addressed until the late 1980s, are still under hot debate.⁴⁹ Even so, over the last decade of the twentieth century and into the unfolding years of the twenty-first

century, First Nations women maintain the struggle to transcend conditions that limit and control their political voices. Emma LaRocque, for example, claims that in places of education, where aboriginal women hope to find empowerment, they find instead, academic sanctions prohibiting against the use of voice.⁵⁰ Indeed, Wade Davis describes sanctions against voice as “traumatic in the extreme” when “...in the original clash of culture, brilliant students of practical knowledge experience a lack of understanding by systems that fail to understand the genius of survival.”⁵¹

Acknowledging that practical knowledge and cultural materials from the past often indicate survival strategies, Longman nevertheless points out that, on the whole, the disavowal of cultural material that people live with everyday is a particular Eurowestern perspective.⁵² Longman re-contextualizes representation from the point of view that histories and stories be told not only to regain identity, but to be told in art specific to cultural values no less critical and objective than Eurocentric views.⁵³ Noting that as political activism of the 1960s fuels collective empowerment to spread political activism into native communities across Canada, Longman brings evidence of world knowledge in art that is different, but no less important than Eurowestern perceptions of the world.⁵⁴

Robert Davidson, for example, states that in the claim for a “place in the world” the politics of First Nations cultures and land claims mark a place of knowledge that art and culture calls upon, from the past, in order to move into the present:

Culture is a way of life. Culture is the foundations of a people. The safety of the people is dependent on the safety of the land. Our responsibility is to train and educate our children in the traditions and culture that has been proven effective for generations.

We are now singing out traditional songs, which have been handed down to us through the generations. There are only a few songs that have survived, but there are enough to set a standard from which we can compose new songs, as our forefathers did. These new songs express who we are now. We now sing an old song called “Eagle Spirit.” The song is old, but we have created a new dance that expresses who we are today. The image and meaning of that dance are expressions through the red Eagle mask. The red symbolizes the love we have for ourselves. It symbolizes the strength we are gaining as a people and the strength we need to reclaim our place in the world.⁵⁵

—Robert Davidson, Haida artist

There is no doubt that the colonial system of domination, in Canada, creates cultural conditions that cause excessive hardships for people accustomed to their own authority. Terms negotiated in trust and implemented through contracts, called treaties, are enforced by brutal government power—many treaty terms have been ignored, annulled, or simply broken—and most terms, if not all, deny Aboriginal peoples’ basic human rights. Over generations of imposed “principles of civilizing and assimilation,” government intervention increases to phase ancient rituals out.⁵⁶ For example, the Sun Dance ceremony of the people of the plains; the time honored Potlatch, which is a large gathering called “to recognize an individual’s claim to a particular status or inherited right,”⁵⁷ and, the Winter Dance gathering of the NLaka’pamux First Nations are criminalized. In addition, cultural materials are gathered up: destroyed or distributed among museums throughout the world.⁵⁸ On the whole, a flawed aesthetic, drawn from traditional Eurowestern political theory, introduces conflicting ideologies and social

conditioning to impact identity and heritage of diverse cultures surviving over thousands of years.⁵⁹ From the view of a “First Nations’ artist...living in a colonized county,” Longman writes, “I have had the challenges of a dual existence — living in two vastly different worlds that often have cultural collisions.”⁶⁰

Postcolonial influences before and after globalization

In the later part of the twentieth-century, Canada became known as a cultural mosaic. Rather than combat ethnocentrism, official government policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism were introduced to sustain cultural diversity and individual rights of expression. Apart from suspecting the reality of multicultural representation, an applicable argument centered on identity and subject positioning exposes a vulnerable side of multiculturalism.⁶¹

In a postcolonial world, multiculturalism has its detractors. For example, the encouragement of cultural traditions—food, exotic dress, and arranged marriages—ought to be abandoned because it fixes people into a static system of “synchronic essentialism.”⁶² Moreover, arranged marriages commonly lock women and men into oppressive cultural mores that are the least expressive of freedom and equality; indeed, numerous accounts reveal that arranged marriages often violate basic human rights.⁶³ Sunera Thobani contests, for example, that in the encouragement of multiculturalism, freedom for all is far from a reality.⁶⁴

However, she does admit that in the new global climate when multiculturalism is promoted as a “discourse of enrichment,” antagonism might be recognized and accepted as a unique route to a multiplicity purporting to characterize political pluralism in a more positive light.⁶⁵ Nonetheless, Thobani suspects that “multiculturalism more likely serves to attest to the enduring superiority of whiteness...and to certain rigidity in the cultures of racial others.”⁶⁶

On the other hand, where only the dominant law carries weight, Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, asserts that multiculturalism stands as a place to acknowledge a “particular society” rather than “the hyperreal...that bypasses the state in globality.”⁶⁷ Moreover, as activists claim multiplicity and pluralism as a changing strategy capable of standing against claims of the patriarchal “Son-of-Enlightenment” power, Spivak speaks to “multicultural activism as a place to challenge European Enlightenment to Reason as such.”⁶⁸

For Chantal Mouffe, multiculturalism creates a unity between experience and intuition capable of contesting against a fixed essentialist position; indeed, she sees the strategy of multiculturalism as a non-essentialist perspective that provides a countering argument for subject positioning.⁶⁹ In her view, a multiplicity of social relations attests a hegemonic position where antagonistic divisions, which are aspects of pluralistic democracy, encourage possible sites for political engagement:

How can we grasp the multiplicity of relations of subordination that can affect an individual if we envisage social agents as homogeneous and unified entities? What characterizes the struggle of [possible] new social movements is precisely the multiplicity of subject positions

which constitute a single agent and the possibility that this can become the site of an antagonism and thereby politicized.⁷⁰

Mouffe insists that in order to think politics in a post-feminist world, we must accept the fact that “no identity is ever definitively established.” Rather, identity as such comes from the multiplicity of subject positioning and hegemonic practices.⁷¹

Accepting a position of multiplicities for subject positioning, Homi K. Bhabha, for example, insists that empowerment comes in a “profound process of redefinition” that involves “narratives” that are “internal to national identity.”⁷² Bhabha submits that the image of human identity that best exemplify his thinking can be found in the work of art, for example, in Renée Green’s statements about the binary logic—the consensual and the conflictual—through which “identity and difference are often constructed”⁷³ and also in the “broadcast voice of Guillermo Gomez-Peña who works “a borderline of culture.”⁷⁴ For Bhabha, multiplicity is a commitment to theory that is capable of moving between and across the values of political and cultural production:

... a sign of political maturity to accept that there are many forms of political writing whose difference effects are obscured when they are divided between the ‘theoretical’ and the ‘activist’...they are both forms of discourse and to that extent they produce rather than reflect their objects of reference.⁷⁵

Through an international and interdisciplinary approach to culture, Bhabha’s ideas and principles function side by side in a “discursive space” to inscribe an articulation of cultural *hybridity*.⁷⁶

Conversely, although Griselda Pollock appreciates an interdisciplinary methodology for its heuristic grounding, she finds it less useful when it comes to teaching cultural analysis.⁷⁷ When it comes to research attuned toward studio practices, Pollock, together with Mieke Bal, develop a “transdisciplinary” methodology more capable of addressing concepts embedded in diverse theories and many practices “that constitute the arts and humanities: the fields of thought that puzzle over what we are and what it is that we do, think, feel, say, understand and live.”⁷⁸

I adopt this methodology as I also seek parallels between critical art and the articulation of pluralities: through the positioning of agency in cultural actions, in art attuned toward the articulation of concepts arising for change and difference in the flow of time, and the interconnectedness of all lived experience.

Although lived experiences noticeably support intimate patterns of identity, when these patterns are deemed universal, problems arise that must be addressed. For example, Diane Fuss explains that in theoretical arguments that pit “natural givens” against socio-political processes, the authority of experience is disavowed, because “rarely” does it “advance the discussion” and “frequently” it results in “confusion.”⁷⁹ Additionally, in the anti-essentialist argument, “female experience,” is discredited from the view that a “feminist pedagogy” cannot stand as an “official representative” for an entire community.⁸⁰ While affirming the possibility of an anti-essentialism position, which in itself holds a degree of essentialism, Spivak, asserts that in a claim for the production of “truth” from

experience “...there is always a degree of feasibility, but there is also always the impossibility that it can address all experiences universally.”⁸¹ Chantal Mouffe also asserts that it is futile to keep searching for a “feminist discourse...that corresponds to the ‘real’ essence of womanhood [nevertheless] the struggle for equality of women should not be abandoned.”⁸²

Without a doubt, Mouffe declares that “by now the real task is to show the struggle against the multiple forms in which the category ‘woman’ is constructed in subordination [and] to show how it expands the possibilities for an understanding of women’s multiple forms of subordination.”⁸³ In other words, in the course of developing a “plural democracy” Mouffe states that “discourses that assume the category ‘women’ to be necessarily subordinate, are to be avoided;” however, in spite of this, the “struggles against oppression” should not be forsaken.”⁸⁴ Instead, Mouffe speaks to the possibility that “...many feminisms can reflect on the conditions for creating effective equality of women.”⁸⁵ Maintaining that such a project does not reject the “concept of identity” Mouffe argues that from this position “...women can struggle against forms of subordination that exist in many social relations and come to a clearer understanding of subject positioning.”⁸⁶

Pedagogy, literacy, and multicultural teaching

From Paulo Freire's standpoint on ethical pedagogy, the focus moves easily, and quickly, from an illiterate, assumed underprivileged, third world population, to a pedagogy that takes ideas about knowledge and literacy, linked to the Enlightenment project of progress and order, to socioeconomic and cultural political positioning that brings acts of knowledge together in "dialogical relations," within teaching and learning. For example, this might merely be a simple act of learning to read a labour contract; however, to paraphrase Spivak, to know something does not necessarily mean acquiring the ability to act."⁸⁷ For Spivak, a turn toward teaching literature, for example, as a transnational multicultural act rests in "knowing about something and learning to do something."⁸⁸ In exemplifying diversity and contingency, Spivak claims a place for difference that speaks to the "complexity of the human condition," setting a parallel with her interests in multicultural teaching.⁸⁹

By connecting experience and objects of cultural production to "global resistance," Spivak observes that through "ideas of social redress through the notion of rights...today's "native informants" collectively attempt to make their own history as they act (in the most robust sense of agency)."⁹⁰ Speaking out for claims to cultural as a possible site for a critique of Eurowestern rational structures of civil society, Spivak expands on Foucault's idea of "culture" as a compatible term for "the multicultural struggle" as she makes a similar claim with the intention that culture:

...lends a complex strategic situation in a particular society. “Our culture,” with its claim to a pattern of behavior beyond reason alone is opposed to the claim of the culture of the European Enlightenment to Reason as such. In its paleonymic—as a name with a history, in other words—and in its idiomatic strength, multiculturalism—as long as it does not code mimicry as resistance—performs a critique...of the rational structures of civil society.⁹¹

In other words, as culture supports identity and identity the individual, Spivak claims a place to embrace a “more frankly ethnocentric and less professedly Universalist [identity]”⁹²

Claiming that multiculturalism can offer a place for identity, LaRocque seeks support for cultural background knowledge in academic research, from the belief that a loss of voice is a loss of “authentic reflection of the human condition.”⁹³ Drawing attention to personal reflective processes in multicultural approaches to education, she presses for a cultural approach to academic research that affirms her status:

...as a Native woman, [I] am compelled to pursue and express my scholarship quite differently from the way my non-native counterparts do. I do this by maintaining orality in writing, taking an interdisciplinary approach to genre, calling for ethical re/considerations...and openly referring to “voice” within academic studies.⁹⁴

To paraphrase Longman, such common problems can be frustrating, especially for the artist who wants to move away from traditional modes of expression. On the other hand, Longman writes, “it can be rewarding, especially when a connection is made;”⁹⁵ That is to say, when art from a different cultural perspective is understood as an objective reflection contextualizing the human experience, hope is raised for human compassion.⁹⁶ In a contemporary application of Freire’s

dialogical pedagogy, Rita L Irwin, for example, has developed “a living practice,” in teaching, that is directed toward raising the value of personal expression in art. For example, by urging the articulation of ethnocentric and cultural differences in the classroom, she calls attention to “memory, identity, reflection, meditation, storytelling, interpretation, and representation.”⁹⁷ Additionally, through the combination of text and image, Irwin encourages students to “integrate knowing, doing, and making” through a dialogical approach in art, that way challenging normative written languages of instruction.⁹⁸ In other words, to quote Freire:

Because dialogue is an encounter between women and men who name the world, it must not be a situation where some name the word on behalf of others. It is an act of creation... Dialogue cannot exist, however in the absence of a profound love for the world and for people.⁹⁹

Conclusion

While the Canadian Constitution and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms guarantee individual and collective rights for all Canadians, and a multicultural policy sustains the rights of expression of cultural groups, extending the appearance of democratic pluralism in Canada, from an inquiry into experiences of First Nations’ peoples in Canada, I explain how socio-political problems, arising from a flawed Eurowestern political aesthetic, complicate the Canadian dream for a just and pluralistic democratic society. I demonstrate that multicultural activism, in a post-feminist global society, is capable of addressing contemporary issues of agency, identity, and subject positioning. In addition, for a

dissertation attuned toward articulating politico-efficiency of cultural action in art, I draw upon a transdisciplinary methodology to connect diverse concepts that flow between intellectual curiosity, postcolonial theory, and philosophy. Ending this chapter, I bring evidence from classroom experiences to remind us that individual expression matters and that dialogical practices in art and literature foster cultural relationships between people, the world, and the unfolding flow of time.

CHAPTER TWO

Political Culture

While Canadian history contains its share of intolerance, prejudice, and oppression, it also contains many attempts to find new and creative mechanisms for the accommodation difference. As a result, Canada has developed a distinctive conception of the relationship between citizenship and identity.

— Will Kymlicka, *Citizenship, Communities, and Identity in Canada* (2004)

One clue to understanding the logic of Canada's unique pluralistic democracy lies in the complexity of a political discourse centered on the concept of building a nation that is multinational, bilingual, inherently tolerant of race and religious differences and the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity. The rule of law, found in philosophical principles of liberal universalism and ideas about democratic freedom uphold the concept of freedom of expression and social justice. What is left out of this conversation is how the Aboriginal first people interpret the story. The theory of equality of opportunity is a political response to building a just nation. The idea of universal franchise,

human rights, and civic participation carries on into the current, international, era of decolonization. All of these concepts, principles of law, and rules of conduct are enshrined by Canada's written Constitution 1982 and the theory of equal opportunity is ensured in the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. How these principles and concepts play out in the long history of Canada deserve attention, I think. It is in the story from colonialism to a separate independent country, that the idea of a pluralist democratic government manifested itself in a strong federalist movement that was first sealed by the Constitutional Settlement of 1867, also known also as The Canadian Confederation, and then again in the Canadian Constitution 1982.

The historical political narrative, about the "making of Canada" however, is an off-shoot of the "founding" of New France and that, in turn, belongs to the history of exploration and conquest which is connected to the development of the first global economy. As maritime empires advanced in naval technology the world became smaller. European explorations contacted not only different cultures, but they "discovered" an entire—so called—New World.

For the original inhabitants of what would become Canada, it was not a first time experience. From Norse journals it is known that explorers had sailed from Greenland along the Atlantic coast past Labrador and had stopped along the way to trade with the indigenous inhabitants, R. Douglas Francis, historian, explains:

From the ninth to the twelfth century, Scandinavia was the leading European sea power, with a commercial empire extending from

Russian in the east to Sicily in the south and to Normandy, Ireland, and Greenland in the west. The Norse navigators were the Western world's best. Their occupation of parts of Greenland [by 985] was a continuation of their voyages from the European mainland...in 986 A.D....Bjarni Herjólfsson, the owner of a ship that traded between Norway and Iceland...met with stormy and cloudy weather and were driven off course for several days. When the weather cleared they sighted flat land covered with woods. As this country did not fit the description of Greenland, Bjarni sailed north...Bjarni was thus the first known European to sight eastern North America.¹⁰⁰ (R. Douglas Francis 1996)

In this part of the story the Norse legend tells about sighting land, eventually written journals confirm that claim that they had numerous encounters with the indigenous peoples from the very start. From historical research R. Douglas Francis et al describe the first encounters as “conflicted” and “violent” on the part of both cultures. “The recorded contact,” notes that it “was characterized by violence,” the journals state that the Norse came upon an encampment of *skraelings*, a derivative name they used for the inhabitants which meant barbarian, they set upon the natives and immediately killed all but one person. (R. Douglas Francis 1996)

From Norse “sagas,” it was told that the survivor later returned with support and in a retaliatory “skirmish,” the Norse leader was “mortally wounded...and the crew returned to Vinland.” (R. Douglas Francis 1996) As the Norse expeditions continued, they met with hostilities, but there is a written account describing commercial trading which took place between the different cultures. Apparently on subsequent expeditions a few brief, often hostile, encounters occurred but it appears that the Norse did return often enough to buy wood from the *skraelings*,

but because of hostile relations with the natives, they were prevented from establishing a permanent colony. Alan D. McMillan, a professor of archaeology and sociology explains:

...remains of sod-walled houses indicate [Norse] settlement around AD 1000. Their interaction with the Native People of the area was hostile, and Norse attempts to occupy the land seem to have been frustrated by the Native defense of their territory. This experience forestalled European colonization for another five centuries.¹⁰¹

These Norse stories are widely accepted as factual truths. Following this dialogue the archaeologist Anne Stine Ingstad unearthed evidence of a brief attempt of settlement located round what is known as L'Anse aux Meadows in Newfoundland.¹⁰² (R. Douglas Francis 1996)

Following the threads of the exploration narrative, stories abound about Basque whalers off the coast of Labrador that conjoin with Portuguese accounts of reaching North America by “island hopping across the Atlantic.” (R. Douglas Francis 1996) Spanish chronicles signal that the French, English, and Dutch explorers quickly adapted to the global economy to expand their commercial interests toward a North American trade; in fish, fur, timber and eventually metals. These stories expand the lure of trade and commerce well past the “demarcation line” of Spanish and Portugal dominion, set in place “by the Treaty of Tordesillas in 1494.”¹⁰³ (R. Douglas Francis 1996)

While historiographical accounts point to the rise of the first global economy as maritime nation empires gained expertise in navigation technology, oral stories from the Natives of North America prove that following their own cultural

patterns, the indigenous peoples were adept entrepreneurs. There is plenty of evidence from anthropology to point out the fact that Aboriginal cultures had developed a complex society based on ideas about living in harmony with the elements and on the land in ways that require cooperation. This ideology of sharing carries a line of thought about community living, collaboration, and the concept of egalitarianism into the political environment of the colonial political reform and into the current century as Canada's federal-provincial governments struggle to come to terms with the concept of Indigenous nationalism

Moreover, it is well known that Canada's Aboriginal societies were fully capable of administrating what amounts to complex nation-to-nation trade agreements with the Europeans. Additionally, in the context of archaeological evidence, a lengthy narrative emerges to explain how and why material objects hold an important key to understanding societies of the past. While anthropological endeavors enter to combine oral history with written ethnohistory the living conditions of Aboriginal communities have been mostly described from Eurocentric documentation. McMillan et al elaborate:

The Huron and Petun are known primarily through ethnohistoric documents. European chronicles describe the culture. ...Village locations were carefully chosen...requirements were access to fresh water and arable soils available firewood and a location that could be defended....Before the fur trade warfare among the Iroquois was commonly to avenge previous deaths and acquire prestige...Captives were distributed among those who participated...Some, particularly women and children, were adopted...usually to replace members lost in the previous warfare. They eventually became full members of this society....¹⁰⁴ (McMillan 2004)

From the oral archive of the Aboriginal peoples the complexity of sociopolitical organization was well established long before the European nations enter the picture. Where historians and Aboriginal scholars disagree, is not only in interpretation or misinterpretation. On one hand, there is evidence from spiritual beliefs that Aboriginal cultures hold a worldview that connect their societies to the land from time immemorial in a way that cannot be disputed. On the other, scientific research claims that ecological conditions could not have supported human life as early as Aboriginal myths of origin claim.

As I investigate conditions that mark Canadian sociopolitical and cultural activities, my research describes how various groups of decision makers sought to entrench the politics of inclusion not only from an interest in economic development, but from a belief in the power of creative policies that would accommodate social and cultural differences. In so far as the idea of social change is grounded in philosophical principles, the colonial reformers advanced ideas based in humanism as a grounding progressive choice, but this is often deemed an essentialist position. Yet, what can be more essential than to take an ethical stand to defend basic human rights? While it may be taking an academic risk, in terms of defining human rights as a core of “human kind,” it should not be considered a risk to defend rights protection as an essential core of democratic governance.

In theory, this position goes along with ideas about the liberal defense of freedom in the context of a discourse on the situation to encourage “transformation of reality,” where voices other than the dominating group may be

heard. Some of the most dynamic forces for social change insist that self-determination is a fundamental human right. From the recommendation that public education provides a solid sociopolitical ground, to the call for environmental stewardship sustainable economic development and respect for “direct” community action/participation, the political rhetoric turns on such values as the dignity and rights of individual human beings.

In Canada, political philosophy is rooted in the belief of liberal democracy, directed toward freedom equality and social justice for all Canadians. The fundamental challenge to achieving social justice may be traced to the struggle to bring three different ‘founding’ nations together in a federalist union directed toward providing good government mutual respect for cultural differences, which includes the support for public health and education, and economic development.

An enduring characteristic of Canadian political culture is that it is inherently pluralistic. Simply put, colonial political reformers such as Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine, George-Étienne Cartier, George Brown, and Robert Baldwin held strong views on creating a federal system that would divide political powers between federal-provincial jurisdictions. As such, federalism ought to respect the value of cultural diversity, language, and religious differences as it upholds the rights of ethnic minorities it ought to uphold the values of fairness, and freedom of expression. With public education held high as a humanizing

project, public policies directed toward social justice; include ideas about environmental justice.

Continuing this line of thinking, numerous groups of decision makers have declared their allegiance to the concept of creating a Just Society. Among the list of constitutional reformers the names of Lester B. Pearson and Pierre Elliott Trudeau stand out. Pearson drew public attention in the 1950s as the president of the UN General assembly and he entered federal politics with a personal irenic code directed toward world peace and a liberal mind-set directed toward social change. From his stand on peace, environmental sustainability, social and cultural equality, Pearson also took a strong personal interest toward supporting the arts, humanities, and the social sciences. Eventually, moving to the leadership position of the federal Liberal Party of Canada, Pearson became Canada's 14th Prime Minister. Once elected, Pearson's Liberal government moved quickly on social reform.

In the same decade, Trudeau entered public office. Bringing a decidedly activists' view toward possibilities of social change, Trudeau drew the attention of the voting public and in 1968 became Canada's 15th Prime Minister. Both political leaders held equally strong views on public policy. Significantly, Trudeau made a strong personal commitment to patriate the British North America Act 1867 and to ratify a Canadian Constitution with a Charter of Rights and Freedoms. Importantly, both leaders sought to distance politics from religion, and in the name of citizens' rights, they directed their attention to sustaining

individual rights of freedom of expression and association, the right of individual faith and collective religion, the advancement of higher education, cultural equality, and social justice.

In other matters, and seeking to build a Just Society for all Canadians, political policies hang on liberal ideals that uphold the role of the state to be essentially logical, rational, and humanistic. From the knowledge that the state upholds individual rights, both Pearson and Trudeau believed that Canada had to move into the modern world, and to do so, religion must be separated from the state. The key note of the argument encircle politics as culture and from the argument for social change, they directed efforts toward justice, with a focus on the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity.

For a deeper understanding of the argument for social change, it is necessary to accept the fact that disparities exist between Canada's federal government and the provinces. These animosities have been attributed, by some, to the unstable nature of Canada's pluralistic democracy. Other sociopolitical critics point to the complexity of administering a multinational society, while others see the problem as a consequence of a "backward" thinking society, especially in Quebec where an entire provincial population was held in the grip of the Church. In order for Canadians to live together in peace and harmony social change had to be a necessity. From numerous accounts, the pivotal year of social change is 1960.

The historian, Fernand Ouellet, offers a logical explanation of the sociopolitical imbalance circa the 1800s that existed between Canada east and Canada west that may be found in the context of an economic paradigm. According to this view, a sharp contrast could be discerned between the “forward thinking” British English-speaking entrepreneur who was more or less in control of commercial enterprises; and, the “backward” French-speaking “Folk-society” of Canada east, which was controlled by the Catholic clergy’s monopolies in education, health, and their hostility toward urban growth.¹⁰⁵ (Ouellet 2010)

Another explanation for social imbalance may be found in the fact that in the 1850s a mass “exodus of French Canadians to the industrial towns of New England” occurred that alarmed the Catholic clergy. Ouellet explains that in an all out attempt to regain its power, the Church actively sought to edge the state out of institutional power in Quebec. In this atmosphere, the state acquiesced to the religious orders. The Church took over everything from libraries, mental health, medicine, theology to the law and all of this was held in the hands of the Church. In relation to those conditions, the clerical influence made it almost impossible for a lay teacher or lay health worker to find employment in Quebec.¹⁰⁶ (Ouellet 2010)

Louis Althusser’s analysis on such a “sphere of ideology,” is where moral judgment and social values meet at the intersection of the “Marxist theory of the state,” which provides an apt description of how the struggle for social change intricately involves cultural situations. On one hand there is the economic base of

free-market capitalism, controlled or distributed through ideological policies of state socialism. On the other, there is the constituent matrix of the community which is bound to leadership groups in various ways.

As Althusser characterized it “State power” is held in the administrative grip of governmental authority protected in law and order, this he called “the Repressive State Apparatus.”¹⁰⁷ The “Ideological State Apparatuses” (ISA) contains certain realities that are sanctioned and created by religious beliefs and family values, which are all promoted and upheld in various educational systems. (Althusser 2003) Additionally, as Althusser proclaimed, a divisional line appears between the public sphere of “State Power” and the private status of “State apparatuses” which he claimed to be a pluralistic unity, that functions at the level of economics to be described as “...the *site* of the class struggle.” However, this also belongs within the realm of “...the imaginary relationship of individuals to their conditions of existence.” (Althusser 2003)

In the sense that Althusser explained “Ideology” as representations of ethical values, religious beliefs, legal and political systems, he proclaimed that while these are “world outlooks,” they have no basis in reality. What they all “need,” Althusser claimed “is “interpretation,” and that, will always be found in relation to the very “conditions of existence.” (Althusser 2003) The structural implications of Althusser’s social analysis, rests within the category of knowledge and is evidenced, for example, in terms of economic politics where, in the province of Quebec, for instance “given the clerical control” over education, it

places public education the control of the private realm. Moreover, in terms of the British North America Act 1867, education was relegated to the responsibility of the provinces. In light of the tight grip of the ISA, given that the church held dominion over universities, hospitals and schools, in Quebec, it placed public education into the “private” realm.

Michel Foucault sites the relationship between the liberal democratic movement and the humanist model of progress, in the world, as the working of state power over cultural empowerment in the realm of “biopolitics.” A term that he coined to describe the measure of social inequality based on governmental control of the power of knowledge. Obviously, to follow the logic of Ouellet’s research, in French-speaking Quebec, giving power of education and knowledge over to the church, the State, lost control over “essential matters, including the economy.”¹⁰⁸ (Ouellet 2010)

For the political reformers of the 1960s it was necessary to regain political power in Quebec and the solution was to “declericalize” Quebec and to “update intellectual and material resources” to quote Ouellet.¹⁰⁹ (Ouellet 2010) A key component to understanding Canadian liberal views about democracy in the 1960s revolves around a “theme of secularization and modernization.”(Ouellet 2010) An offshoot in all of this is the fact that leading up to Canada’s one hundredth anniversary of Confederation and the year long celebration in 1967, federal monies flowed into the economy to advance the concept of pluralism

manifested in federal policies of multiculturalism and bilingualism, but more so in support of the arts and humanities.

The fact that Canada *is* a multinational state that seeks to find a national identity in unity through difference is contained by an abiding idea that different nations may exist together while respecting and sustaining their differences. Through advancing the concept of harmony, the practice of negotiation is sought in response to sociopolitical antagonisms. Because the sociopolitical discourse is upheld in an official policy of multiculturalism in the advancement of cultural equality for all Canadians, the acknowledgement that different cultural values and different national identities may bring people together in a unique form of nationalism—rooted in cultural respect—ought to quell any hint of victimization. Sunera Thobani, assistant professor at the Women’s Centre for Research and Gender Relations at the University of British Columbia is, however, highly critical of the political rhetoric of social unity. The troubling questions of citizenship, national identity, and indigenous rights, have sullied the waters of social justice, because, as Thobani states, “migration projects of the British Empire established racial hierarchies” that still manage to project the “imperial goal” of citizenship, “which exalt the humanity of their claimants...even as they are closed off to other human beings through networks of power.”¹¹⁰ Despite official Canadian policies on multiculturalism, tied to claims of inclusivity, social injustice issues are key concerns in visioning Canada as a Just Society.

In all of this, *humanist ideology* stands as the pivot around which political activity moves, in Canada. However, from the stand on secular governance to its political language as educator, the narrative of political culture holds a central place in the discourse that directs political ideology in Canada toward developments in post-humanism. Nevertheless, because Canada's long history of governance carries a strong sense of fairness and a social framework built on respect for individual rights, language, religious difference, and cultural diversity it upholds humanist ideas that culture might advance social change. But more than that, in terms of a people capable of choosing a future together, history proves that Canada's multilayered cultural values are not static; they change with different forms of freedom of expression, in the arts, the media, the political realm and more so, in the realm of technology. Although the concept of equality still stands as the humanist idealistic goal of a Just Society; such a society is also capable of addressing non-human needs, for example, in terms of environmental justice. Far from identifying any common features to describe human rationality there is a parallel discourse belonging to the story of nation building in Canada that belongs to the realm of political theory that advances the notion of the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity.

In all of this there is the idea that Canada is a voluntary society of different nationalities wishing to live together. Conjoined with a theory of knowledge that is gleaned through lived experiences, the concept of different and the multiplicity of complex ideas is held in the democratic concept of freedom of

expression. While applying the posthumanist term to Canadian society is as elusive as turning to postmodernism, Neil Badmington describes posthumanism in respect to the influence of poststructuralism and to the work of Jacques Derrida and Michel Foucault. More so, in Louis Althusser's analysis of "*Marx's theoretical anti-humanism*" any practical application of theory is considered an "effect of social conditions."¹¹

Thus, as I examine social change in Canada I draw upon certain realities that promote a resistance to assimilation "implicit in humanism," and point to political elements that promote concepts of difference. In this sense, the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity falls in line with Althusser's description of a Marxist "*praxis*" wherein the "characteristic articulation" of the sociopolitical economy, and the cultural, scientific, artistic endeavors are based on the "specific *human practice* and the specific articulation of the unity of human society."¹² While the difference between the "problematic of *Human Nature*" and Marxist "*theoretical anti-humanism*" as described by Althusser, appears only as a degree of convergence, when taken into the realm of a practical application of theory, for example, it is important to note Trudeau's stand on the exercise of equality, because it is here that the liberal political agenda in Canadian has been directed toward the importance of practical reasoning proper to the study of "human praxis." Trudeau explains:

...what led me to politics was not a desire to fight for freedom; in a way, that was yesterday's battle. In my thinking, the value with the highest priority in the pursuit of a Just Society had become equality. Not the procrustean kind of equality where everyone is raised or

lowered to a kind of middle ground. I mean equality of opportunity. For where is there justice in a country in which an individual had the freedom to be totally fulfilled, but where inequality denies him the means? And how can we call a society just unless it is organized in such a way as to give each individual his due regardless of his state of birth, his means or his health?...active politics gave me a way to bring a larger measure of justice to the organization of the state...¹¹³

In the sense that I claim a posthumanist direction in Canadian politics—in light of Trudeau’s remark on the practical application of a specific level of human practice, directed toward equality—I also I draw attention to postcolonial, post-feminist writers and artists such as Canadian Aboriginal scholars, Jo-Anne Fiske, Emma LaRocque and Mary Longman, who all contest the function of power through narratives that are based in the fact of the freedom of expression of everyday lives.

Pointing toward changes in attitude toward the possibility of changing the world, through acting together, many postcolonial post-feminist scholars deem that lived experiences and localized information to add a paradoxical scepticism about education to claim that knowledge which comes from lived experiences belongs to the body of world knowledge. Jo-Anne Fiske explains:

Colonial education is typically viewed as a cultural invasion....Colonial curricula ignore, contradict, and deny the students’ culture: their language is forbidden and their daily life is structures according to foreign moral precepts of the colonizers....The practices of colonial education...not only failed to assimilate Aboriginal peoples,[it] unintentionally provided the foundational upon which Aboriginal leaders successfully built structures of resistance....In the final analysis...women resisted efforts to undermine their social positions and [restrictions] on their personal autonomy...to selectively utilize skills and knowledge beneficial to themselves.¹¹⁴

Fiske gives credit for resistance to “leaders,” but it is also important to note that resistance to “cultural invasion” came also from the intimate experience of women and men who did not wait to find a political language, but challenged the gendered language that created divisions where, in actuality there were none. The female embodiment is not an essentialist position it is simply a process of daily life in which politically, the argument for equality of opportunity is carried out in the name of social justice for all. In Canada, however, it has to be made known that through the harsh and gendered terms of the Indian Act, Aboriginal women have had to bow under the and heavy hand of European patriarchal law thereby to make to struggle to be heard immensely more difficult.

In consideration of the role of gender politics and lived experiences, it may be said that posthuman histories challenge stereotypical power relations between the human and gender constructs in light of revealing historical transformations where the gendered nature of power obscures the authenticity of women’s “voices.”¹¹⁵ In countering “what has been left out of the official accounts of the marginal,” a resistance to “imperialist” education brings a compelling argument against the dominating discourse to insert an alternative, critical narrative, of the colonized to the margins of society.

Describing the posthumanist process as a “performative” situation that provides a break from the stereotypical “hopelessly male dominated” picture of culture as a whole, where other voices are both “partial and conditional” a new discourse enters to describe posthumanism as a “body” in history as well as a

personal activity. Paula Rabinowitz, a feminist “posthumanist” cultural historian explains:

Poised between action and representation, post human bodies...are bodies living outside national, sexual, economic borders. They exceed and override borders by tuning bodies into acts and actions into representations. Eliminating the distinction between action and articulation, deed and word, the post human body is still saturated with stories of humanity that circulate around it; it speaks through a language straddling the borders between sickness/health, male /female, real/imaginary. It tells stories however through those already told; it rips off the past to refuse the future. And so the posthuman alien and marginal like the subaltern probably cannot speak because it is always spoken through stories that someone else already told.¹¹⁶

In light of a philosophy of social pluralism that undergrids Canada’s political pluralistic democracy, cultural politics anticipate social change at the level of the philosophy of multiculturalism that is a central feature of the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity. Not to be interpreted as the ideal of humanism, it is the practical application that closes off the essentialist interpretation. Moreover, the theory of equality opens an alternative idea that different people can live together, without assimilating. Indeed with the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity to ground social values that seek to uphold ethnocultural justice, the social constructs of society ought also to embrace environmental justice. While this is an ongoing discourse, evidenced from the work of ecologists such as Dr. David Suzuki and ecofeminists like Val Plumwood and political feminists such as Maud Barlow there is a greater and growing awareness of the consequences of climate change.

As I argue a position from ideas about the necessity for inclusion, I draw upon examples from colonial history and from Aboriginal oral traditions, histories, stories, cultural objects that promote a circular concept of knowledge of things of the world that looks less like a fixed horizon and more like a idea of equidistance sharing and cooperation, which is closer to a philosophy of multiplicity where things —people, pigs, peacocks and rocks—all belong to the greater cosmology; in which everything is interconnected. In the theory of discourse, pioneered by Paulo Freire in the realm of education, cooperation encourages freedom of expression, but this is not from the philosophy of “giving” voice to the voiceless, it is from active participation in community, in politics and coming to know the freedom of expression through dialogue.¹¹⁷ (Freire 1992)

As Canada maintains the ideal of multinationalism and upholds an official policy of multicultural citizenship in a framework of bilingualism there is a promise to protect freedom of expression and citizen rights central to the theory of discourse wherein respect for the other and for the human right to be heard is defended, along with the exercise of freedom of expression, with is paramount with the values of a just society. Indeed, in the twenty-first century, human rights are protected more solidly in the Canadian Constitution than some other democracies. Oddly enough, that promise is also embedded in a British colonial regime devoted to the concept of responsible government as an essential political element in maintaining public order.

The relevance of peace, equality, and fair responsible governance are key ingredients in Canada's historical experience tied to important Colonial Acts of 1701, 1763, 1764, 1774, and 1791. To paraphrase John Ralston Saul, there is a fixation on the concept of egalitarianism that carries an echo of English socialism and ideals of the Scottish Enlightenment, but there is also an alternative source where an indigenous idea of egalitarian balance is tied to a living web of historical experience linked to the notion of relationships. Saul elaborates:

Across North America, First Nations shared the idea that people were linked primarily by relationships, not by blood. Many of the nations had ritual adoption to replace people who were killed. This often involved captives taken in battle being traded as slaves to another nation, where, through difficult trials they became someone else. This may seem a violent form of transformation to most people today.... The indigenous approach often included the belief that people could pass through a metamorphosis into a different form of belonging—they were not locked into a single role determined by race.¹¹⁸

Colonial “fairness” is found in many documents that associate equality with justice and as such, fair arrangements allude to an egalitarian concept of inclusion and later to political concept of equal economic opportunity. Eventually to a liberal democratic concept of freedom and ethical judgment all directed toward upholding the dignity of the individual. With the British conquest of New France circa 1760, military rule ensured public order; however, British colonial officials soon took over governance to eventually direct attention to the development of responsible government.

The idea of authority and public order as a central principle of power may be found embedded in historical documents that carry political “instructions” to

various British governors to ensure peace, welfare and good government.

However, as Saul explains it the word “order” was soon deleted from what amounts to “proto-constitution” documents and replaced with the phrase, “*Peace, Welfare, and Good government.*” (Saul 2009) In the texts of several other colonial bills Saul’s research reveals that the British governor James Murray was given:

... ‘full power and authority to make, constitute, or ordain laws, statutes, and ordinances for the *publick peace, welfare, and good government* of our said Government’ He used his power to treat the religious civil and linguistic rights of the francophone Canadiens as normal rights, though this would not have been the case in Britain and he had as yet legal authority to do so. That legal authority would come in 1774 with the Quebec Act.¹¹⁹

In the third decade of the nineteenth century similar instructions were embedded in the text of the British North America Act 1867 (BNA Act), taken together with concept of “*fairness*” as a guiding principle for social justice, the theory of responsible government enters the political dialogue as an integral and practical part of the ongoing political conversation in Canada.¹²⁰ (Saul 2009) The goal of the State in all of this has been directed toward inclusion and cultural cohesion. In another way, as Canada’s political culture adheres to the concept of multinationalism, in the context of fairness, inclusivity was extensively promoted in the mid-twentieth century, as political policies meant to bring different people together through cultural politics of multiculturalism and the theory of equality of opportunity was touted as a guiding principle to ensure social justice for all Canadians.¹²¹

From the historical experiences of Canada's Aboriginal peoples, apart from what is described as the devastating and lasting negative impact of colonialism, Aboriginal leaders and cultural historians stress the importance of the indigenous concept of egalitarianism. The interpretation goes past the Western concept of "mankind" as dominant and superior in the world and past modern humanism to break with anthropological concepts and to embrace the idea of an intrinsic connection with the environment directed toward promoting care for the earth and ecological systems that are all part of an ideology based on living in a spiritual relationship with the environment, which at the moment sustains life.

In political judgement, negotiation rather than power principles, are central ideas in Aboriginal practices. This is where stress is placed on the practical application of consensus. Upheld in a sense of order grounded in a traditional council, order is dedicated to reaching voluntary agreement on contentious matters through discourse; these councils are often described as a "council of fire."¹²² (McMillan 2004) In these meetings, space is created for the plurality of voices to enter the community. In addition, the oral history of Aboriginal statements of cultural identity that are bound to traditional ideas about inclusivity that ought to belong to the scholastic discourse, but until recently Aboriginal practices have often been ignored. In matters of political and community rituals, societies have been conjoined through the concept of consensus, although this history also reveals dissent in Aboriginal communities throughout Canada. McMillan et al, draw attention to the fact that:

The council fire of the league of the Iroquois was rekindled among the Six Nations of the Grand River. The fire had been extinguished in their New York homeland during the American Revolutionary War, when no common decision could be reached. The Six Nations in Ontario found themselves with the larger Iroquois population and reinstated the league in an attempt to establish traditional political patterns in their new land.¹²³

Timely to my research, a four-part CBC (Canadian Broadcasting Corporation) television documentary series titled, “*8th Fire*” that premiered January 2012. This documentary series translates the Aboriginal historical experience in terms of knowledge and wisdom from the idea that information is passed generationally. In another sense, the *8th Fire* program is designed to bring other cultural identities to examine Aboriginal knowledge that is different from the dominate discourse, but non-the-less valid.¹²⁴

Hosted by Winnipeg journalist, Wab Kinew, the series is highly critical of the unequal and too often contentious relationship between First Nations peoples and Canadians. The series promises to open a new dialogue between First Nations people and non-aboriginal people in such a way as to promote a greater understanding of the history of social and political injustices that Aboriginal communities have suffered. In the final purpose, the series is dedicated toward healing the rift between different cultures. Paramount is the introduction of historical experiences through Aboriginal voices and the use of the oral tradition and cultural ritual as an educational tool. In this sense, the documentary is meant to urge Canadians to become involved in a “creative campaign of public

education as the program content "... explores ways to repair the relationship between Canadians and the First Nations Peoples of Canada."¹²⁵

In addition, by presenting information from "situated knowledge" and lived-experiences, native historians advance the idea that cultural knowledge, albeit different from society to society nevertheless belongs to world society overall. As Aboriginal people lay claim to knowledge and wisdom—carried from past to present—that is as valid and truthful as any other system of knowledge, it is sad to say that Aboriginal leadership is often ignored. This is especially apparent throughout the history of colonization where the elite position awarded to European claims of dominion triumph over the wisdom and experiences of the other.

When it comes to acknowledging the fact that the Aboriginal systems of self-government are equally capable of extracting economic and social value from knowledge as any other cultural or sociopolitical system, what is acutely apparent is that when colonial ideology and law override historical tradition, the values, rights, and freedoms of a just society may be reduced to political rhetoric. Yet, an important key in the development of Canada's pluralistic democracy is the concept change in economic expectations and through all of this there is an abiding political desire to consider the theory of equality of opportunity in support of individual and cultural groups aimed toward social justice. Upheld in turn by philosophical principals that respect diversity among people, these values are

enshrined in the rule of law that undergrids Canada's "multinational" system of federalism.

Although the theory of federalism appears directed toward divisional governance, in practice it actually works to diffuse political power away from central authority in order to distribute political authority more evenly between federal jurisdiction, the provinces and the localized regional districts. The Canadian federation is also meant to accommodate minority groups and as such, recognizes cultural distinctions and encourages politically self-governing societies. In light of Aboriginal historical experiences, however, governmental acknowledgment of the concept of Aboriginal self-government has been slow to penetrate the political mindset. From economic standpoint, the concept has been even slower to make a way for a large segment of Canada's settler/immigrant society to become less resistant to the idea.

It is important to stress the fact that the concept of Aboriginal self-government is enshrined in the text of the Royal Proclamation 1763. Whereas the Canadian government has legislated for freedom and equality for all Canadians, it has dragged its heels when it comes to recognizing the same basic human rights of Aboriginal peoples which are written into the 1763 proclamation. In this sense the Canadian federal-provincial governments have been painfully slow to recognize the conceptual goal of Aboriginal-self government. Indeed, the 1996 report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples is highly critical of Canada's protracted reluctance to honor terms of the legal colonial acts and treaties.

In the late twentieth-century in the context of changing economic situations, court decisions moved political negotiations quickly along to recognize Aboriginal land claims. In the twenty-first century, from a social political standpoint, the authority of the concept of Aboriginal-self government and the cultural rights of Canada's First Nations peoples are being recognized. Nevertheless, to paraphrase Pamela Palmater, chair of the Centre for Indigenous Governance at Ryerson University, it is difficult to understand the political reluctance to acknowledge the fact that Aboriginal peoples belong to a nation that is inherently self-governing and have been governing for 50 thousand years.¹²⁶

An important political precedent was set in Canada, after 1982 when, in the context of several "official" meetings, correctly known as *Federal-Provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters*, certain edicts of the Royal Proclamation 1763 were brought to the constitutional table for examination.¹²⁷ From the "verbatim" transcripts of the proceedings I quote a presentation speech, made by the representative of the Inuit Committee, Zebedee Nungak:

The recognition of Aboriginal peoples as self-governing societies, however imperfectly applied has characterized the relationship between Aboriginal peoples and non-Aboriginal peoples since European contact. It is impossible to account for Colonial Charters, the Royal Proclamation, the numbered and modern-day treaties, even the Indian Act, without acknowledging that Aboriginal peoples have always been understood to have a political culture quite different than that of the newcomer Canadians.¹²⁸

—Zebedee Nungak, Inuit Committee on National Issues.

By sorting through the complexities of Canada's nation building, what becomes explicitly clear is that in an accord hammered out between the French and the British—circa mid-eighteenth century—three distinct cultures were brought together in an unusual arrangement that requires the cooperation, Nation-to-Nation, between different societies.

Terms embedded in early colonial agreements were also brought forward in recognition of language and cultural rights; yet the place of Aboriginal voices in Canadian history has, for a very long time, gone unnoticed. In this sense, Georges Erasmus, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations points out that the “arrow of time” carries clear evidence from the past to reveal that Aboriginal peoples understood the treaty agreements on a different level. Indeed as the colonial systems shattered Aboriginal social and cultural arrangements to interfere with economic developments, patriarchal policies designed to hasten cultural assimilation were implemented. What is more than clear to the colonized is that colonial laws intensified when rights and equalities of the other proved inconvenient.

In light of the circumstantial nature of Canada's Constitutional law, key elements recognize and affirm freedom and equality: these also stand for Aboriginal constitution rights, but it is well-known that those rights were compromised by the Indian Act. Resting in ancient agreements, and carried in a text that is different from the dominate culture, Aboriginal peoples hold up cultural objects to prove their sovereignty. They also present stories, folklore, and

spiritual practices in cultural art objects where in images affirm the right to freedom and equality that are just as significant and just as valid as written colonial documents.

Consequently, the concept of diversity must be upheld, yet in the reality of Aboriginal communities and other minority cultures the makeup of cultural symbolism is often ignored or cast aside thereby to foment feelings of oppression, dependency, and inequality. Indeed, subjugation of minority groups is part of the price paid for economic development, but the greater price to society has been time. Nevertheless, because civil rights and cultural equality are embedded in colonial treaties and carried forward in law, Aboriginal peoples repeatedly find strength in their community to call for the recognition of their equality rights and freedoms. Speaking at the First Ministers Conference, Georges Erasmus elaborates:

Time and again, your [colonial] laws have wrongfully and unilaterally altered our treaties. Once again the First Nations are here [at the table] in good faith but, this time we insist that your supreme law ensures that history does not repeat itself.¹²⁹

While the politicians, bureaucrats, and Aboriginal representatives acknowledge and sort through the complexities of Canada's nation building, is clear that from colonial federalism through to constitutional federalism, governing political parties have a vested interest in economic developments so as to be reluctant to settle country-wide land Aboriginal claims. While in the twenty-first century there has been progress in achieving policies aimed toward bringing multicultural groups together, the modern state has been slow to carry out its responsibility.

As for acknowledging Aboriginal human rights, the governing bodies have been slow to reply to the Aboriginal peoples' call for equality rights and the acknowledgment of the concept of self-government. As self-efficiency is a fundamental right and given the fact that Aboriginal rights to a land and water base is mentioned in the Royal Proclamation 1763, it leaves to speculation why the concept of Aboriginal self-government is difficult to grasp. Indeed as the constitution recognizes language, religion, culture and equality rights, it is clear that the specific mention of Aboriginal rights must be upheld. What leaves more to wonder, in spite of careful articulation of cultural equality, the problem of endowing Aboriginal rights, and upholding Aboriginal title is still problematic. Indeed it is clear that Canada's politicians cannot come to terms with the concept of Aboriginal self-government.

As Canada *is* a multinational state that adheres to philosophical principles of freedom, fair treatment, shared welfare, social justice and cultural equality, it is generally understood among democratic theorists and party politicians that the accord which brings three distinct cultures together is unyielding. Will Kymlicka, who holds the Canada Research Chair in Political Philosophy at Queens University states:

...the major challenge in Canada has been the accommodation of ethnocultural difference. There are two forms of ethnocultural pluralism in Canada that needs to be distinguished. First, Canada is a *multination* state. Its historical development has involved the federation of three distinct peoples or nations (English, French, and Aboriginal peoples)...nations in the sociological sense. Canada is also a *polyethnic* state...accepts large numbers of individuals and families from other cultures as immigrants....In the 1970s, under pressure from

immigrant groups, the Canadian government rejected the assimilation model of immigration, adopting instead a more tolerant policy (known as the policy of “multiculturalism”) that allows immigrants to maintain various aspects of their ethnic heritage.¹³⁰ (Kymlicka 2004)

For centuries Aboriginal societies maintained the concept of cultural identity, which falls right in line with Canada’s “official” policy on multiculturalism. The irony lies in the fact that in the twentieth century, Canada’s Indian Act 1867 and the consolidated Indian Act of 1876 was still used as an administration tool interpreted as an official policy of assimilation. Given the strict application of terms of these acts, in light of the harsh reality of political subjugation, Aboriginal nationhood and societal culture became almost impossible to maintain. Alootook Ipellie, writer journalist, artist from the remote Inuit community of Baffin Island elaborates:

...the status of the Inuit under Canadian law was totally unclear. Although the government told them they were Canadians citizens, they still could not vote in any elections, whether these were municipal, territorial, or federal. Canada was concerned about which bureaucrats would speak for the Inuit, federal or provincial. The idea of letting the Inuit speak for themselves never occurred to many of those in authority. Through the 1950s the government fought to take active control over the arctic...the government built schools, the children were removed from their homes...Traditional Inuit customs and skills were forgotten...culture shock and acute loneliness...Alcohol drugs and boredom plague the Inuit For the original inhabitants of this once terrible and beautiful land, the last five hundred years have been full of surprises. For thousands of years it seemed that their life style would never change. But their contact with human beings from other lands and other cultures forever changed the scope of their daily lives.¹³¹

In next sections I will follow the thread of political activism through an exploration that follows federal funding for the critical arts, especially with a

focus on funding and programming for documentary film production at the National Film Board of Canada (NFB). What is always troubling in the story of Canada is that as Canada became a federalist nation and a pluralistic democracy that projects freedom, equality and justice, Canada's Aboriginal peoples remain subjugated under colonial laws of the Indian Act. Moreover, it is curious that as a free and independent country, Canada retained legal ties to the British Crown well into the twentieth century. In the following sections I will account for the overlapping development between colonial powers and colonial political reform, but first, an economic explanation is needed that ties social values and cultural survival to the foundations of colonial federalism.

The North: Apart from sentiment and toward settlement

The beauty and myth of the Canadian Nation State is that it survives in a changing world of political intrigue and social transformation. On one hand, Canada stands as a symbol of survival in a harsh and inhospitable northern climate. This image conjoins the theme of cultural survival in a narrative of colonization centered on heroic stories about exploration, stories of European settlement, and economic progress. On the other, colonial nation building goes hand in hand with a sociopolitical narrative that turns on philosophical concepts such as democratic freedom, cultural equality, and social justice. Conjoining the nationality-based discourse with ethical considerations about language, religion, and cultural rights, a brief history of French and British relations helps to

understand the cultural structure of Canada's political past as this is Canada present and future. Missing from the historical dimension are the voices and opinions of the original inhabitants of Canada and their struggle to claim and assert cultural and social rights as these are enshrined in several colonial acts, as an "entailed" legal inheritance, protected by a constitution that strives for a stable society and social justice. As I bring voices to the margins I comment on achievements, both symbolic and practical, that contribute to philosophically inclined notions of freedom, equality and freedom of expression.

A theme typical, in the story of the development of Canada, lies in the fact that as a northern country the harsh environment and difficult geological regions conjure up romantic stories that entwine with localized social shaping of the historical narrative. In the context of modernity and new historicism, the critical discourse turns to an ethnical analysis of multiple forms of signification that not only consider the economic impact of colonization, but also the consolidated dominant position of European values in education. In an ongoing political dialogue the theme of social justice and universal citizenship is never far from the surface.

Historically, the chronological register centers on the economic dialogue that developed between European traders and indigenous peoples, which started out on a strong footing grounded in the exchange of goods that were more or less of equal value. In this account, European trade created an international cultural relationship that was more or less in balance, but as economic arrangements

changed the traders became explorers. In this narrative, as the geographical borders of trade expanded, the European's became more reliant upon the indigenous peoples' knowledge of the land, environment, and resources, but this quickly changed and as European settlement spread out accordingly, the usefulness of indigenous knowledge became unessential.

Harold Innis, a Canadian political economist and pioneer of communication studies followed the rapid expansion between trade and settlement through to natural resource exploitation in North America. Through his close examination of the fur trade, developed first by the French and then taken over by the English after 1760, Innis declared that the fur trade stands as the "utmost significant element" in the development of the colonial economy throughout North America.¹³²(Innis 2001)

Beginning with accounts of simple and mutually beneficial trade activities, Innis explains how trade in fish, fur and timber quickly expanded to take in metals and then land development and how all this economic activity grew to adversely impact Aboriginal societies. Upon formalizing the Treaty of Utrecht 1713, which settled a war between France and England, the French Crown ceded its holding in Newfoundland and Hudson's Bay to the British. From this time forward the fur trade is hailed by Innis as the single most influential factor in the accelerated rate of British nation building in North America. Innis elaborates:

The period from 1713 to 1763 witnessed the expansion of the fur trade from Montreal in northern North America beyond the St. Lawrence drainage basin, and into the heart of the Hudson Bay drainage basin on the Saskatchewan. With this expansion the limits of the fur trade from

a geographical point of view under prevailing technique had been reached. Competition from Hudson Bay became more effective, costs of transportation costs increased, and profits declined in spite of a rise in price. Competition from the English from the south also became more effective. The efforts of these developments on the colony [mark] their importance as factors in the downfall of the French *régime* in Canada....¹³³

Acknowledging the fur trade as crucial to economic history of British colonialism in North America, Innis set his examination within the philosophy of mercantilism. Innis also showed that the highly lucrative fur trade did not, at first, encourage settlement.

However, devoting a significant section of his study to the trade developments in the northern regions—which will eventually become the country of Canada—Innis examined the participation of English merchants in the fur trade to extend his analysis of the staples thesis to account for the political situation that evolved over the early decades of the 1700s. While Innis explains how the English merchant class eventually entered into the political process that was developing in the British held territories, he records that the early stages of trade was indeed, only an economic partnership; for a couple of hundred years, there was no commitment, on the part of the British, to supply resources for settlement. Indeed, it is known that while the British Queen Elizabeth I encouraged exploration and commercial trade, her administration offered little in the way of financial aid in support of England's first colony in North America for example.

Fastening his inquiry in the framework of the staples thesis, Innis directed his study to the exploitation of natural resources and by examining economic

developments through the staples thesis, he showed that the situation changed as European markets expanded into timber, after which exploration followed and then mining metals and quickly, land speculation. In this scenario the relationship between the Europeans and Natives worsened.

Significantly, drawing knowledge from ethnographic research, it is clear that Aboriginal communities throughout North America already had trade arrangements in place—with each other—that appeared both solid and well organized. As European fur trade expanded further north and west, historical transcripts acknowledge the fact that Aboriginal societies quickly adjusted to economic, social, and cultural change. In the opposite direction, however, the ethnographic tradition describes Native social and cultural life as severe. Basically concerned with survival, inherently under developed and overly susceptible to diseases, the Aboriginal communities have been described as being incapable of coping with the steady influx of settlers and increased colonizing attempts. Alan D. McMillan and Eldon Yellowhorn explain:

The late eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries were difficult times....More English settlers poured into the area, particularly after the American Revolutionary War, displacing Native People from the most desirable locations and reducing them to squatters on their own land.¹³⁴(Alan D. McMillan 2011)

For over a hundred years western documentaries have projected a picture of peaceful co-existence between traders and indigenous communities, but what they often leave out is the fact that along with settlement, that narrowed traditional Aboriginal hunting boundaries, “provisioning and trapping for the fur trade placed

enormous “unsustainable” demands on the local environment and ecological systems.¹³⁵ (Innis 2110)

In the sense that Aboriginal communities struggled with survival on their own land, they became less independent and in this historical phrase of the nation building story, colonial government policies were developed which contributed, inevitably, to the ruthless subjugation of Aboriginal peoples. A pattern emerged; following economic and colonial development throughout British North America based on the staple thesis in which the fur trade grounds peaceful cooperation between equal trading partners. As trade expanded geographically north and westward, the dynamic changed. New elements came into play such as, timber harvesting and mining; trade and economic dynamics moved quickly for mere access to resources to partnership alliances and then to overt exploitation.

Conversely another story exists, but it is usually relegated to the footnotes. This story relies upon orality and in its history, the richness of its details are often dismissed by the Eurocentric academic authority as only belonging to the realm of folklore fairy tales or myth. In this story the voices of the original inhabitants of North America carry the theme of cooperation, consensus and community life that describe cultural identity. The changing theoretical paradigms advanced through poststructuralism, social feminism, and the post-colonial discourse, has been welcomed by Aboriginal societies as they lay claim to their own history. In addition, in Canada, groundbreaking court cases have laid a strong legal foundation for the acknowledgement of oral-history accepted as factual; and, the

important recognition that Aboriginal peoples can be expert observers of their own traditions. All of which are as valid albeit different as the Western European canon.

In the context of the European immigration and settlement story, private land acquisition not only accounts for the loss of traditional hunting and fishing lands of the Aboriginal inhabitants; but, the settler society approach to land use understood the land as a commodity, which was completely unfamiliar to Aboriginal peoples who were used to a spiritual connection to the land. Holding a completely different conceptual and spiritual belief about social ways of living on the land; commodification of the land and resources accounts for an enormous cultural shock on the part of native communities. However, it must also be acknowledged that cultural shock was experienced by Europeans as well.

Signifying practices that shape and divide cultural understanding

As it is my intent to investigate the role of the critical arts in analyzing and implementing ideas that encourage the ability to create new thoughts about how economic, cultural, and social values form knowledge, it is my ongoing goal to find places where evidence of a cultural dialogue help us to understand a world not experienced directly. Hence, I supplement written accounts or “official” historical documents with creative objects—art, artifacts, poetry, film

documentary—that offer symbolic transformations about historical events through cultural productions that bring theory and practice together.

Pierre Burton, an investigative journalist and author, popularized the historical novel. Writing about cultural shock and societal conflict, in North America, Burton described the geological region between Georgian Bay and Lake Simcoe as desolate and far removed from European society.

Two pinpoints of civilization, Trois-Rivières and Quebec, existed on the St. Lawrence. The rest belonged to the Indians—to the nomadic Algonkians and their relatives the Montagnais, who roamed the Precambrian forests between the St. Lawrence and James Bay, and to the sedentary Hurons, who occupied the agricultural lands in the neighbourhood of what is now Lake Simcoe. To the south of the Great Lakes lay Dutch territory and the five nations of the Iroquois League, whose language and culture were similar to their enemies; the Huron.¹³⁶ (Burton 1978)

Typically, the civilized are the Europeans while the social facts of the Aboriginal societies are down played. Although the French and Dutch traders had made inroads into the wilderness of North America, Burton focused his research on the Jesuits who, in 1639, had managed to create a permanent central mission at Sainte-Marie. From this established post, the Jesuits were able to move beyond the small European strongholds to permeate into Aboriginal villages. While official historical records are scarce, the Jesuits kept detailed annual records that chronicle their work in North America. Revisiting the theme of Jesuit efforts to convert the Huron society to Christianity, Burton provides a grim account of the human struggle to survive in harsh and extraordinary circumstances. Drawing his information from the voluminous memoir of the French Jesuit priest, Father Isaac

Jogues and citing long descriptive passages from Jogues' seventeenth century journal, Burton begins his account on the fact that:

Jogues managed to depart Quebec for the Jesuit mission by attaching himself to a Huron trading party and in short notice...encountered his first example of the Indian lifestyle: he witnessed the torture and death of an Iroquois brave at the hands of a group of Algonkin women and children.¹³⁷ (Burton 1978)

Burton focused his narrative on those places where Jogues describes, in his own words, impressions of the hardship and death that accompanied the complex relationships between diverse and different cultural groups. Centering the narrative upon Jogues depictions of his harsh life with the "pastoral" Huron, Burton drew attention to the conflicted cultural relationships between the Europeans, the Iroquois, and the "nomadic" Algonquians.

These stories however, are often deemed offensive by Aboriginal artists and scholars. Mary Longman, for example, is highly critical of Eurocentric views that promote depressing stereotypes of Native people. Whether this is from the brutal treatment of captives or from the romantic version of the "noble primitive Indian," such writing often ignores the richer fabric of Aboriginal society. In Longman's experience, a deeper understanding of Native cultural beliefs and Aboriginal practices tends to be overshadowed by "recycling" themes that serve to reinforce "colonial ideology centered on imperialistic values."¹³⁸

While it is well known that Aboriginal groups had highly organized confederacies well capable of affirming friendly relationships between different

groups, it is also known that hostilities existed between different Aboriginal Nations. Warfare was fairly common, so too retaliatory actions that included the taking of hostages—some hostages were taken into the group, as McMillan et al explain, others were ceremoniously dispatched as Jogues described.

Undeterred by witnessing a horrific “pubic spectacle,” Jogues wrote that he continued to travel with the Huron party along the established fur trade corridor to the missionary post held by Father Jean de Brébeuf and his “Blackrobe” priests at the Huron village of “Ihonatiria on the Penetanguishene peninsula.”¹³⁹ (Burton 1978) Describing his life with the Huron as always being on an edge with death, Jogues stayed with the mission until it and the Aboriginal community was disrupted by the fur trade. Increasingly having to ward off raids into their territory by the Iroquois—who were similarly disrupted by the fur trade—and divided by religious loyalties, the Huron Confederacy lost its position of dominance. McMillan describes demise of the Huron group in much the same way:

The Huron could not withstand this onslaught, which overran the villages around Sainte-Marie. The Iroquois captured the Jesuit Fathers Brébeuf and Lalemant and tortured them to death, according to Iroquoian custom. The surviving Huron—having decided that their situation was hopeless—abandoned their villages, torching them so they could not be used by the Iroquois.¹⁴⁰ (McMillan 2004)

Through an engagement with cultural objects, I argue with Longman and other Aboriginal scholars and artists that much may be taken from experiential viewing that helps to deepen an understand of the relationship between writing and

conversational language through oral and visual approaches to history. For example, turning now to the cinematographic drama documentary, *Black Robe*, I draw attention to how film technology appeals to knowledge about historical events through the visual and auditory senses.

Adapted from the novel by Brian Moore and directed by Bruce Beresford, the film *Black Robe* was released in 1991. The syntax of the film follows more or less along the same story line set out and described in Burton's excerpts from the memoir of Father Jogues:

Set in 1634, the film begins in the tiny French settlement that will one day become Quebec City. Jesuit missionaries are trying to encourage the local Algonquin Indians to embrace Christianity, with thus far only limited results....a young Jesuit priest [sets out] to find a Catholic mission in a Huron village.¹⁴¹ (Bruce Beresford 1991)

The filmic history provides typical story and conjectural ideas about highly conflicted groups, but it also provides some reliable evidence, albeit highly dramatized, about difficult struggles that occurred between different cultural groups.

While the film, journal, and novel present stereotypical pictures and common portrayals of Native peoples' that have been highly criticized. However, fictionalized stories also encourage an awakening to knowledge, which helps to learn how to manage a new sense of being in the world that necessitates adapting to new cultural and social realities. In the context of experiential viewing—art objects and filmic documentation—present intercultural knowledge to the viewing public. This strategy might be used to advance new understanding, or at least to

encourage the acquirement of a new sense of awareness and respect for cultural differences.

While adaptations of such stories tend to generalize their images, the film *Black Robe* presents an abridged account a highly complex relationship between the established Aboriginal societies and the fur trade economy that introduces North America peoples to a European way of imagining the world. The filmic version of history also exposes the controversy about the Jesuit quest to convert the Hurons to Christianity, which seriously divided the community. In addition, historical records reveal that indigenous societies were also weakened by disease—undoubtedly introduced by the priests—and that the Christian converts were forbidden to engage in any traditional rituals. Thus physically weakened, emotionally divided, and socially conflicted, the film sequences bring to light why the Huron community was eventually unable to withstand an attack from the Iroquois.

However, the film sways significantly from historical accounts, to dramatize ethnic violence while it ignores the importance of the peace pact of the Iroquois Confederacy. Visualized as a “longhouse” in which family groups participate in an organized sociopolitical framework, the confederacy is thought to have existed long before European contact. Remnants of the history of the confederacy are said to survive in various cultural objects, such as beaded belts known as wampum, that stand as proof of the fact that from time immemorial Aboriginal societies have been more than capable of self-government.¹⁴²

The Iroquois pact joins five separate Aboriginal nations and is famously known as the League of the Iroquois. Established some time in the early 1500s it stands as a political structure capable of negotiating alliances between nations and equally capable in solving localized disruption. Alan D. McMillan describes the compact as:

...a political and military alliance...governed by a council of fifty chiefs (called *sachems*), among whom the principle Onondaga chief held the position of honor. Each new chief assumed the name of his predecessor, thus perpetuating the council list from when the league was formed. When a chief died, the senior women in his clan chose his successor from the male eligible for the position. The council attempted to achieve unanimous decisions before taking any action. If lengthy orations and debate failed to produce a consensus, each group was free to follow its own course.¹⁴³ (Alan D. McMillan 2004)

While early anthropologists and ethnographers tend to ignore the social role of Aboriginal women, the study of the Iroquois pact reveals that the Native leaders heeded the vocal advice of women. The contribution of social science scholars of Aboriginal descent draw far more attention to the important role that women play in Aboriginal societies such as Mary-Ellen Kelm, and Lorna Townsend describe:

'Chiefs, Matriarchs, Nobles...' So begins the invocation to countless speeches in Nisga'a and Tsimshian fest halls. This salutation draws people to attention and welcomes them. It also stands as symbolic reminder of the continued significance of the ancient hierarchical social structure of the Northwest Coast people. At the centre of this social structure are the *Sigidmanak*, the matriarchs of the Nisga'a and Tsimshian peoples. Though the *Sigidmanak* may defer to chiefs in matters of formal politics or external relations, they hold important rank because they are the ritual mothers of the matri-lineal, houses, and clans that constitute Nisga'a and Tsimshian society. These women regulate marriage and inheritance of names and crest privileges. They also collect and distribute women's contributions to feasts, thereby directing the labour of women of lesser rank. They are, though less

visible and less vocal than their male counterparts, leaders in every sense of the word.¹⁴⁴ (Mary-Ellen Kelm 2006)

Sovereignty: The nation-state and Indigenous autonomy

Today, in the modern Aboriginal “reserve” society in Canada, some Iroquois and Mohawk communities evoke the tradition of the longhouse. This tradition places emphasis on the matrilineal descent. It recognizes clan affiliation and it draws attention to historical experiences, as their communities defend their own right to assert their sovereign powers as a separate nation within Canada.

Other Aboriginal societies have their own version of the “longhouse” tradition. For example in the western subarctic, the complexities of social organization were efficiently maintained through ritualistic practices. Brought to screen in a historical drama titled *Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner)* and directed by Zacharias Zunuk, the story unfolds around an ancient Inuit legend as it reveals the complexity of the society. In a closer examination of contemporary issues, Zunuk directed *The Journals of Knud Rasmussen*, set in 1922 that follows the relationship between the Inuit and European explorers and especially, the negative impact of religious conversion on Inuit practices. Alookook Ipellie, Inuit journalist explains:

About the same time that the Hudson’s Bay Company was gearing up in the Arctic, missionaries [circa 1870s] began their assault on the Inuit... Before contact with the outside, numerous supernatural beings—many of them harmless, some helpful, but the majority “pregnant with the power of ill-will”—were the basis of Inuit belief. Right up to their Christian conversion, superstition and taboo ruled

every part of Inuit life. The shaman was their spiritual advisor. After contact, a lot of Inuit found themselves drifting in the winds of change, bewildered without guidance, their spiritual equilibrium had been profoundly shaken...many Christian ideas were in conflict with traditional Inuit beliefs....¹⁴⁵

In the west coast areas of British Columbia the important the potlatch ceremony emphasized “inherited rank and privileges” that were acknowledged through consensus and upheld in an elaborate gift giving ritual performed before witnesses. In the central plateau region of British Columbia consensus was also the way of acknowledging systems of authority. James Teit elaborates:

The chief rarely decided a question without asking the opinion of his fellows...in hunting parties; the most efficient man took the lead and directed the others, at their request but subject to their approval. In religious ceremonies, a capable man who was looked upon as taking the most prominent part was called the “chief” of the ceremonies and dances [belonging to the potlatch]...Orators possessed great influence and power, often swayed the mass of the people ...most of these are said to have favored peace and harmony....¹⁴⁶

Other Aboriginal groups, of the plains, for example, maintained a series of organized societies through which sovereignty was maintained. Membership advanced along lines of individual accomplishment and complex rituals permeated every aspect of everyday life with the Sun Dance ceremony holding the most prominent position. (McMillan 2004)

In all of this, Aboriginal societies throughout Canada claim a conflict with nationalism that fails to recognise and understand Indigenous nationalism. As a national ally of the British, for instance, the Iroquois indisputably reject the notion of British sovereignty. In this sense, many Iroquois uphold the tradition of the

hereditary council of the longhouse, with the council fire standing as a historic symbol of historic longevity and the gift of wampum to mark major occasions that have been witnessed by tribal associations thorough the ages. In this atmosphere, sovereign rights of the British are contested.

Conjoined with the British notion of colonial sovereignty there is an antagonism within Aboriginal societies that trace divisions to troubling issues around which political reform and religious conversion constantly split the effectiveness of the cause of the longhouse tradition. McMillan explains:

Iroquois society, particularly at Six Nations, is split into two factions. Those in the conservative or traditional faction participate in the longhouse religion...often speak an Iroquois language, tend to emphasize matrilineal descent and recognize clan affiliations, and support the council of hereditary chiefs as the only legitimate government. Non-traditionalists belong to the Christian church..., tend not to recognize clan distinctions, deal with the federal government through the elected band council and generally speak English as their main or only language. Both groups highly value their Iroquois heritage, but the larger non-traditional faction participates more fully in the broader world around them.¹⁴⁷ (McMillan 2004)

Much of what can be said about conflicted relationships between Canada's Aboriginal communities and federal-provincial governments may be traced to this pattern.

In addition, grounded in centuries of exercising its colonial sovereignty, the Canadian state continues to flounder when it comes to upholding and explaining its legal obligations based on the premise of Indigenous Nationalism, to the greater majority of Canadians.

Furthermore, the rivalries between traditional and non-traditional Aboriginal societies complicate the political terrain in Aboriginal communities all across Canada. On the other hand, regardless of how Canada claims the success of multinationalism, the state constantly sidesteps its legal obligation when it comes to adequately addressing the legal status of Indigenous Nationalism. This is an enormous problem and as Alan C. Cairns, an Adjunct Professor of Political Science at the University of Waterloo, charges:

Nationalism, rooted in the experience of colonialism and thus deprived of self-rule also has a powerful mobilizing capacity that generates solidarity in its adherents and social distance from the majority society...Fortunate nationalisms, perhaps after a long struggle, can take control of their own state. Less fortunate Fourth World nationalisms of Indigenous peoples of settler states...lack the option of independence...The search for an accommodation between these two realities—is where we [in Canada] are now, caught in a conflict of nationalism.¹⁴⁸ (Cairns2004)

While the politics of inclusion understood as assimilation adversely affects indigenous societies throughout the world, Cairns asserts that since “The Canadian majority is here to say” unless self-governing powers for Aboriginal right to self-governance—that are entrenched in colonial treaties—are legally acknowledged, constitutional alienation that exists between Canada and Aboriginal nations will continue to grow.¹⁴⁹ (Cairns 2004)

Despite clear provisions made for the concept of Aboriginal self-government in the Royal Proclamation 1763 and leaving aside the fact that the Canadian Constitution 1982 upholds “the existing aboriginal rights of aboriginal peoples of Canada,” the state has been hopelessly slow to acknowledge equality

rights, which are embedded in various colonial acts.¹⁵⁰

(http://www.solon.org/constitution/English/ca_1982.html 1982)

Indeed, there are well-known examples that describe fully engaged Aboriginal involvement on a Nation-to-Nation level as their contributions greatly enhanced in the social and economic development of North America. Building upon Harold Innis's staples theory, Susan Sleeper-Smith, an associate professor of history, draws from the historical archive to argue additional facts for the recognition of equal rights for women.

Starting from the necessity to acknowledge the fact that through their marriages with the European traders, Aboriginal women played a significant role in helping to expand the economic success of the fur trade, Sleeper-Smith counters that subordination of women is the product of capitalism and Christianity. From historical affirmation that women held important positions in the Huron's egalitarian society, Sleeper-Smith's research sustains the claim that women were "targets" of the Jesuit proselytizing efforts because, as household members of the matrifocal longhouse, the women were identified as being endowed with significant negotiating powers. Consequently, the Jesuit priests believed that the women would buffer them from the hostilities of the men.¹⁵¹

(Sleeper-Smith 2008)

Following the line of descent through female kinship networks is a complex process. Traditionally, residence in the "longhouse" meant that the men moved into the household of the women. It follows that all the children "belong"

to the women and that material goods passed to the male members of the group through the mother's brother. Noting that the household women of the longhouse could hold a deciding opinion in all conflicts, they quickly became the target of Christian proselytism. Additionally, Susan Sleeper-Smith explains that as the Jesuits generally recruited "catechizers or instruction among Native women," the priests typically held the women converts up as proof of their missionary success.¹⁵² (Sleeper-Smith 2008)

Sleeper-Smith argues that in keeping with the complex relationship of the tradition of the matrifocal "longhouse," which linked women in communal living arrangements in which the women held considerable negotiating powers, the Jesuit "...efforts reinforced[albeit unintentionally] ...matrifocal households."¹⁵³ Namely, while it is generally thought that the Jesuits introduced the subjugation of women by men, by recruiting women to Christian conversion, Sleeper-Smith points out an important contradiction:

The contention that Catholicism had important social ramifications that enhanced female autonomy contradicts the view that Catholicism instituted male patriarchal order, which increasingly subordinated Native women to men....The Jesuits also frequently dismissed the elders of the Native communities, many of whom scorned Christianity. Therefore, it would have been problematic for the Jesuits to support the establishment of a male patriarchal order that subjected their pious female converts to the authority of male fur traders and unconverted headmen.¹⁵⁴

Showing that the Jesuits diverted significantly away from embracing the official European patriarchal status of men, it is apparent that the Jesuit Christian marriages, between fur traders and Native women, often served to reinforce the

status of the woman. In addition, the women played an important role, not only as social and cultural leaders, but as political mediators, Sleeper-Smith elaborates:

...kin networks linked indigenous and French societies. Exchange remained embedded in social relationships, kinship mediated that process, and Catholic kin networks linked the distant fur-trade outposts of an expanding fur-trade society.¹⁵⁵ (Sleeper-Smith, 2008)

The evangelical success of the Jesuits contributed substantially to partnerships that formed between European and indigenous cultures. Well documented accounts point out that the fur trade marriages forged important alliances between Aboriginal communities and European explorers that enabled the fur traders to push deeper and deeper into Aboriginal territories. The important role that Native women played in the fur-trade also marks a social and cultural history of Canada that stands out in the chronicles of British colonization.

The useful relevance of Christian conversion, that linked fur trade marriages to economic expansion, depended upon the extensive kin networks that enabled the traders to gain easy access to distant relatives, thereby to extend their trading area. Sleeper-Smith notes a distinction between European views of trade and indigenous views:

For Natives people, however, trade remained a process of collective exchange, while for the Europeans exchange was an increasingly individualistic transaction within an emerging transatlantic market economy.¹⁵⁶ (Sleeper-Smith 2008)

In the expanding global economy European trade and exploration spread out in North America and as permanent trading posts were established, many Aboriginal groups relocated their villages close to trading posts. As the history of the fur

trade explains economic expansion, it also explains social change. The development of land speculation quickly became the major dispute between Aboriginal peoples throughout the country from the east coast to the Pacific North West and elsewhere.

Indeed, where there is a fur trading post there will be stories about trade alliances, mutual sociopolitical and economic developments, and cultural conflicts. More significantly, there will always be stories from Native mythology, folklore and oral history to appeal to knowledge of different cultural, collective, and lived experiences. In all of these chronicles conflicting stories appear that on one hand raise the specter of equality, but on the other dash it under the narrative of subjugation. Sarah Carter, associate professor of history at the University of Calgary explains;

...before European contact women played an essential economic role, and men did not enjoy greater status or prestige, but rather the work of men and women was complementary. Women possessed and wielded considerable power, reflected especially in the control they had over the distribution of resources of the household. Only through involvement in the European fur trade were women placed in an inferior position to males. Women became more dependent, and their status declined with the advent of European contact—there was a more rigid separation between male and female with unequal treatment and different standards of behaviour.¹⁵⁷(Carter 1996)

Describing negative effects of fur trade Carter disputes the idea of a mutual transformation in the socioeconomic structure that worked to exalt women. Other studies of the fur trade find similar discrepancies. The historian Sylvia Van Kirk, adjunct professor of history at the University of Toronto argues that although the

social transformation of fur trade wives was challenging and often discriminatory, many women nevertheless played a formative and exalted role in the cultural development of the settler society, for example:

A look at a map of Victoria [Canada] in 1858 [Provincial Capital of the British colony of British Columbia] illustrates the dominant position of the family properties of James Douglas, William H. McNeil, John Work, John Tod, and Charles Ross. These men all had been officers of the Hudson's Bay Company. All had indigenous wives, but of different tribal origins... Significant to the social hierarchy of colonial Victoria was the fact that the governor in its formative years was Chief Factor James Douglas, whose wife Amelia was part Cree. When Douglas was knighted in 1863 for his services to the colony, his wife gained the title of Lady Douglas.¹⁵⁸ (Van Kirk 2006)

Typically, as the fur trade moved westward, the growth of its trading territory expanded to create significant side effects on Aboriginal communities. In addition, it is well-known that around the mid 1700s due to a sharp decline in the fur trade, European communities along the fur trade way were left somewhat in disarray; both the aboriginal communities and colonial territories became more vulnerable to land and resource exploitation by increasing numbers of settler communities.

Throughout this historical time, it is equally well-known that in the eastern territories, hostilities between the Huron and the Iroquoians had intensified. Weakened by Iroquois, Seneca, and Mohawk raids into their territory, entire villages of the Huron collapsed and the Huron people sought refuge at fortified French positions.¹⁵⁹ (McMillan 2004) Caught in the middle, between the antagonistic Aboriginal nations were the French fur traders and the French settlers who had colonized the land that had been ceded to France by the treaty of Breda

in 1667. As such, New France stretched more or less from 60°N, near the tip of Labrador to the territory of New Spain in the south

Spread out along the St Lawrence River, French colonies of New France overlapped with British controlled territory around the Great Lakes, the eastern seaboard, and the colonies of New England. These overlapping French colonies and fortifications effectively blocked British access to the west, restricting the English settlement to a narrow strip of land more or less defined by the eastern seawall and the Appalachian Mountains.

Taken as a whole, the governors of New France held colonial power over all the land from the Hudson's Bay through the Ohio Valley, and south. Owing to the success of fur trade, the northern part of New France, of what will eventually become the Province of Canada, was the most developed. This region was divided into three distinct districts; Quebec, Trois-Rivières, and Montreal and this division will become an important factor in the rise of British colonial power, and in the historical development of Canada.

By the 1700s, however, New France was facing a growing economic crisis. European wars had drained the French economy, the fur trade had softened, western trading posts were closed, the French trader/merchants were over stocked and they were slowly going bankrupt. On top of that, hostile British forces of the New England Colonies had intensified their strategic attacks on French settlements. To complicate matters, the warring Aboriginal Nations interfered

with the possibility of colonial expansion and jeopardized the future of French/European settlement.

In an attempt to solve all the pressing problems at once Louise de Callière, the governor of New France, devised a plan to halt the hostilities by backing a peace treaty between the militaristic Aboriginal nations. The goal was twofold: the ratification of a treaty agreement between the hostile tribes would put an end to ethnic hostilities; while at the same time the French would gain Aboriginal allies, which would help them to fend off attacks from the British.

According to the historical documentation, in 1701 Louise de Callière invited representatives of 31 Aboriginal nations to meet at Montreal. They were said to have been accompanied by more than twelve hundred Aboriginal people. It is recorded that many interpreters were on hand ready to interpret and repeat all the speeches of the leaders in “five different languages” (http://canadachannel.ca/HCO/index.php/The_Great_Peace_of_Montreal). To confirm the contents of the speeches and the subsequent peace accord, “thirty-one wampum belts were presented to the leaders of the thirty-one tribes present.”¹⁶⁰ The original written document that spells out the terms of a treaty, known as the “Great Peace of Montreal,” is held in the *Archives de la Marine* in Paris. The document carries the written signatures of the French representation and the inscribed marks of each one of the Aboriginal chiefs, which appear together with decorative images of tribal totem animals that symbolize each group.¹⁶¹

It is well-known that the gift of wampum was always completed in front of witnesses. The ceremony thus adheres to a historically acknowledged custom based on the principle of a witnessed contract. In creating “a historical body of witness” it is argued that the wampum is a social and legal document that ought to be awarded the same status and legal right as a written contract. Describing the process as “...the other way to read our [Canadian] civilization,” John Ralston Saul makes the meaning clear:

...the key moment in the creation of the idea of Canada was the gathering of thirteen hundred Aboriginal ambassadors from forty nations with the leaders of New France in 1701. The result was the Great Peace of Montreal. It was here that the indigenous Aboriginal ways of dealing with *the other* were consciously and broadly adopted as more appropriate than European. Here the idea of future treaties was born. Here an approach was developed that would evolve into federalism. Sir William Johnson’s great gathering of two thousand chiefs at Niagara in 1764 had been organized in order to cement the Royal Proclamation [1763]. In many ways this was the second act in the creation of the idea of Canada—a continuation of the Great Peace of Montreal.¹⁶² (Saul 2009)

In 2001 the Canadian Postal Service issued a commemorative stamp marking the one hundredth anniversary of the “Great Peace of Montreal.” Portrayed as an elaborately draped Aboriginal chief, the central image signifies the ceremonial giving of the wampum. The central figure is depicted as speaking to a group of other Aboriginal chiefs, identifiable as such by their clothing, elaborate hair styles, and beaded head bands. The central figure is shown cradling a traditional pipe in his left arm and holding, out a long beaded wampum in his right hand The

French Governor, appropriately dressed in a blue cloak, watches the ceremony from a raised dais. Numerous onlookers are featured in the far background.

Taken together, the wampum symbolizes agreement and the pipe is an acknowledged symbol of peace. Overall, the Canadian postal stamp is meant to honor and acknowledge a peaceful accord between the Aboriginal Nations and the colonial French Nation. Calling attention to how the memories of important events are held intact in cultural artifacts, McMillan elaborates:

One well-known aspect of historic Iroquois life was the use of wampum. Wampum beads of white and purple shell were woven into belts, which were given as gifts at all major occasions. Any treaties or other agreements, whether with other Aboriginal groups or Europeans, required that wampum be publicly presented...given to mark important events.¹⁶³ (McMillan 2004)

The historic reference to the symbolism of the wampum and its image on the commemorative stamp encourages us to think about the importance of material or cultural artifacts. Pointing to how information is kept alive, and historically intact by a society that organizes its knowledge differently, these cultural traditions are non-the-less as valid a form of knowledge and historical documentation as the written peace treaty of 1701, which is held in Paris.

By the same token, the 1764 Niagara Treaty between 22 Aboriginal Nations and the British colonial governance was also sealed by the gift of wampum. Known as the Two Row Wampum, it stands today not only as a symbol of peace and agreement, but as a legal document it attests to an unbreakable accord Nation-to-Nation. Over the final decades of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century, as Aboriginal groups across Canada press land claims in court, the

wampum is often held up as evidence of a legal agreement that is used to reestablish legal grounds for the concept of Aboriginal self-government and for the acknowledgement of treaty rights that are embedded in the earliest colonial documents.

In the drive for economic self-sufficiency, the First Nations throughout Canada draw upon the significant history of the fur trade, they cite the restoration of cultural practices, and they draw upon traditional beliefs that have been passed down through the centuries. They hold these beliefs up as knowledge that is as valid as reason. As Aboriginal groups demand the legal recognition of the concept of Aboriginal self-government, they appeal to the history of relationships between different nations that are formalized in complex treaty negotiations that were accomplished centuries past. In this sense, they appeal to the philosophical ideal, as it were, of ethics, justice, and good government, which are conjoined in the elements of the Canadian Confederation that promised to bring three different cultures together—the French, the English, and the Aboriginal peoples.

While the “Great Peace of Montreal” settled antagonisms between the Iroquois Aboriginal Nations, it also set a precedent for a non-aggressive pact between the Iroquois and the French. By promising not to interfere in conflicts between the French and the English the Iroquois lent the French a great advantage in their drive to keep the British confined within the narrow strip between the Allegheny Mountains and the Atlantic seaboard.”¹⁶⁴ (R. Douglas Francis 1996)

The Iroquois reception to French expansion, however, was short lived. In the

developing hostilities between France and England, the English forces were bolstered by Iroquois support. With the help of the Iroquois Nation the British managed to weaken the French stronghold in North America:

The Treaty of Utrecht in 1713 settled the war...The French Crown ceded all claims to Newfoundland, except for fishing rights on the north shore, and renounced its claims to Hudson's Bay. The French recognized British, over the Iroquois confederacy and surrendered control over what the English called Nova Scotia, handing the major French Acadian settlements over to the English.¹⁶⁵ (R. Douglas Francis 1996)

British Loyalty: Indigenous Nationalism

The outcome of the Seven Years War, circa 1760s, saw the French regime in North America replaced by the British. In the Treaty of Paris 1763, England and France forged an agreement in which France officially "...transferred control of all French lands in North America to Britain."¹⁶⁶

(<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-2300-e.html>) Under the terms of the treaty, all that remained for the British to take over French colonial policies, was to instate British colonial governance (rather than military rule), rename French territories, and to put English trade charters in place, which sanctioned the establishment of British trading centers throughout British North America.

At the same time as French dominion in North America bowed to pressure from the British, the formal treaty agreements that had been made between the Aboriginal Nations and the French such as, the "Great Peace of Montreal" were

upheld. Additionally, the Royal Proclamation 1763 of King George III, sets out strict rules for the British system of colonial governance. This document contains precisely defined legal clauses that address future land transactions between the settler societies and the Aboriginal societies. The significance of the proclamation, regarding land transactions, cannot be overstated for the economic expansion of the British charter and the way of the future required implicit obedience to the terms of the proclamation.

In addition, the proclamation addresses Aboriginal treaty rights, it upholds language and religious rights, and it also introduces British common law to the former French colonies, but and significantly, it retains terms of French civil law in the territory of Quebec. It is important also to know that in addition to setting the geographical boundaries of British administration in North America, the Royal Proclamation 1763 opened the opportunity for large scale European immigration and especially English settlement.

Eager to maintain peaceful relations with the original French settlers and the indigenous people, the British colonial governors assured both groups, through the Royal Proclamation 1763, that their language, religious and cultural rights would be upheld. Indeed, for the French, the British Crown was the protector of language and religious rights. For the indigenous peoples, the text of the proclamation legally recognizes Aboriginal rights to a land and water base. As such, the British Crown recognized the concept of cultural equality and the concept of Aboriginal self-government. Moreover upon The Canadian

Confederation 1867, since Canada retained legal ties to the British authority, Canada must also recognize the concept of Aboriginal cultural rights as well as the concept of Aboriginal self-government.

Throughout the 1800s an elaborate system of economic controls enabled the British to manage the vast trading area from its international centre in London. While the Royal Proclamation 1763 gives power to the English colonial governors to establish the constitutional foundation of British imperialism in North America, it also stands as the legal document that grounds British law. It defines an imperial relationship between the British Crown and the French speaking Province of Quebec and it also it defines a special relationship between the British Crown and the Aboriginal peoples. By setting the basis, in law, for Aboriginal land ownership, the British Crown guaranteed that Aboriginal rights would hold true throughout British North America for all time.¹⁶⁷ However, as European settlers crowded into North America, the demand for easy access to land triggered tensions that became one of the decisive elements in the American War of Independence.¹⁶⁸

(<http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-2300-e.html>)

From the late 1760s, however, English merchants in British North America had been pressing the administrative authorities in London to extend the terms of British commercial law to the Province of Quebec. In order to appease both the French-speaking colonists and merchants, and the British merchant companies to the south, the British Crown executed the Quebec Act 1774. This

act protected French language rights, but is also upheld “French law with regard to property...and legally confirmed the existence of the seigneurial system,” significantly, “Roman Catholics in Great Britain were not granted such political freedom until the late 1820s.”¹⁶⁹(Francis 1992)

However, in order to “end the virtual anarchy and ferocious competition between traders,” the Quebec Act extended the frontier boundaries of the British colony of Quebec into the Ohio valley, which “embittered”: the English merchants and settlers of the “Thirteen Colonies to the south. (Francis 1992) This caused complications not only for the existing British colonies, but it also created tensions between the British and the Aboriginal inhabitants who were used to dealing with the French in terms of land use. The French had developed a sort of “user” or rental system agreement with the established Aboriginal communities. Through a yearly exchange of gifts, the French maintained the use of land upon which their forts were located, much like paying rent. (R. Douglas Francis 1996)

The idea of private ownership was a completely strange notion for the Native peoples. The land represented a spiritual and social way of being, it could be used, but not owned. With the British executing the terms of the 1763 proclamation, land could be bought outright and land speculation was a growing social phenomenon, but the two cultures had different ways of envisioning land use. R. Douglas Francis et al elaborate:

Indian bitterness over land-grabbing by the British Americans had been growing since the French surrender in 1760....In contrast to the “gift diplomacy” practiced by the French, the British in the Thirteen Colonies had pursued a system of making treaties or outright

purchases for the Indians' land. They made payments only one time. After their conquest of the interior, the British put a halt to the [French] policy of making generous annual payments to the Indians.¹⁷⁰ (R. Douglas Francis 1996)

While it is understood that the terms of the Quebec Act 1774 settled linguistic and religious conflicts between English Canada and French Canada, what is less well known is that by extending the boundary of Quebec well into the Ohio Valley the terms of the Proclamation of 1763 came into full force. Because the act protects Aboriginal land, it made land speculation illegal. Consequently, the only legal way to acquire land was buy land from an Aboriginal group the purchase had to proceed strictly through the "official," British treaty, process. This prohibition is most certainly one of the key elements that helped to set off the American War of Independence, which brings the query back to the Quebec Act. R. Douglas Francis explains:

Not surprisingly, the extension of Quebec's boundaries embittered the Americans....they viewed it as a measure that effectively continued to seal off the West, which had been officially closed since the Proclamation of 1763. They also bitterly resented the recognition that the Quebec Act bestowed on the colony's despised 'papists' by conceding 'the free exercise of the religion of the Church of Rome' and by recognizing the right of the Catholic church to collect tithes. The 'tyrannical' act figured prominently among the grievances of the Americans when they launched their rebellion in April 1775.¹⁷¹ (R. Douglas Francis 1996)

The Quebec Act 1774 made the area of the Ohio, roughly to the Mississippi, more or less as inaccessible to European/British land companies as it had been under French control. But for the people of the Quebec, colony it guaranteed language

rights and religious freedom. Taken together with the Royal Proclamation 1763, the British Crown became the protector of basic human rights and cultural equality. This is because the proclamation carries a text which begins to articulate human rights for three distinctive cultures—Aboriginal peoples, the French, and the English. Saul described the two acts as being crucial to understanding the political application of philosophical concepts, ethical values, and principles of freedom and equality. In the context of Canadian federalism, the notion of good government and the drive for responsible government, are embedded the text of these colonial acts, as such they “could be” as Saul suggests, “the basis for Canadian civilization.”¹⁷² (Saul 2009)

Conversely, as terms of the Royal Proclamation acknowledge the sovereign rights of the British Crown, it also embeds certain terms that justify the appropriation of all Aboriginal lands. The Royal Proclamation 1763 creates conditions under which certain blocks of lands are held in trust on the belief that the land would be protected from outside exploitation. Additionally, certain land would be intentionally reserved for the exclusive use of Native peoples. However, it also gives the Crown sole authority to acquire land and to dispose of land as the colonial administrators see fit. Thereby, the British Crown assumed the legal responsibility to allot private land ownership of Aboriginal lands throughout British North America and did so, for instance, through grants to favored immigrants, to military officers, and to government officials. Additionally, as Crown land is an asset, it can be rented out. In this scenario Crown land provides

income through taxation and exploitation of natural resources. Utilized in this way, the income from Crown land may be directed toward providing public services—roads, bridges, military protection, health care, and public education, and eventually, the income helps to maintain the Indian Act.

Today, in the twenty-first century, the conflicted relationship between Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian governments is mainly rooted in disagreements over land and resource exploitation. Exemplified by the existing structure of colonial acts, which had not been applied evenly, the British governance was actually breaking its own legal jurisdiction. The political issue for the Canadian Crown, now, in the twenty-first century is how to dismantle the arrangements inherited from the colonial past, while keeping multinational constitutional rights intact.

One major challenge is the fact that as European settlement moved west, in Canada, the British Crown was hard pressed to comply, in a timely manner, with the terms of the Royal Proclamation 1763. Hastened by the gold rush in the province of British Columbia, settlement and land speculation occurred well before the treaty process could proceed. Consequently, only a few legal treaties exist in Province of British Columbia; therefore the remaining land, left untreated, remains to this day unceded in the eyes of Aboriginal peoples.

The aboriginal land question is not only about land entitlement; it is also involves a question of the fundamental human right to self-determination. The long list of broken promises also carries unresolved issues about inadequate

housing, insufficient funding for Aboriginal education, and the illegal exploitation of Aboriginal natural resources. This also brings up environmental concerns about conservation and sustainable development. In numerous legal challenges these are the issues in the forefront that are before the courts. The terms that are covered in the texts of colonial acts obligate the Canadian Crown to judge ethically, to act responsibly, and to abide to the terms of the concept of good and fair governance; especially with regard to the administration of Canada's Indian Act which controls minute aspects of Aboriginal lives. Moreover, as Aboriginal leaders claim the right to negotiate with Canadian governments on a Nation-to-Nation basis, the question of nationhood, in keeping with the Canadian concept of multinationalism, keeps coming up.

In the long history of colonization, the literature of Canada's imperial past abounds with ideas about democratic freedom and participatory government. At a time when liberal political and social views considered concepts of cooperation and egalitarianism, it is important to know that cultural diversity, language, and religious rights, which are all embedded in the "proto-constitution" acts set up an a typical standard for Canada's pluralistic democracy. The historical situation, from colonialism to post-colonialism, carries a narrative in defense of liberal philosophical principles of freedom and equality. Yet the question remains, if the function of the government is to protect democratic freedoms how can it justify rights for the greater good as it allows inequality and social injustice for others? These issues continue to disturb the quest for social justice in Canada.

As Saul describes it—in the struggle for independence from colonial powers—the creation of Canada’s unique pluralistic democracy depended greatly upon the recognition of difference and diversity. Moreover, because at the time of settlement few colonial people could read, localized participation required the local interpretation of legal documents. In one sense the process may be called participatory, because while the British colonial documents were written in English they had to be translated into a form of “legal” French, and the contents were meant to be read aloud in public. As Saul explains:

Each important new legal text had to be read...in public, usually on church steps or other public gathering places. In the oral tradition, the whole idea of meaningless official language is virtually non-existent. The meaning of Canadian texts was digested within an oral tradition. And these texts did indeed have to be read in public because Canada had a particularly high male suffrage. As in most places, the right to vote was based on property ownership or income. Most Canadian men were property owners. Immigrants got property on arrival. So by the early nineteenth century we had a higher suffrage than in Britain. But our voting citizens were largely illiterate. Our democratic culture was therefore oral.¹⁷³

It stands to reason that local interpretation holds a special place in Canadian history. Indeed, the early introduction of the concept of orality will occupy an important place in the current era as Aboriginal leaders press human rights and land claims in court, they rely on the stories and oral histories that have been passed down generationally. Today, in numerous legal cases about land rights, it is important to note new ways in which judges have rediscovered how to hear oral testimony.¹⁷⁴ (Saul 2009)

The narrative of land acquisition forms an important key element in the development of Canada. It not only connects land use to the issue of cultural memory, it also connects the concept of democratic freedom and equality with the struggle for the “universal” franchise. Because land acquisition, in British North America was not tied to nobility or to inheritance laws, land ownership was more broadly distributed in Canada than in Britain, France, or other European nations. Therefore, as Saul explains, “Canada had a broader franchise than most countries.”¹⁷⁵ (Saul 2009) However, women and Aboriginal persons were denied the vote.

The importance of this fact will become more apparent as my discussion moves toward the concept of gender and Aboriginal equality rights. Equality of opportunity holds a definitive place in the development of Canada’s unique pluralistic democracy. However, in the long century leading up to and including the Canadian Confederation 1867, which includes the establishment of Canada’s Indian Act, voices that describe how Aboriginal peoples understood these historical social, political, and economic arrangements are missing. Indeed, to quote Allan C. Cairns:

There was, therefore, no belief at the time that in future years Canadians would confront Indian nationalism based on hundreds of reserve communities scattered across the country. Thus non-Aboriginal policy-makers in the imperial era did not confront the question of how to fit organized communities defined as First Nations into the Canadian system of governments and peoples. In the imperial era, Aboriginal peoples did not challenge the mainstream constitutional order. They were either outside it, administered in internal colonies or prospectively viewed as ordinary members of the dominant society after assimilation had eroded their distinctiveness. In

a sense, they were treated as immigrants who had arrived early.¹⁷⁶
(Cairns 2004)

It is obvious that social and cultural values cannot be separated from the economic and political terrain. They cannot be separated from an immediate awareness of the environment either. On one hand, the land companies were acting on good faith toward British immigrants eager to move onto fertile farm land. On the other, the Aboriginal peoples who understood the use of land in a spiritual and cultural connection to nature could hardly understand the concept of private land ownership. Caught in between, the British authority maintained a frontier between different cultures and different ways of imaging the natural and commercial world. While it may appear profitable to discount the complexity of environmental factors, from a perspective in environmental ethics, land use and respect for the natural world loom large in narratives about a spiritual connection to the land and survival in light of scientific efforts to master culture and nature. The unusual thing about Canada of the eighteenth century is that it shows, through political reform, that an alternative sense of reality may exist in the very presence of nature which plays a principal role in thinking about how to live in a changing world.

William Blake's world view: Freedom is expression

Writing in the eighteenth century, the poet engraver William Blake, for example, believed that knowledge of beauty in nature is united through an

embodied sense of social justice. Symbolizing Canada in nature as a form of freedom, Blake used the concept as a metaphorical foil to write about forbidden ideas in relation to social and political revolution. Citing imaginative wilds of Canada, Blake idealized Canada as a balance, of sorts, between success and excess of the American Revolution and the French Revolution. For Blake, Canada stands as an example to the world. For those with the *Magna Carta* the concept of good government is a promise to observe a kind of justice that ought to promote equality of opportunity. While Blake may not have known the extent to which those notions are embedded in Canadian nation building, he places his complex prose poetry within the political realm of such an ideal when he refers to Canada as a model for social justice.

Indeed, as S. Foster Damon points out, the political in Blake is not at all uncomplimentary, for although Blake's printed and written works contain confusing even contradictory passages, he nevertheless places his imaginative poetic expression within an affirmative notion that poetry has a right of "autonomy and privacy."¹⁷⁷ (Damon 1988) From the form of prophecy that Blake draws upon, *America*, stands at once as a "birthplace" of "Revolution" with the body of "Orc" standing as the distinct symbol of American "Liberty." Obviously using the poetic voice to speak out for freedom, Blake invokes a claim both to privacy and to the freedom of autonomy. In other words, Blake separates the private and public while holding onto the right to speak out publically against oppression.

In this same sense, to quote Harold Bloom, “Blake’s *America* is at once a political allegory” and an allusion to a “mythic” world in which freedom might question authority.¹⁷⁸ (Erdman 1970) It is from a sense of political commentary that Blake offers Canada up again, this time in Jerusalem, to cite Canada as one of the “Thirty-two Nations” capable of upholding language rights and equality rights. Through promoting the concept of a unity of interconnecting nations, Blake sees the possibility of bringing “...All the Nations Peoples & Tongues throughout all the Earth,” together in a peaceful assembly.¹⁷⁹ (Erdman 1970) Through the use of an elaborate system of symbolism, Blake finds a place of “individual salvation” where he might express—indeed finds the freedom to express—his own private struggle in finding a community, in life, where the individual has the freedom of expressing an opinion.¹⁸⁰ (Erdman 1970)

Obviously Blake supports political reform and the density of Blake’s poetic vision rails against contradictory forces of empire building. For Blake, there was a need to find a new language to express freedom. Blake finds a safe mode in the complexity of symbolism where he included the right to speak out against slavery; all of which enveloped him at a time when any incitement or mere utterance against the British Crown could bring down the fatal charge of sedition. In consideration of the vital need to find a new language that would absolve him of treason and as he tried to escape from the tyranny of reason, Blake found solace in passion symbolized in poetry.

It is important, I believe, to highlight multiple lines of identity and subject positioning, when criticizing sovereign's tyranny, oppressive authority, and corporate control. By invoking concepts of democratic equality, people and community might be brought to the centre of economic policies and the political discourse. Undeniably pluralism and diversity are embedded in the very foundational moment of Canadian nationalism. In this turn there ought to be space to rethink the usefulness of those forms of expression where the use of cultural nationalism (social and political) may foster critical and innovative cultural practices that connect and integrate with diverse societies, but without pressing for assimilation. To quote Blake, there ought to be, in unity and equality, a peaceful place for "All the Nations Peoples & Tongues throughout all the Earth."¹⁸¹ (Erdman 1970)

In one sense to spur the ideology of multinationalism is to uphold jingoistic ideas about nationalistic identity, yet in the wider sense, developing an argument in support of national identity and cultural equality plays a significant role in addressing the concept of inclusivity, the rights of minority groups, and the processes of economic development in the context of championing efforts to enhance healthy social and ecological environments. As such, people, democracy, and habitation ought to be at the center of national political and economic discussions. Indeed, by putting people, democracy and the health of the environment at the center of economic development, the efforts of citizens are supported in ways that promote awareness about participation and accountability.

It also helps to create a deeper understanding about how interlocking information networks help to advance knowledge and empower those on the borders of the dominate discourses. While keeping true to the vision of a whole interdependent and interconnected world, interventionist art meets the criteria of these concerns. In light of interventionist art that allows or encourages individual or community engagement in ecological activism, there are numerous possible ways to articulate difficult situations that ought to be beneficial to individuals, families, and cultural equality.

Aesthetic values and oral histories

Significantly, Aboriginal claims for the value of knowledge that has been passed generationally for centuries, but this has been more or less dismissed by the larger society that cannot seem to grasp the meaning of time honored systems of beliefs and knowledge unless it adheres to an admirable Eurocentric Western system of knowledge. Arguing that the degree to which the value of knowledge hangs on the power to distinguish value between different standpoints and world-views, Aboriginal scholars and lawyers have appealed to the higher authority of the courts where their oral histories and cultural objects have “stood the test of time” to enter the legal discourse as a valid system of knowing, human rights, and civic privileges. In the complex realm of understanding and coming to appreciate the aesthetic values of Aboriginal cultural artifacts, art, and cultural writing Alfred Young Man, a scholar of North American Indian Art, proclaims:

From the *Native perspective*, any analysis of North American Indian Art must be sensitive to Native arts' current aesthetic attitude and critical literature... To an American Indian artist, *Native perspective* texts may seem all too true and an absolute vindication. However, a Euro-Canadian who reads them may begin to feel uneasy and ultimately culpable in a very nasty historical drama... In the struggle to define Native art some readers may suffer a twinge of guilt and some may lapse into throes of despair if they persevere through what can be at times insulting and accusatory material...¹⁸²

To teachers, following Paulo Freire's' lead, the pedagogical situation involves the practical application of an ethical approach to learning to read art or to teach theory of art involves exciting the student/viewer without the intent of politicizing them. As viewers, the struggle to define art through content is reminiscent of a Marxist unity of theory and practice in art rather than a passive idea of pleasure; to follow Lyotard's explanation of Kant's theory the contemplation of the beautiful.¹⁸³ Of interest to scholars and artists of contemporary First Nations art is how to maintain cultural distinctiveness while resisting marginalization yet reveal sociopolitical concerns. In this search for understanding a collective idea about Native identity and cultural unity the theory of ethico-aesthetics presents a respectful recognition of the plurality of multicultural voices, as the Aboriginal cultural heritage centered on a dramatic and often unjust history necessarily has to bring dramatic facts of colonization forward.

My caveat is that I am not talking about humanist unity but the arrogance of humanist ideas of assimilation and how I think a practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity eschews essentialism as it opens a dialogue rather than a an argument. Drawing from the belief that we ought to respect the

resources of the world, we also ought to share information; and we ought to be ready to hear rather than adopt an arrogance of the philosophy of “giving” voice to the voiceless. I contend that equality of opportunity also upholds the idea of multiplicity without victimizing difference.

As for social justice, it has to be acknowledged that the banning of the potlatch—a celebratory festive tradition enacted in various Aboriginal societies throughout Canada—serves to stand as the model of colonial and religious intolerance that in all of the documents of Canadian confederation deny. It really is the arrogance for the other, that Eurocentric Western knowledge manages to refuse to know that the honor of gifting, in an Aboriginal community is as reliable as any other order of office. In the ceremony that passes status on it enhances the prestige of leaders and the potlatch ceremony invites the community to stand as witness to the status of a leader. An elaborate art tradition developed to provide gifts for such occasions and as the economic situations changed due to trade, so to the inventory of gifts. In the early twentieth-century, the historic archive shows that household utensils and sewing machines were added to the piles of Hudson’s Bay Blankets that stands as a west coast institutional reality.¹⁸⁴

Because it was thought to inhibit the “efforts” of cultural assimilation, the potlatch was banned in 1884.¹⁸⁵ (McMillan) After which precious cultural artifacts were gathered up, some destroyed in spectacular iconoclastic fires while others were handed over to museums or sold to private collectors. McMillan exemplifies the power of the Indian agent’s authority:

In 1922, after a large potlatch, the agent at Alert Bay prosecuted those involved, striking an infamous bargain in which those who surrendered their masks, rattles, and other potlatch regalia could buy their freedom from jail. Some of these items were sold to an American collector, and the rest were divided between what are today the Canadian Museum of Civilization and the Royal Ontario Museum. In recent decades, after the law was revoked and potlatching could take place publically, the Kwakwaka'wakw at Alert Bay constructed a large dance house on their reserve and began to press for the return of their lost treasures. Finally the Canadian government agreed to give back the goods, providing they be put on public display. By 1980 museums had been built in Alert Bay and Cape Mudge, and the newly returned artifacts formed the basis of the collections. These museums do not just display objects, but are dynamic community cultural centres that enhance the Kwakwaka'wakw language and traditions.¹⁸⁶

In rightfully claiming their cultural possessions, the Aboriginal communities still had to bow to the will of the government. They could not just simply regain ownership of their material cultural goods; they had to put the cultural artifacts on “public” display in a manner that would satisfy the non-Native authorities. In terms of the struggle for social justice, the extensive destruction of high cultural values places the question of freedom of expression at the very margins of human rights and cultural justice. In all of this, the Canadian government prides itself in official policies of multiculturalism and bilingualism, while the terms of the Indian Act counter the claim.

Thus common themes in numerous court cases filed by Aboriginal communities against human rights violations, in Canada, are the concept of cultural equality and the failure of Canada's governments to uphold its own laws. Typically when the category of knowledge comes, up, the legal argument centers on the “Hearsay Rule” that allow the Crown to disavow evidence from lived

experience. However, thanks to the groundbreaking Gitksan Wet'suwet'en trial, orality is accepted as a legal testimony in Canada. This history making decision has reshaped the Canadian "legal landscape."¹⁸⁷ Several fundamental themes now set precedent in Canadian law. For instance, the right to speak from experience and to be heard almost always comes first on the list. Riding a close second is the rightful acknowledgement that cultural information rests in material objects of creativity; therefore to offer a kind of information that may be truthful. Along with the affirmation that individual stories can move from the level of myth and legend into the realm of objective knowledge recognizes the fact that Aboriginal women and men may be "expert" observers of their own cultural and social traditions. Paradoxically, as Dara Culhane points out, given the number of court cases across Canada, there is a growing "...opportunity for non-Aboriginal peoples to learn, and begin to develop an understanding of Aboriginal cultures on their own terms."¹⁸⁸

Since there are countless ways in which concepts of democratic plurality and multiculturalism may be abstracted, I think it is important to acknowledge tangible forms of knowledge that might be said to function as a language of agency. Moreover, as Aboriginal leaders claim the right to negotiate with Canadian governments on a nation-to-nation basis, the question of nationhood, in keeping with the Canadian concept of multinationalism, keeps coming up. In this sense when cultural expressions are placed at the center of "official" discourses, it is obvious that the storytellers' knowledge offer alternative ways to consider

official and archival information. Additionally, by believing it possible to promote diversity as a positive move to urge a greater understanding of the broader history that informs social change, information gathered from historical experiences brought together with cultural experiences and expressed in cultural objects cannot but help to enrich the philosophical landscape in the direction of posthumanist developments.

Conceptual and political goals: Good government and the Canadian Confederation

In this next section, I isolate social and cultural practices that link with certain liberal and democratic ideologies. I do this in an attempt to bring cultural and aesthetic developments in Canada into concord with a worldly reality that we have a vested interest in retaining and upholding democratic freedom. In the sense that social justice and environmental justice, ought to encourage cultural responsibility exploration keeps circling back to the theme of basic human rights and cultural equality. Central to my thesis is how a practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity is useful in addressing the questions of humanism, power relations between dominating groups of authority, and to contest those places that are politically divided along cultural lines, all of which stand as a priority—the highest priority—in the pursuit of a just society.

While the substantive meaning of sociopolitical citizenship engages a form of discourse around which theories of the political advance the power of the state to form or control knowledge, there are alternative positions that engage those

movements in which community voices opine. By the same token, even in light of multiplicity, those voices are almost always lost or absorbed into the dominant discourse. That is the great problem. To remain distinct, to survive to develop the freedom to regard differences, to uphold language and cultural rights, to address social and gender issues, and to establish fairness and effectiveness in a relationship between one without the surrender of the other, that is the great challenge.

Lacking sentiment for habitat or means of survival seems to counter philosophical principles of freedom, justice, and equality. Such apathy seems to run counter to Canada's official policies of multiculturalism and bilingualism. Moreover, in recognition of Canada's official policies that advance ideals of inclusivity through good and fair government, Canadian policies stand at the center of a liberal humanist outlook that undergrids a certain kind of political experience in Canada that ought to be good. Although far from reaching perfection, it may be said that Canada's pluralistic democracy offers a model to counter inequality and injustice that might move the democratic process past the patriarchal tradition of humanism to embrace something different. On one hand, by holding close to principles of freedom of expression and equality of opportunity, governance in Canada has already made a first step toward posthumanism. Neil Badmington describes one turn toward posthumanism as a way to look to the "general crisis of humanism" and to question the excessive power of "Man" that has soiled the environment (which, for the moment, at least

still sustains life).¹⁸⁹ (Badminton 2000) Yet, as a philosophical movement, Badminton sees, along with Foucault and Derrida, the impossibility of making a clean break with humanism. As they recognize the power of “epistemic change and of showing how “systems are always self-contradictory, forever deconstructing themselves from within,” the category of “Man” may just as well be in jeopardy as not.¹⁹⁰(Badminton 2000)

Perhaps as persons’ begin by acknowledging the fact that many people contribute to knowledge—as well as to make claims about truth, justice, and cultural beliefs—upholding ideas about difference, inclusivity, freedom, cultural and environmental justice should help to envision possibilities of collectivity, cooperation, and a future for the world capable of sustaining economic developments and political systems built on democratic rights and social equality.

In consideration of the “cultural foundations of federalism,” nation building in Canada developed from the British parliamentary model and with the Constitution Act 1791, nation building swayed in favor of a multinational relationship created between three distinct societies; the French, the English, and the Aboriginal peoples. John Ralston Saul explains:

...the act was ‘designed’ to bring three distinct nations together... and the intent of the text was perfectly clear. *Peace, Welfare and good government....*¹⁹¹ (Saul 2009)

Although Aboriginal communities throughout British North America have been drawn into this process, it has had compromising results for their communities.

Writing from a post-colonial perspective, Jo-Anne Fiske elaborates:

As resident reserve members, status women (and men) enjoy specific rights and privileges; membership in the band electorate, a share of the band's common resources, financial support for tertiary education, housing assistance, and financial aid from special Native economic development funds. In contradictory efforts to assimilate Indians into the mainstream society while allegedly protecting their lands from Euro-Canadian encroachment, the state has frequently revised the criteria it uses to assign legal status.¹⁹² (Fiske 2006)

Combined with increased land purchases, to accommodate mass European immigration, Native groups were hard pressed to resist government intervention. Eventually the concept of Aboriginal sovereignty gave way, under pressure from the colonial administrators.

On one hand the colonial government had authority to sign treaty agreements with the Aboriginal peoples of Canada. On the other, in relation to the administration of the Indian Act, there is an ambivalence or contradiction that is reflected in numerous changes in legislation. The federal government's authority to carefully manage the lives and affairs of Aboriginal communities allows the government to reconsider, from time to time, who might belong to the category of "status," who might be "allowed" to live within the "reserve" community and to share in economy, and who might be more easily integrated, through assimilation, into the global model of a political culture build upon economic practices.

As we shall see, the Canadian federalist framework provides legal justification that is used to defend democratic freedom and cultural diversity. It

will also be used to grant women and minority groups voting rights and it will be used to advance the struggle for gender and sexual equality. Eventually, terms of federalism will be used to officially acknowledge the merits of oral history that will be used in the pursuit of knowledge where in defence of knowledge from lived experiences will be used to legally define Aboriginal land claims in the twenty-first century.¹⁹³ Indeed as federalism is the foundational framework for a culture interested in developing a just society, this has been carried over several centuries to hold firm well into the political economy of the current era. An equally aged philosophy of multiculturalism defines a distinct Canadian philosophy characteristically upholding ideas of ethno-cultural justice and democratic pluralism.

It is the power of diplomatic relationships that bring Aboriginal people, the French, and the English together in a precedent setting “mindset” which sets conditions for the future of a Canadian pluralistic democracy, as Saul explains:

It was here that the indigenous Aboriginal ways of dealing with *the other* were consciously and broadly adopted as more appropriate than the European. Here the idea of future treaties was born. Here an approach was developed that would evolve into federalism.¹⁹⁴ (Saul 2009)

By placing a solid emphasis on peace, justice, equality, and the idea of a shared welfare, British imperialism in North America continued what the French had begun. Moreover, in current discourses in political science, now that economic systems are truly globalized, the institutional design of Canadian federalism strongly upholds the ideology of democratic pluralism. This is because Canadian

federalism is grounded in the context of public policies that value the concept of a peaceful and cooperative relationship between multinational societies managed through different levels of government. Will Kymlicka describes the process as:

...the hallmark of a genuinely multinational federation. This is reflected in the fact that the 1867 Constitution not only united four separate provinces into one country, it also divided the largest province into two separate political units—English-speaking Ontario and French-speaking Quebec—to accommodate ethnocultural divisions. This decision to create (or, more accurately, to re-establish) a separate Quebec province within which the French formed a clear majority was the crucial first step towards accommodating national self-government within Canadian federalism.¹⁹⁵

Typically only the federal government emerged from this narrative with the authority to administer the new country; missing as usual are Aboriginal voices. To complicate matters, with the ratification of the British North America Act 1867, responsibility for Aboriginal peoples, and their reserved lands was allotted to the federal state. While this subjugated Aboriginal peoples under the jurisdiction of the act, it also led to strong social, political and economic bonds between Aboriginal communities and the federal state, but not with the provinces.¹⁹⁶ (McMillan 2011) In part this is the grid that holds the antagonism between the Canadian federal government and the provincial-territorial governments. Richard Simeon, a Professor of Political Science and Ian Robinson, a research teacher in the field of comparative political economics describe how federalism fits within the contemporary Canadian political environment:

Federalism is thus about the coexistence of multiple loyalties and identities; it is about divided authority, “national standards” and provincial variation, “self-rule” and “shared-rule,” “coming together”

and coming apart.” Finding the right balance between these is the trick. Much survey evidence confirms that Canadians are, indeed, federalists in this sense, valuing both their national and their provincial identities.¹⁹⁷ (Robinson 2004)

Cited as essential elements instrumental in accommodating minority cultures and minority language rights, the development of federalism in Canada follows humanist pursuits of rights and equality. These stand as ideals that influenced the development of the Constitutional Settlement of 1867, for example, where concepts of diversity, multiplicity, and plurality directed political developments toward achieving a just and inclusive view of society that was the dream of the colonial reformers.

As the nineteenth century moved on, political factions come no closer to finding a solution to antagonisms. Pitted by geological imposition, cultural injustice and the struggle for language rights the theme of political antagonism is framed and presented in the action of a filmic documentary drama titled, *John A: Birth Of A Country*, directed by Jerry Ciccoritti. Released for television viewing in 2011 the docudrama is billed as “thriller” following political events that lead up to the Canadian Confederation 1867.¹⁹⁸ Tracing the complicated historical story of nationalism, the film focuses on the theme of language rights and cultural equality. The condensed visual representation provides a lucid account of the complicated polarizing elements introduced by various characters. For instance, economic competition of capitalism introduced by George-Étienne Carter, autonomy for Quebec and French language rights argued by Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine. In the complexity, political alliances that belong to the historical archive

explode across the screen. In many ways, and certainly more entertaining than a history text, the filmic version of the confederation settlement proves somewhat easier to follow.

In the film, George Brown, Georges-Étienne Cartier, and John A. Macdonald emerge as the political leaders most capable of negotiating the confusing boundaries of a colonial “democracy” set in place to the obvious benefit of British concerns. Set in the time period well after the colonial uprising of 1836 and 1837 and following in line with the recommendations set out in the famous Durham report, the parliamentarians are identified through the narrative of the Union Act 1840 that created the Province of Canada. The political leaders are depicted as representing French speaking Canada East and English-speaking Canada West. The drama unfolds as the members from English contingent and the French-speaking protagonists struggle to come to terms with both languages in a coalition government headed by co-premiers, Baldwin and La Fontaine. The two government sections are portrayed as being dysfunctional to the point of destruction. The problem, rooted in the requisite, albeit confusing, double majority vote, makes it clear that the required consensus may never happen; therefore important legislative bills remain on the floor. Since bills never pass into law governance is locked into an ineffective stalemate.

The audiovisual sequences feature the political opponents, John A. Macdonald, barrister and solicitor residing in Kingston, and George Brown, a Toronto journalist and newspaper editor, as they argue the cause for a unified

parliament. Cartier comes up with the unique idea of democratic pluralism, complete with a new concept of nationalism based on cultural diversity. The vote is called, the motion defeated, the government falls. In twist of interpretation, the “Tory” leader, John A Macdonald, is re-appointed and together with his “Tory” ministers, forms yet another deadlocked and soon to be short lived, government. The filmic version of historical events stays close to the historical time line as it portrays the parliamentarians of the late 1860s, as feisty orators and bitter opponents.

In the filmic political time, like the mid 1800s, there is the introduction of the two party governance in the Province of Canada; although the political allegiances are not quite yet formed into “conservative” and “liberal” oppositions’—the political right and the political left in that order—they do the line up in the house of commons in much the same was as in our own current era. In the film version the “Tory” adversaries’—conservatives in every sense of the political game—are featured sitting on the government side of the House, from where they argue for central governance and from a political economic theory. The radical reformers—soon to be Liberals—are shown on the opposing side; they press for strong nationalistic alliances, representation by population, and social programs. With the “Tory” leader, Macdonald, arguing for a central government and economic advantages in British markets and the liberal side arguing for social reform, George-Étienne Cartier—every bit Macdonald’s political equal in real politics—speaks out for pluralism in government and

autonomy for Quebec. The language debate dominates the narrative, but to complicate the political process, the physical body of parliament shuttles back and forth between the French-speaking capital of Montreal and the English-speaking capital, Kingston—as it did indeed in real historical time. The cinematic version of the nineteenth-century experiment in democracy configures political tension in the argument between different cultures. In the final cinematic sequences of the film, the parliamentarians settle one difference: they agree to an entirely new physical site for the capital of the Province of Canada.

As the historical experience confirms, the city of Ottawa became the choice for a new capital. The building program for new parliament buildings meant to “house the legislature” of the united Canadas Province, began in 1859. (Vance 2009) By 1865 impressive buildings were standing on a majestic site overlooking the Ottawa River. Dividing the French-speaking constituent from the English-speaking part the river creates a visual boundary that only serves to confirm the contentious alliance. Within a few months, yet another minority government crumbled under the weight of the necessary double majority vote.

In real political time, the historical archive it is well known that the British colonies of Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and Prince Edward Island were already contemplating the possibility of a Maritime Union. When the political reformers of the Province of Canada heard about it they asked to attend a meeting to discuss the option. This conference was proposed for the spring of 1864 and certain

elected members of Province of Canada attended.¹⁹⁹ R. Douglas Francis et al elaborate:

The Maritime colonies had long considered union among themselves. The Colonial Office strongly endorsed the idea...they had agreed to meet...in July 1864, the Canadas suddenly and surprisingly, asked permission to attend and to present a proposal for a wider British North America federal union. The Maritimers agreed and arranged the meeting for September 1, 1864 in Charlottetown.²⁰⁰

That initial meeting lead, in quick succession, to the Quebec Conference, where the politicians drafted “seventy-two resolutions” for what would become the British North America Act. This brief was ready for presentation to the British authorities at the London Conference, holden over the winter months of 1866-1867. (R. Douglas 1992). When the British North America Act was signed; on March 29, 1867 the act of the British Parliament would stand as Canada’s constitution, for the next one hundred fifteen years. Thus the united colonies of British of North America became a new and independent country, designated the Dominion of Canada. By accepting the “monarchial” principal to stand above political parties, federalism stands as a novel experiment in democratic history. Roger Gibbins a Professor of Political Science describes some of the details:

A Canadian Parliament was created with two legislative chambers, the elected House of Commons and the appointed Senate. The governor general, whose consent was needed before any bill passed by the two chambers became law, provided a link to the British Crown and, for some time to the British government. Legislative assemblies were created for the new provinces of Ontario, and Quebec, the existing legislative assemblies in Nova Scotia and New Brunswick were incorporated, and all four were linked by their lieutenant-governors to the government of Canada. A national judiciary was created, and the legislative powers of the new Canadian state were divided between the federal and provincial orders of government. The federal government

was assigned the principal economic and taxation powers of the day while the provincial jurisdiction encompassed matters of more local concern, including schools, hospitals, municipal institutions, the management of public lands, and property and civil rights.²⁰¹ (Gibbins 2004)

The legacy: Colonial federalism and Canadian confederation

By bringing different cultures together the Canadian Confederation helped to resolve divisive problems of colonial federation, what is obviously missing in this entire are the voices, opinions, concerns of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples. Before the so-called "birth" of the Canadian nation-state, preceding British and French colonial governments had already enshrined a fiduciary relationship with the Aboriginal People. Paradoxically, in order to manage this responsibility, Canada's new federal government created the Indian Act, which in 1867 was designed initially as an administrative document. The organized Indian Affairs branch in Ottawa quickly took on the role of domination, and in all manners of conduct administrated the act under strict terms. Their political autonomy was smothered under a blanket of governmental restrictions: The respectful Nation-to-Nation relationship between the federal government and Aboriginal community's soon departed company and thus, Aboriginal peoples were treated as outsiders in their own land.

With Confederation, Canada's Aboriginal peoples became wards of the state and subjects of what Michel Foucault describes as a "biopolitical" regime

where power over the other is embedded in the power of the governing group. In terms of a political and cultural analysis, Foucault described biopolitics as:

... power mechanisms that at least in part...beginning in the eighteenth century took charge of men's existences, men as living bodies...biopower in its juridical form takes charge of life...power ends in the privilege to seize hold of life in order to suppress it....²⁰²

As Foucault exemplified how biopower reflected the political experience in dealing with “living beings,” he developed the term “biohistory” to describe how the rights of sovereignty deals with power over “...legal subjects whom the ultimate dominion of death.” (Foucault 1990) The new language, developed by Foucault is useful in articulating political practices in terms of Canada's Indian Act.

For example, it is here, in 1867 that the state set out broad guidelines of political authority over Aboriginal peoples which fit well within Foucault's description of political authority that acts on the premise of “bio-power” capable of taking charge of life. To follow this through, Foucault explained that political authority is both a controlling agent and a productive agent, because it creates possibilities for the “protection” of life (as the 1763 proclamation asserts), while at the same time life is taken under control of the sovereign state; just as the Indian Act justifies it.

From the perspective of an Aboriginal scholar, Jo-Anne Fiske, this provides an acute illustration of an oppressive framework, held in the language of political power, which was carried to confederation from the legacy of colonial federalism to subjugate Aboriginal peoples into the current

era. Pointing out that the policies of the Indian Act rest upon the "...basis of the paternalistic notion, that Indian people as 'wards' of the state required protection," Fiske also points to the fact that it was assumed "...that they would become 'civilized' into the broader society."²⁰³ In the colonial era through imperialism, and extending well into the modern era of confederation, Aboriginal peoples did not challenge the authority of the state, however, in contradistinction, Canada's Aboriginal peoples have held fast to their rights of cultural expression, their concept of self-government and, according to historical fact in claiming nation-to-nation status, Aboriginal groups have never ceded their own sovereignties.

What does Confederation mean to Canadian culture? On one hand the theme of peaceful cooperation appears often enough to have become an established dogma. On the other, in the context of the historical experience, confederation carries the theme of democratic and philosophical principles of cooperation, fair judgment and equality of opportunity. For many artists, academic ideas about humanism connect the liberal theme of freedom of expression with an unmistakable democratic environment that undergirds liberating powers of a critical discourse. Manifesting these ideas in the category of art intervention and art documentation has a long history in Canada that links cultural expression with ideas about pluralism, rather than unity, in which central authority or a single interpretation is challenged in critical or interventionist art.

In the sense that art is a so called “pure” activity there is, in Canada, a historical and contemporary tradition of an art narrative that exists inside living experiences. In another sense, documenting life as art in film, for example, offers the so called “creative” act wide scope in consideration of both the maker and the viewer. Taken together, these art practices account for a kind of critical intervention that can be both life affirming and political. Boris Groys, Professor of Philosophy and Art History offers an explanation:

Art becomes a life form, whereas the artwork becomes non-art, a mere documentation of this life form. One could say that art becomes biopolitical, because it begins to use artistic means to produce and document life as a pure activity. Indeed, art documentation as an art form could only develop under the conditions of today’s biopolitical age in which life itself becomes an object of technical and artistic intervention.²⁰⁴

Imperialism: Monumental art in honor of nation building

In this section, I explore the relationship between art and the interlinking subject of theory, which positions intervention art as an ongoing process required to continue a critical dialogue. But first, I want to revisit themes taken up in the preceding sections, because in the context of historical experience, the shaping of the political life in Canada also shapes the basic function of documentation.

On a limestone outcrop above the Ottawa River stand the impressive buildings of the Canadian Parliament. The bluff is a well-known historical landmark. Aboriginal peoples and European traders knew it well as a navigational point. In the early colonial era, it was familiar as a military base. When Ottawa

was chosen and approved by Queen Victoria as the capital city of the Province of Canada, the site was developed as a governmental precinct.²⁰⁵

The choice of the city of Ottawa for the new capital of the Canadas had already polarized language and religious factions within the union of the Canadas. On top of that, the Ottawa River flows between Canada East and Canada West, which presents a physical division between provincial cultures that, were already visually different and socially divided. Creating buildings for a the union of the Canada's created a problem set for the architects' the solution was to find a unifying element that would provide a countering contrast that might help to quell oppositional attitudes between different cultural groups. In creating an adequate unifying monument—to democracy—they meant to draw attention to the “aspirations” of nation builders bent on bringing multinationals socially and politically together in one Legislative Assembly. Regardless of the new location and the lovely new buildings, within a decade, the Province of Canada floundered, but in 1867 as the historical archive proves, the colonies were reunited under the British North America Act and Ottawa was once again the city designate for the capital of an entirely new country: the Dominion of Canada.

The building program for the provincial capital was already highly regarded as “one of the finest in the world,” and now, a new program was needed to enlarge the site, to expand the building program and to create new buildings for a new country.²⁰⁶ Jonathan F. Vance, an award winning historian elaborates:

...designed to house the legislature of the united Canadas....The Centre Block, designed by Thomas Fuller and Chilion Jones, and the

two flanking buildings, by Thomas Stent and Augustus Laver, were triumphs of the style known as High Victorian Gothic, with its emphasis on carved ornamentation, the use of multicoloured stone and the adaption of a wide range motifs. The architects' aim was not to copy any one style but to use the best elements from a number of styles to produce a set of building with striking interest...In 1867 [the buildings] became the seat of government for the new Dominion of Canada.²⁰⁷

It is well known that the early construction of the Parliament Buildings, which began in 1859, was to house the legislature of the Province of Canada. (Vance 2009) What is less well known is that the architectural design for the new federal buildings intentionally links the essence of form with light and dark contrasts to meld the symbolism of Gothic Revivalism with new ideas about unity through diversity. Vance explains:

High Victorian Gothic in its purest form was not to be the model, for it was too closely tied to Canada's earlier colonial status. More popular was the Second Empire style, characterized by steep mansard roofs, projecting pavilions to break up the flat wall surfaces, and classical decoration like superimposed columns and pilasters.²⁰⁸

Basing the architectural organizing principles in details employed in Gothic elements, the architects' design of Canada's Parliament buildings is meant not only to offer a symbolic interpretation of harmony and unity through difference, but by purposely emphasizing an eclectic melding of several architectural styles, the visual effects project the expressed values of difference to produce an analogy for the abstract idea of political unity in stone.²⁰⁹ (Vance 2009)

A brief walk around the grounds of Parliament Hill, reveal several monuments that project symbolism in that same direction. In the tradition of commemorative sculptural groupings, numerous portrait statues provide links to

the past that embody the legacy of nation building expressed in stone. These monuments stand in commemoration of the achievements of political reformers who not only carried the concept of nation building to its logical end, but they also stand to serve as a visual reminder of what it takes to legitimate the political process.

The beginning of the commemoration project on Parliament Hill is marked by the portrait statue of the rebellious Sir George-Étienne Cartier.²¹⁰ Erected in 1885 the monument draws attention to Canada's parliamentary history wherein as Cartier's close association with John A. Macdonald marks his support of the union of the British North America colonies and their political relationship carried on into the post-Confederation era. (Francis 1996) As a well known 'capitalist' entrepreneur, Cartier freely mixed politics with business. R. Douglas Francis elaborates:

None of today's conflict of interest existed...Cartier...actively concerned himself with Montreal business while serving as the director of a host of banking, insurance, transportation, and mining companies.

²¹¹

Cartier also helped to instigate the purchase of lands privately owned by the Hudson's Bay Company, thereby greatly increasing the land mass held under British control. In addition he is often credited with "...the concept of the transcontinental railway;" and Cartier was instrumental in bringing British Columbia and Manitoba into the Canadian Confederation.²¹² (Saul 2009)

The commemorative statue of the federalist reformer, George Brown, was positioned in 1844; it stands to recognize his contribution to responsible

government.²¹³ More so the monument heralds the major role that Brown played in shaping the nation-state of Canada. Calling to mind the Charlottetown Conference of 1864, it was Brown who suggested a unique form of government that would direct the Province of Canada and several other British colonies straight along the road to Confederation. Apart from being John A. Macdonald's fierce political opponent, what is less well known is the extent to which George Brown drew support for his feelings, about responsible government, from certain aspects of the Scottish Enlightenment; the philosophy of common sense and Hume's stand on perception, for instance. From a philosophical standpoint, Brown was deep into living history as he saw conflicting obligations under a British regime that ran a close parallel to the conflicted relationship between the people of Scotland and the British Crown and in Canada, the French/English situation. Brown interpreted cultural difference in the context of the people of Quebec, as a form of subjugation held under matters of inequality. One way out of an impasse was to implement a practical philosophical sense of equal concern for all—equal opportunity for example—and another, Brown thought, was for the federal governmental support “free, publically funded, and non-sectarian” education.²¹⁴ (Francis 1996)

In 1914 a double portrait group was commissioned to honor Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine and Robert Baldwin.²¹⁵ This monument also draws attention to particularities of politics that exalt the struggle for minority rights to the level of language, religion, and cultural equality. In light of the argument for

social justice, these issues remain at the fore front of political and academic debate in Canada. The great accomplishment of the combined efforts of La Fontaine and Baldwin rest in the proceedings of the 1848 coalition government and through their tenacity, the parliamentary unilingual bill set in place in the Act of Union 1840 that privileged English as the only parliamentary language, was overturned. French, as an “official” language of parliament, was reinstated. The La Fountain/Baldwin effort is the chronological marker for the prelude to confederation, where the Province of Canada almost achieved legal independence from colonialism. As Saul points out:

...from the Constitution of 1791... We have always had written proto-constitutions. We have always used them as if they were largely oral. A single example: The 1840 Constitution was written against most local wishes to create a centralized, unilingual mono-state. In 1848, under the same constitution Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine and Robert Baldwin, the reform leaders of Lower and Upper Canada, turned it into a federal, bilingual decentralized state. The only fundamental law they had to pass in order to change the constitutional rules was the one that formalized bilingualism....²¹⁶ (Saul 2009)

While there are many ways to interpret monumental sculptural representations, the best examples on Canada’s Parliament Hill direct viewing interest toward ideas about cooperation and egalitarianism. In this sense, the double portrait of Baldwin and La Fontaine—those champions of an alliance between the French-speaking and the English-speaking colony—stands as a tribute to political reformers who dedicated their political vision toward political and responsible government.

The plinth inscription on the double portrait bestows the title of the first elected premier on La Fontaine, which might prove a confusing moment. Because the Act of Union 1840 brings Upper and Lower Canada together as the Province of Canada, it is a provincial colonial union and not the creation of the Canadian confederal state. Far from finding nationhood, the Province of Canada remained a colonial federation and the promise of unity, which was constantly marred by political infighting, was always an issue. In deciding multicultural policies, the relationship between Canada East and Canada West appeared to have little hope of political or cultural survival. In the move from a colonial federal state to confederation, La Fontaine agreed to bow to the Conservative Party leader John A. Macdonald. Thus, in 1867, Macdonald was awarded the role as Canada's first elected Prime Minister.

The monument to John A. Macdonald was installed in the 1880s.²¹⁷ It pays tribute to Macdonald's role as a nation builder and it stands in praise of his role in the Charlottetown Conference. Indeed, his contribution to the draft of the British North America Act 1867, which created the nation-state of Canada, is significant and it adds to his status as Canada's first prime minister. In another sense, the statue of Macdonald stands also as a reminder of the political conflicts that consumed his energy as the leader of the Legislative Assembly when he was premier of the Province of Canada. The monument also stands as a shrine to confederation because of Macdonald's role in the Confederation Settlement.

Although official records of Charlottetown conference that took place over in September 1864 are scarce, Macdonald's speech to the delegates survives. In it Macdonald affirmed a commitment to a plan that would create a union of British held colonial provinces in British North America. Brian Busby, literary historian and anthologist provides this excerpt:

...The question of 'Colonial Union' is one of such magnitude that it dwarfs every other question on this portion of the continent. It absorbs every idea as far as I am concerned. For twenty long years I have been dragging myself through the dreary waste of colonial politics. I thought there was no end, nothing worthy of ambition; but now I see something which is well worthy of all that I have suffered in the cause of my little country. This question has now assumed a position that demands and commands the attention of all the colonies of British America...we cannot delay—the union of the colonies of British America, under one sovereign, is a fixed fact...In discussing the question of colonial union, we must consider what is desirable and practicable: we must consult local prejudices and aspirations. It is our desire to do so I hope that we will be able to work out a constitution that will have a strong central government...Everything, gentlemen, is to be gained by union, and everything is to be lost by disunion. Everybody admits that union must take place some time. I say the time is now. Here we are now; in a state of peace and prosperity—now we can sit down without any danger threatening us, and consider and frame a scheme advantageous to each of these colonies. If we allow so favourable an opportunity to pass, it may never come again...²¹⁸

While Macdonald appealed to the colonial reformers to put aside their differences in favor of one sovereign government, his insistence on a strong central government that would hold complete federal authority over the provinces clashed with the ideology of the liberal group such as La Fontaine, Baldwin, and George Brown. In the end, Macdonald's dream of creating a "highly centralized

state...underestimated the pluralism of Canada,” and his plan was undermined by Georges-Étienne Cartier.

Cartier’s argument for political pluralism is hailed as the decisive feature in the creation of Canada’s federal-provincial system of governance.²¹⁹ (Laselva 2004) To quote, Samuel V. Laselva, “...a highly centralized state would reduce the provinces to little more than administrative unites and that would confer almost imperial power on Ottawa.”²²⁰ In the end, however, the constitution settlement conferred the ultimate judicial authority on the British Parliament. Under Westminster’s highest court of the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council, amendments to Canada’s constitution, the 1867 BNA Act, could only be approved in London.

While the monumental figurative groups on Canada’s Parliament Hill honor the commitment to democracy by individual policy makers, figurative sculpture may also motivate recognition of an artwork in an association with the human form. The installation of such figures in a political setting, however, establishes a sovereign strategy meant to evoke more than the obvious; indeed, it projects the historical monument into the realm of political ideology. Nevertheless, as an object of contemplation, sculpture also suggests a relationship between the object and its symbolism, which goes much deeper, because the sculptural monument has roots in the tradition of representation. In this dialogue the conversation turns on a relationship between power and politics of expression, which holds the image open to all possible modes of interpretation.

In the artistic strategy of juxtaposition, it is well known that where and how an object is presented determine the viewers' perception. In the sense that the sculptural groupings of Parliament Hill are meant to encourage thoughts on the relationship between the private and the public, they also provide a visual link, in consideration of the location, that site is an inherently political designation. Canada's Parliament Hill, symbolizes a firm stand on broad issues of freedom, equality, value judgements and, good government. In the context of the complexity of maintaining order and supporting public welfare, the political reformers portrayed on the "Hill" conceived a peaceful way to inscribe government policy apart from the use and authority of power.

Indeed, from a political agenda, the monuments are meant to draw attention to the political goals of cooperation, wherein concepts of freedom, equality, and social justice are conjoined with notions of order and welfare: all presented as valued goals of fairness, peace, and good government. Additionally, by limiting attributes of political symbolism, the sculptural monuments are easily recognizable as portrait representations. Although they stand in a historical place and invoke a political text, as artistic images they also belong to the private realm as portraits of citizens, albeit, involved in the political experience. Boris Groys, hailed as an astute observer of the power of the aesthetic elaborates:

If we want to speak about the ability of art to resist external pressure, the following question must first be answered: Does art have its own territory that is worthy of being defended? The autonomy of art has been denied in many recent art-theoretical discussions. If these discourses are right, art cannot be a source of any resistance whatsoever. In the best case art could be used merely for designing, for

aestheticizing the already existent oppositional, emancipatory political movements—that is, it could be at best merely a supplement to politics. This seems to be the crucial question: Does art hold any whether there are powers of oppression or liberation? Thus the question of the autonomy of art seems to me the central question in the context of any discussion of the relationship between art and resistance. And my answer to this questions is: Yes, we can speak about the autonomy of art; and yes, art does have an autonomous power of resistance.²²¹(Groys 2008)

The fact is, Groys argues, that the aesthetic should have “equal rights” as an object of contemplation that involves the philosophical quest based on value judgment. In the well established sense that the art object—the poem, the novel, the visual arts, the film—moves from mere factual information to the realm of knowledge, Groys argues for the sake of investigating ideas in art objects, because they offer multiple chances to think about other ways of being in the world.

To continue my tour of Parliament Hill, the monument to Queen Victoria was set in place circa 1897.²²² It was dedicated to her memory in 1902 when her eldest son, King Edward VII, visited Canada. By a strategic placement, the monument addresses Canada’s enduring relationship with the British Crown as well as the extra ordinary life of the monarch, who was destined to a long sovereign reign. In the sense of British colonization the Victorian era mirrors the global developments of Elizabeth I, but more so, Victoria’s rule takes in much of what can be said about British colonialism. In relation to Victorian politics, the standing figure of Queen Victoria marks a kind of sovereignty that symbolizes absolute British authority that dedicates her status to the nation through of the supremacy of the British Empire.

In a sculptural tradition that calls attention to the relationship of space to form, the standing figure represents a kind of majesty that, taken together with the political concept of the “monarchical” principle, draws attention to the attributes of Queen Victoria’s long history. Often featured seated in an attitude of royal dignity, Victoria’s standing portrait presents an enduring image of one exalted, high up in dignity, to stand as the very symbol of Victorian power that the English held, over the vast colonialist territory of the British Empire.

On a more practical level, the sculptural object directs attention to the fact that the choice of Ottawa, as Canada’s capital city has been “credited” to Queen Victoria. Moreover, resting in the character of the image is the embodiment of the “monarchical” principle that is meant to remind the viewer of a higher spirit of order that resides over political party rivalries in Canada. Significantly, the historical fact that Queen Victoria’s royal assent brings the nation-state of Canada into being rests in the proof of her signature on the British North America Act 1867.

As part of the 125th celebration of Canada’s Confederation, a monument to Queen Elizabeth II was put in place in 1992.²²³ It is an impressive free-standing equestrian work in bronze. Structurally balanced and decidedly expressive in realism, both horse and regal rider represent the embodiment of a state of unity meant to express continuance between the British Crown and the nation-state of Canada. The tribute to Queen Elizabeth II is situated to create a both a visual link to the “monarchical” principle embedded in the BNA Act 1867—and still in place

in the twenty-first century—and to Queen Victoria’s personal relationship with Queen Elizabeth II, who has served as Canada’s monarch since 1952.

Fundamental to art as documentation, the monuments on Parliament Hill inscribe a text that is held in the history of nation building. Indeed, as a means of recording facts the art narrative inscribes the drama of the political experience that is different from the written representation, but offered in familiar attributes such as formal quality, the art/monuments carry an authorship of visual expression.

Groys puts it in perspective:

This gesture [formal quality] is always contextual and historically specific, but it also has pragmatic importance as a model for further representations of this gesture. Thus, social and political criticism in the name of art has an affirmative dimension that transcends its innocence its immediate historical context. By criticizing the socially, culturally, politically, or economically imposed hierarchies of values, art affirms aesthetic equality as a guarantee of its true autonomy.²²⁴

So far as the monuments on Parliament Hill celebrate the achievement of political autonomy, they hardly stand as a critical narrative. There is a curious lack of sculptural documentation to address how minority groups may have interpreted the historically situated events. There is little to explain how Aboriginal peoples responded to nation building. However, a much later addition marks an inauguration ceremony in 2000, in honor of minority political women who pushed for universal suffrage; and later, pressed to have the gendered language written into the British North America Act 1867 removed:

This monument entitled “Women are Persons!” is a tribute to Nellie McClung, Irene Parlby, Emily Murphy, Louise McKinney and Henrietta Muir Edwards. Known as the Famous Five, these women won the “Persons” Case, a 1929 court ruling which legally declared

women as persons under the British North America Act and made them eligible for appointment to the Canadian Senate.²²⁵

It was not that any one woman wished a seat in the Canadian Senate. The argument for personhood was a matter of conscience and that moved suffragist feminists such as Louise McKinney and Nellie McClung to address the broader issue focused on the idea of enfranchisement as an enabling act capable of countering social and political inequalities. In the acknowledgement of democratic equality and full citizenship, women's rights had to be brought to the wider fabric of society.

Unlike the senate appointment, that excluded women from exercising full citizenship rights, Canada's Wartime Elections Act of 1917 had already opened the way for political equality. Wives, mothers, sisters of military men were already exercising their right to vote, which more or less granted the vote universally, regardless of sex, religion, or ethnic alliance. The Wartime act extended the right to vote to non-landed men and to members of the Semitic group, perhaps a first country in the annals of democracy to do so. However, because of the terms of the Indian Act, extending the vote to Canada's Aboriginal peoples could only come upon the renouncement of their status.

While it is well known that women in Canada had regularly voted in the early years of the nineteenth century, despite radical liberal values on reform, in 1849 women were denied the right to vote. R. Douglas Francis elaborates:

Responsible government thus moved Canada forward along the road to democracy and political autonomy. The voters, through their elected representatives, would now do the governing—or at least the male

portion would, for in 1849 the Reformers amended the election law to exclude women from the franchise. In spite of the common-law prohibiting against female suffrage, a few women had voted. They had even helped a Tory win in 1844—an incident the Reformers had not forgotten. Ironically, after their hard fight to achieve responsible government and greater self-government from Britain, Canadian politicians imposed tighter controls over the Indian population of the Canadas.²²⁶

Far from a quirk of fate, denying Aboriginal communities the concept of self-government falls in line with the drive for cultural assimilation. As for denying women the right to vote, it averts the democratic right to direct government action into the realm of sexual discrimination. Thus, as women social activists pressed the private issue of gender identity they intentionally directed their campaign so as to push the argument for equality into the realm of the political.

By directing facts of sexual inequality toward the concept of quality of opportunity, gender discrimination was aligned with discrimination against women and minority groups. This put the struggle for equality of opportunity directly into the social economic realm. As they sought to contest the opposition between the private and public life, Canada's political activists addressed the basic human right to participate in governmental decisions through a more or less hidden discourse on gender equality.

Confident that the logic of equality of opportunity would hold the attention of the members of any Legislative Assembly, the small committee of the Political Equality League, led by Nellie McClung, directed their campaign toward social welfare and in general, the betterment of society. But they made their claim for full citizenship focused on the concept of equal opportunity.²²⁷ Placing the

integration of private and public life at the center of political discourse enabled the private and domestic question of property rights, guardianship of children, divorce laws, and access to higher education to be brought to the political argument for economic equality of opportunity. To direct legislative bills appropriate to public power, the group widened their horizon to draw attention to assure social justice for women in the private sphere. Nellie McClung, an avid civil rights essayist writes:

...the vexed question of whether or not women are persons, according to the laws of the British Empire...belongs to the legal gentleman... who had lost a case in Women's Court in Edmonton [and] denounced the Magistrate [Emily Murphy], the first woman Magistrate in Canada, by telling her that her appointment was illegal, for women are not persons in the eyes of the law, and never have been.²²⁸

As McClung relates it Emily Murphy, the first woman magistrate in the British Empire, took the challenge seriously enough to do her own research and discovered that:

...any five people, British subjects, can ask for an interpretation of any Act, and she decided that she would petition Parliament to give us their interpretation of the clause in the B.N.A. Act which deals with Senate appointments, reading 'From time to time properly qualified persons may be summoned to the Senate.' We put our names on the petition and it was sent to Ottawa.²²⁹

By an opinion of the Supreme Court of Canada, terms of the petition were denied. Eventually, the petition made its way to the Judicial Committee of the Privy Council in London and from the highest court in Britain, came the landmark decision that women are indeed persons. McClung gives the details:

On the morning of October 18th, 1929, newspapers all over the British Empire carried black headlines: “Privy Council Declares That Women Are Persons!”...it came as a surprise to many women in Canada at least who had not known that they were not persons until they heard it stated that they were.²³⁰

The practical application of the historical decision made democratic history, significantly because it set the legal precedent for an amendment to the British North America Act. However, it could also be postulated, following Murphy’s research that had any five British subjects, female leaders of the so called third world, made a similar petition for women’s full citizenship: the fate of colonial subjects of the colonies of the British Empire might have turned on a different episteme.

What distinguishes the colonial subject from the limits of knowing the serf mode is to engage the political by taking a stand for a model of self-knowledge as a person capable of speaking.²³¹ (Donna Landry 1996) The constant question is how the subject is constituted in light of political structures of control, brings my inquiry into the realm of identity politics. To speak as a person in the eyes of civil secular law, links the demand for sexual equality to the wider struggle for human rights. Geeta Kapur, a “Delhi-based critic and curator” writing from a post-colonial perspective, examines the situation of citizenship in the context of society in light of identity politics in the former British stronghold in India:

...civil society comprises the realm of rule-governed negotiations in a legal framework the privileges certain citizens on account of class, caste, etc....in which different sections of the population fight—within a manifestly unequal society—for their democratic rights to benefits, public services, representation and entitlements on behalf of a community or cause.²³²(Kapur 2007)

Extending her inquiry into the ideologies of globalization, Kapur looks at ways in which negative political situations may adversely affect the granting of citizenship:

Being a citizen within the terms of the nation-state rests on contractually conducted ideologically over-determined and often *exclusionary* privileges. Global citizenship (necessitated by the logic of global capital and the contingent need for a mass movement of labor) frequently translates into a systematic process of *disenfranchisement*: the badge of alienation is worn by millions of migrants. Heavy with historical contradictions, an international civil society is postulated at an elevated (possibly utopian) level, even as the discourse on citizenship is rhetorically renewed by asking how the citizenry—as multitudinous force—comes to be redeemed within and outside state formations.²³³ (Kapur 2007)

In the political rhetoric, there are persistent gaps. Gender, race, and ethnic equality are often far from realized. As Canada works through political squabbles, these issues keep coming up whenever the concept of freedom and equality rights of minority language and religious groups—including the rights of Canada's Aboriginal peoples—breach the concept of social equality and fairness in favor of the argument for economic efficiency.

While historical documentation define the concept of good government and democratic plurality as unique, perhaps radical, the concept of peace and order that is embedded in the accord between the French and English ascribes the concept of social justice as it meets at intersection of a political regime dedicated to nation building, which in turn upholds the concept of democratic freedom and cultural equality. Here again, I draw attention to places where social justice and

good government are presented as definitive goals of the Canadian Confederation. However, in the next section, as I consider intergovernmental systems that are connected, in terms of the 1867 constitution, I will discuss the importance of various Royal Commission Reports that are relevant to social change, for instance, in higher education and the implementation of democratic policies and constitutional law in Canada.

The Canadian constitution: Human rights and social equality

In the previous section, I examined the connection between Canadian politics and the philosophical quest of freedom and equality through a discussion on the critical arts and the practical application of concepts that are found in the federalist perspective that undergirds Canada's unique pluralist democracy. Indeed, the Canadian political agenda hangs on liberal ideas in defense of democratic freedom that encourage questions of what it means to live together yet separate.

At one end of the spectrum we acknowledge the triumph of the liberal ideal of social and cultural justice, equality, freedom of expression, and environmental justice. These concepts are embedded in the defining text of early British and French colonial policies. They are contained, in part, in the Royal Proclamation 1763, reestablished in the Quebec Act 1774, restated in the Constitution 1791 and they are guaranteed, by the British North America Act 1867. These historical experiences point out the unshakable fact that Canada *is* a unique pluralistic

democracy and a multinational country. At the other end of the rainbow, however, the dream of a “unified Canada” often appears to be nothing more than a cultural myth. While legal, cultural, and social arguments have been developed to champion participatory democracy, it is clear that Canada’s ideal carries the eirenic discourse and that official policies support the concept of otherness and difference. It is also clear that real problems stemming from Canada’s colonial past keep coming up.

The sub-continent political and environmental activist, Vandana Shiva, opines that the failure to acknowledge the economic imbalance between diverse communities is an underlying reason why troubling questions keep coming up. (Shiva 1990) Shiva attributes social imbalance and ethnic poverty in combination with “...gender subordination and patriarchy...as the oldest of oppressions.”²³⁴ (Shiva 1990)

In Canada, gender equality is protected by “one of the most famous milestones in jurisprudence,” the 1920 “persons case.” This important amendment to the BNA Act 1867 clarifies gender equality; it guarantees minority rights and these are reinstated in the Constitution Act 1982. As an aside, had other Commonwealth countries of the 1920s adopted the “persons” decision, there would be little chance to subjugate women and children under the chattel code of belonging to the realm of “movable possessions.” The Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms provides additional protection for fundamental human rights. As for the rights of nature, the power of the environmental network is expanding.

However, as Shiva points out, it is also well known that the practical application of environmental justice, like cultural and gender equality, is tied to economic developments. In Canada, it has been proven that economic policy slows the process especially well when it comes to the guarantee of social justice in relation to the question of equality of opportunity, but in the realm of environmental justice the situation is really alarming, in light of resource extraction in the oil and gas industry.

When it comes to the exploitation of natural resources, the “mercantile” mind set described by Harold Innis, obviously undergrids the fact that the Canadian economy is a natural resources based economy. On the focus of nature, while governments ought to be environment trustees, the narrative of support for sustainable trade, social and environmental justice, the lack of good working conditions complicate negotiations when it comes to the environmental debate. Nevertheless, Aboriginal voices are becoming stronger in this region. As Canada’s First Nations peoples struggle to achieve the promise of a land and water base that is enshrined in the Royal Proclamation 1763 direct action groups contest the patriarchic political rhetoric of economic development. As democratic freedom, cultural equality, and social justice are guarantees—written into the various accords, treaties, and parliamentary acts that affect all Canadians—Aboriginal communities are just beginning to have the same rights recognized.

The underlying philosophical narrative that refers to the relationship between democratic freedom, culture equality, and nationalism is never far from the surface. It is rooted in colonial governance in Canada. It has spread from the eighteenth and nineteenth century political discourse to find a strong branch of democratic governance in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries. This is where concepts of nationalist culture describe and embrace otherness and difference and this is where Canadian policies of multiculturalism and bilingualism provide the incentive for social change. In all of this the political narrative gives justification for the governments to exercise their fiduciary responsibility from the idea that multinationalism guarantees cultural equality and social justice for *all* Canadians.

However, in the interest of the global economy, unregulated trade agreements, questionable energy projects, military spending, and so called “tough” crime bills compromise the desire to protect social values in the interest of social and environmental justice. As globalization becomes stronger it becomes increasingly difficult, to keep localized policies in place, which address the great ethical questions that link human rights and rights for planet earth: upon which, at the moment, we still depend. As civil society groups, young people, and many members of Canada’s First Nations communities become drawn into the struggle for social and environmental justice, attention is directed toward ideas about different voices in the realm of human and non-human relationships in a changing world. This sort of interweaving directs attention toward posthumanist developments.

In exploring the pluralistic framing of Canada's unique democracy, I established that the dynamics of colonial federalism brought what was left of the British North America colonies—after the American War of Independence—together in one assembly. Colonial federalism sets the ground work for The Canadian Confederation in which political confederation divides political power between government levels, to limit authority. In turn this sets the model for Canada's multilevel governance, which is said to be the “defining moment in the evolution of Canadian pluralism.”²³⁵ (Laselva 2004)

Following Samuel Laselva's focus on the unitary features of the Canadian Constitution typically places the emphasis on Sir John A. Macdonald's dream of a strong central state. Conversely, Laselva credits George-Étienne Cartier's intervention for the alternative goals of confederation settled on the federalist model and under which ultimate juridical power is held by the federal government. With political power limited by dividing authority between the provinces and the federal government tensions are often not far from the surface, thus old issues keep coming; equality guarantees not in the least. ²³⁶ (Laselva 2004) In the context of a pluralist democracy in contemporary Canada, Pierre Elliott Trudeau's charge, that “...Canada must be a just society,” centered the political narrative on a conversation that lead to a decade or more debate on the patriation of the 1867 British North America Act. What is difficult to understand is how political wrangling complicated the struggle to entrench a Canadian

charter of rights and freedoms in a distinctly Canadian constitution so that all Canadians might relate to it.

Fulfilling the goals of confederation

One of the oldest, if not the major antagonistic problem in the Canadian political discourse is rooted in the fact that for over one hundred fifteen years, the BNA Act 1867, which brought the nation-state of Canada into being, was locked in trust, in London. Without a distinctly Canadian constitution, only Britain's Judicial Committee of the Privy Council could "interpret" or amend the British North America Act 1867. This is because the BNA Act is an Act of British Parliament and not an act of the Canadian parliament. In order to effect "domestic" legislation pertaining to the act, it was necessary to take it from the authority of Westminster and bring it to the authority of the Canadian nation-state. The problem was not that the British wanted to hang on to the act; indeed, proclamation of the Statute of Westminster 1931 enshrined, in British law, the right of independence of the dominions of the Commonwealth countries, this included India as well as Canada.²³⁷ (Chrétien 2010) While India proclaimed "complete" juridical independence from Britain in 1947, the problem with Canada was that the federal-provincial governments simply could not agree on how to manage the necessary constitutional amending formula that British law required for patriation. Try as they may, many astute political leaders had attempted to bring the BNA Act to the authority of Canadian jurisdiction. All had failed; that is

until Trudeau decided to make it his priority. In pressing for the patriation of the BNA Act, Trudeau made it his main concern to enshrine a charter of rights and freedoms into a distinctly Canadian Constitution. Lorraine E. Weinrib, a law professor at the University of Toronto elaborates:

The adoption of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms is Pierre Elliott Trudeau's greatest political achievement. Overcoming obstacles that had baffled his predecessors, Trudeau secured constitutional change that offered the tantalizing possibility of a new type of national self-understanding. Rather than an evocation of shared blood and history, which could only invite discord in a land of aboriginal peoples, colonial conquest and increasingly diverse immigration, the Charter bound a pluralistic and far-flung population into a nation of free and equal rights-bearing citizens.²³⁸

In addition, it was unfeasible, from Trudeau's philosophical standpoint, to distract attention away from the "relationship between the individual and the state;" especially at a time when the unity of Canada was in question. When Trudeau began to address the constitution question what is now referred to as the "Quiet Revolution" was in full swing in the province of Quebec. Fired by a separatist movement and supported by the Quebec premier, René Lévesque, a referendum on Quebec sovereignty appeared to be a sure thing. For Trudeau, it was time to concentrate on his constitutional philosophy and from the belief that a charter of rights would fulfill one goal of the original Canadian Constitution (1791), people of Quebec would feel more at home. Trudeau was convinced that a charter would to allow all Canadian citizens to "...consider the whole of Canada their country and field of endeavor."²³⁹ (Weinrib 1998)

The Trudeau Liberals came into federal office in 1968, just after Canada's year long centennial celebration. The Liberal election campaign promised strong policies on social equality and the liberal movement in Canada helped to weaken separatist movement in Quebec. Once elected, the Liberal's immediately acted upon political promises and over their first term in office (1968-1971) put social programs in place directed toward strengthening a liberal platform of social justice. The Liberals won the next federal election (1971-1979) and well and in his role of the leader of the federal government, Trudeau called a number of first minister's federal-provincial conferences on constitutional reform. The participants were charged to address the issue of a written constitution for Canada and to provide a draft, to quote Weinrib:

The charter that [Trudeau] offered the county in a nationally televised speech in October 1980 included a full range of guarantees: fundamental freedoms, democratic rights, mobility rights, legal rights, equality rights, and language rights.²⁴⁰

In order to achieve this, and to comply with the rule in accordance with British law, The Canadian parliamentarians had to draft an amending formula for the NA Act. Given the ongoing federal-provincial antagonisms this would prove to be a monumental challenge.

On one hand, the Canadian Parliament had to pass the resolution for amendment, but because Britain had fiduciary colonial responsibility to "protect" Canada's federal structure the proposal had to go to the British Parliament for approval. (Weinrib 1998) Herein enters an ironic fact; in order to reach an agreement to go to London with an amendment proposal, the double majority

principle that harkens back to the divisional problems that the colonial reformers, La Fountain, Baldwin, Brown, Cartier, and Macdonald had faced more than a century earlier entered the equation. The politically divided fractions had to come to consensus on the resolution. Acting unilaterally—without the support of the provinces—would get Trudeau what he wanted, but this was not a politically astute move; he had to get the territories and the provincial premiers to agree to his charter proposal, this would take considerable political wrangling.

The constitution effort: Reform and the charter of rights and freedoms

In this section, I look at the political environment that led to the successful patriation of the BNA Act. In particular, the arguments and political debates center on the entrenchment of a charter of rights and freedoms which the draft constitution promised to protect. This drew the attention of various intellectual groups, feminist campaigners, human rights advocates, and grassroots civil rights workers, all of which centered the critical discourse at the level of direct participation that fits with the sociopolitical views of Antonio Gramsci.

Direct political action could be ascribed to the social category of the “organic” intellectual. This category pretty well describes the strategic positioning of Canada’s civil rights advocates and feminist equal rights activists, many of whom occupied a central position in the struggle to patriate the BNA Act but more so to ensure equality of opportunity and distributive justice. Through a more or

less hidden discourse, Canadian political activists advocated for the basic human right to participate in governmental decisions. As they sought to contest the opposition between the private and public life, in terms of Canada's participatory democracy, they expressed the fundamental right to exercise their civil responsibility. Lorna Marsden, a Professor of Sociology explains:

Participatory democracy is a broad concept. In organizational terms it suggests including not only a wider group of people but also different kinds of people in the decision-making process. In the 1960s many kinds of people were asking to participate in the decision making that would shape our society. Students were placed on the governing councils of universities, workers were occasionally put in decision-making positions at plants and offices, consumer preferences were being studied rather than assumed, and the legitimacy of closed decision making was routinely called into question by reform movements of many kinds—and reported in the press.²⁴¹

To achieve the end goal of a Just Society, Trudeau held that participation was the greater part of making a claim to full citizenship. From his standpoint a just society needed citizen participation which was an organized way to mediate between extremes. This necessarily placed the focus on the concept of equal opportunity directed toward social welfare and, in general, the betterment of society.

Placing the integration of private and public life at the center of political discourse enabled the private and domestic question of property rights, guardianship of children, divorce laws, and access to higher education to be brought to the political argument for economic equality. Bills appropriate to public power might then be enacted to bring social justice to the private sphere.

Yet, in spite of the groundwork set in place by the early suffrage campaign—to

wit, the “persons case”[sic]—Canada had been slow to ensure equality of opportunity for women and minority groups. Complicated by the fact that electoral participation appears weak in Canada, even the vote appeared not to have proven an appropriate political resource for women or for that matter—especially for that matter—an adequate political leverage for Aboriginal peoples.

Nevertheless, there appears no lack of political activism in stressing the ability to know when basic human rights are violated. Indeed by showing that something might be done about inequality, in light of juridical and legal positions directed toward upholding basic human rights, those “organic” intellectual social activists’ spared little time in pointing out fault lines in the mechanism of government power where social and cultural discrimination may be revealed and repaired.

To follow this through Foucault’s work on the relationship between power and knowledge, for example, one way to draw strength from the historical lines of freedom and equality is to make the legal case for equality of opportunity fall within the integration of the political/private realm. As the terms of Antonio Gramsci’s analysis are known to bring political and economic resources to the theoretical position, this knowledge helps to untangle the apparent antagonist relationship between the political and the personal. From Gramsci’s view, as I have already mentioned, paying attention to the social category of the “organic intellectual,” is where direct participation may result in social change.²⁴²

Indeed, following Spivak, this is where the individual might speak for the community, and might be heard. As I address conditions surrounding political debates of the 1980s, on bilingualism and multiculturalism in terms of equality of opportunity, I follow the conditions for social change that radiate out from the decidedly “organic” and intellectual feminist movement in Canada; especially to give expression to current issues in contemporary Canada. For example, as the concept of intervention stands as evidence of agency in the articulation of socio-political reform, elements of political philosophy direct attention toward Canada’s unique stand on equality in the name of cultural, social, and environmental justice. Those elements that uphold the concept of democratic freedom, cultural equality, and social justice ground the political narrative that promises to ensure equality between different peoples, genders, races and religion. All of which affirm the facts that throughout the history of multinationalism, even as discriminatory problems keep coming up, the political agenda in Canada continues to try, at least, to uphold the principle of social and cultural equality through the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity.

However, in 1981 a brief on governmental response to charges of human rights violations, which specifically addressed gender inequality, showed that because the BNA Act could only be amended in London, the Canadian federal government was incapable of altering legislation to guarantee gender equality for the women of Canada’s First Nation societies. The historical treatment provided in the text of the BNA Act clearly placed jurisdictional responsibility for

Canada's Aboriginal peoples, education and livelihood, in the domain of the national federal government. The provinces had no jurisdiction over the administration of the Indian Act. And complicated by the Indian Act, an amendment to legislate for gender equality for Aboriginal women was still governed under the BNA Act: that amendment had to be made in London. Ironically, because Canada had not yet patriated the BNA ACT in 1981, the gender equality question in Canada could only be resolved in London, by Britain's Privy Council.

To complicate matters, any Aboriginal land claims also had to be discussed in London and as Trudeau correctly interpreted the text of the BNA Act, it only referred to the powers of the Crown and not specifically to the amending formula. In practice, the BNA Act united the British North America colonies to create the nation-state of Canada, but in law the British Parliament remained more or less in control over Canada's constitutional rights. Despite shortcomings, the ratification of the BNA Act 1867 was an astonishing accomplishment in political and jurisprudence history. The distinction is in the fact that at the historical time in which Canada was creating a unique pluralistic democracy, other countries looked to submerge people in a monolithic nationalism through the idea of a unity state—one people, one country under the homogeneous mantra of “we,” to paraphrase Lyotard. In Canada, the Confederation settlement claims national pluralism. The political historian,

Samuel Laselva, credits The Canadian Confederation with bringing different people together in one assembly as a heroic historical achievement:

...distinct nations (English, French, and Aboriginal peoples)...with its scheme of minority rights...allowed multiple loyalties and multiple identities to flourish; it thereby enabled Canadians to live together and to live apart in one country.²⁴³

This scheme of three modes of nationalist identity sets the framework that holds Canada's pluralist democracy. Through the concept of accepting diversity and difference, Canadians are encouraged to embrace the humanist idea of unity, yet at the same time the expression of difference upholds the promise of a heterogeneous framework which is more compatible with developments in posthumanism.

In the wake of new feminisms, poststructuralism, the postcolonial debate, together with directions in posthumanism, it is quite accurate to dismiss the ideology of unitary paternalistic governance. However, to follow the work of Franz Fanon, the colonial agenda recreated in North America, a "third Europe" that more than capable of creating situations under with to subjugate people under a harsh program of humanist assimilation—Canada's Indian Act notwithstanding.²⁴⁴

In the sense that conditions which limit the freedom of the subject draw concerns about romantic notions of multinationalism, in the harsh light of reality difficult lived experiences clash with the ideal concept of inalienable "natural" rights. Sunera Thobani, for example, exposes the rhetoric of multinationalism in her timely and enormously critical book, *Exalted Subjects Studies in the Making*

*of Race and Nation in Canada.*²⁴⁵ (Thobani 2009) Addressing the hypocrisy of unitary rhetoric from the position of contemporary sociology and political science, Thobani posits that the egalitarian narrative obscures techniques of power and political authority that work to “exalt” national subjects over others.

Addressing issues pertaining to Canada’s Aboriginal peoples and immigrants,

Thobani points to conditions that create “outsiders” through:

...narrations, which are inscribed into the juridical order and shape state policies and practices, the national subject is not only existentially but also institutionally and systematically defined in direct relation to the outsider. Such exaltations function as a form of ontological and existential capital that can be claimed by national subjects in their relations with the Indian, the immigrant and the refugee.²⁴⁶

Drawing attention to negative aspects of co-operation, Thobani sees tendencies that lean toward creating and “outsider” narrative that falls far from meeting the ideals of inclusivity put forth in Canada’s papers of Confederation.

In the mid-twentieth century, while the student/worker uprising in France challenged government sovereignty and the American Civil Rights movement was addressing racial discrimination, the Canadian federal government was intent on directing its power toward legislating official policies of multiculturalism aimed toward the guarantee of cultural equality and social justice. In the struggle to understand the power of oppositional cultural binaries, for example, prime minister Lester B. Pearson called for a Royal Commission on Bilingualism and Biculturalism. The report, which was released in the late 1960s, addressed the concept of oppression as belonging to cultural intolerance.

From an avowed attempt to open Canadians to social change, many of the recommendations of the Bilingualism and Biculturalism Report (B & B Report) were adopted by Pearson's Liberal government. Like the nation-builders before him, Pearson clung to idea of revisiting history in order to reinforce the almost mythical idea that unitary political policies would bring different people together and open the eyes of citizens—especially young Canadians—to the concept of democratic freedom and human rights brought into harmony between different cultures and directed toward world peace. In the quest for social justice through unity, Pearson thought what Canada, the country, needed was a flag: a public medium around which to rally the people; and, Canada needed official policies uphold cultural tolerance, under these banners Canada might achieve the goal of Social Justice.

In June 1964 Pearson instigated the “great flag debate.” It did not bring people together as he had hoped, it polarized public opinion and it set off a round of bitter arguments in the House of Commons, which carried on over seven months. Basically, the political debate centered on the Conservative Party's leader, John Diefenbaker's insistence, that a new flag for Canada had to “honour the ‘founding races’ and specifically that Union Jack, had to hold the “canton of honour.” Pearson argued for a clean break from the symbols of Canada's colonial past. Namely that the British Union Jack and the British Red Ensign, both of which were qualified Canadian flags, had to go.²⁴⁷ Typically, a committee was struck to decide upon an appropriate design. Eventually the parliamentarians were

presented with a design; and, in all night debate the vote was called. On December 15th at two in the morning; the parliamentarians voted “163 to 78” for the now familiar red and white maple leaf flag. (Flag Debate) By 1967, Canada’s centennial year, Pearson’s flag was flying high. The political authors Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, and John English elaborate:

...Canada’s new red and white maple leaf flag...seemed to have become what Pearson had hoped it would be: an expression of the willingness of the young to break with their past.”²⁴⁸

Pearson’s interest in breaking with symbol of Canada’s colonial past did not, however, include breaking with philosophical principles, rules and values, which determine peaceful relationships between different cultural groups. Indeed. Pearson’s eirenic proposals held tight to the ideals of democratic freedom and he continued to direct diplomatic negotiations toward the achievement of world peace. In domestic politics Pearson wanted to appeal to a broader constituency and he desperately wanted a break from the Conservative party’s economic rhetoric. James Bickerton and Alain-G. Gagnon, Professors of Political Science explain:

One historical reading of the relationship between political parties and Canadian voters is that it has been essentially one long tradition of alternating electing one of two national parties, both of which have competed for the same policy space and the same electorate. The victor in any particular election has been the party that was more successful in brokering voter support along three or four primary dimensions: the socio-economic (which roughly translates into a left-right ideological spectrum), the ethnocultural (which encompasses religion, ethnicity, and language), the ultra urban-rural, and the regional.²⁴⁹

In the political narrative of the mid 1960s, there is a unique and renewed interest in nationalism. This time it was embraced by young people choosing to attend political rallies in obvious support of “reinvigorated” liberal ideas about defending democratic freedom. Indeed this response gave Pearson an advantage in the 1967 federal election, which was carried forward to the next administration in support of liberal humanist ideals in the heady days of Pierre Elliott Trudeau’s Liberal administration that from 1968, held on for sixteen years plus four.

The liberal defense: Equality and freedom of expression

With Canada’s official policies on multiculturalism and bilingualism entrenched in bills of legislation, the theme of multinationalism was carried to a new level as new social and cultural programs were directed toward the guarantee of cultural equality, social justice and the freedom of expression. Additionally, these programs were handsomely financed by government grants in support of developments in higher education, the humanities, social sciences, architecture, and the arts. It is from this history that the political rhetoric of the mid to late twentieth century conjoins with Trudeau’s own philosophical quest to prioritize freedom of expression, cultural equality, and social justice.

Trudeau’s key argument always links the liberal defense of freedom of expression and cultural equality with the concept of social justice for *all* Canadians. Trudeau so often used the philosophical phrase, “reason over passion” to press his particular sociopolitical agenda that the Canadian artist, Joyce

Wieland, appropriated his philosophical position to articulate a new sociopolitical approach to art. Using the artistic strategy of cyclical sequencing, Wieland stitched the words of Trudeau's celebrated remark into a series of quilted assemblages.²⁵⁰ By using a distinctly poetical voice, Wieland commanded a political and authoritative cultural agenda in aesthetic works that carry titles such as "*True Patriot Love, Reason over Passion, and La Raison avant la Passion.*"²⁵¹ Completing these works with reflective titles that address Canada's new official languages act, Wieland brought an element of humor to an otherwise serious political agenda. In addition, Wieland demonstrated sensitivity toward the concept of worthy human equality and multiculturalism in the Canadian political scene.

From her initial "companion pieces made in both official languages," Wieland revealed a growing interest in the political especially by directing her work more and more toward a decidedly interventionist art discourse. As she found a new role as a political activist, Wieland turned her attention toward documentary film-making. In these works, Wieland took the first step from "painter" to "artist-as-documentarist" to address a particular political expression through ethico-aesthetic themes that celebrate the growing awareness of the national identity. In one sense, Wieland's path to political activism stemmed from an interest in literary feminism and the discourse on heroinism. In another sense Wieland's ideas about alternative art making grew from an interest in ethical awareness of political art intervention and the capabilities of using documentary film-making as an expressive tool.

Widening her discourse to concentrate on the idea of the hero, Wieland's first film, *Tea in the Garden*, focused directly on female heroics. In the film, *True Patriot Love*, Wieland drew attention to the heroic place that Laura Secord holds in Canadian history. In a recent essay, the author Stephen Marche offered a brief historical overview of Secord's role in the 1812 war between the United States and Britain:

Popular history has distilled our most iconic war heroine's life down to a vignette of a woman trekking through the woods on a mid-summer's eve. While tending to her husband, a Canadian militiaman wounded at the battle of Queenston Heights, Secord learned of American plans to ambush the Forty-ninth Regiment at Beaver Dams. Aided by Aboriginal scouts, she travelled twenty miles to warn Lieutenant James FitzGibbon and his men, who were camped near present-day Thorhold, Ontario. Her bravery helped save the Forty-Ninth Regiment, but the battle of Beaver Dam itself constitutes little more than a historical footnote. Ironically, her service to the military eventually eclipsed that of FitzGibbon and his regiment: without firing a single shot, she became a bone fide war hero....her twenty-mile walk has become a malleable symbol: of loyalty to the Crown; of a distinct national identity; of our keener desire to lend a hand....²⁵² (Marche 2012)

While the historical archive is available, the exchange between the historical data and Wieland's use of literary theory allowed her to unite the theme of heroism with a feminist identity directed toward loyalty.

In practice, Wieland marked her own loyalty with an affinity for the country in her most ambitious film, *The Far Shore*. In this work Wieland conjoined her interest for environmental ethics and ecological protection, with the theme of the heroic as a place of "identity with the land." (Burnett 1883) In an experimental work, featuring the legendary member of the Group of Seven, Tom

Thompson, and Wieland developed her thesis—the exposition of the heroic—and to follow through, applied the technique of filmic documentary to record the heroic struggles of marginalized minorities in Canada and Canada’s Aboriginal peoples.

For instance, in the early 1970s the environment movement brought social activists together with ecologists associated with the Sierra Club. Wieland was involved and she worked with the Cree Nation of northern Quebec in their struggle to protect their traditional land and their treaty rights against the exploitation of natural resources and the wholesale destruction of the environment by the enormous James Bay hydro-electric project.²⁵³ (Nowell 2001)

Chronologically, in 1973, Wieland made *Solidarity*, a documentary film that records the heroic demonstrations of striking women workers at a biscuit factory. Tracing her interests in political controversy back a bit in time, Wieland’s 1969 film, *Reason over Passion*, records a cross-country trip she made that is part travelogue and in part a political satire. Wieland shot the landscape scenes from the window of the train and, later inserted the political footage to create the political commentary. Iris Nowell elaborates:

The film opens with a flickering sequence in which the landscape is barely discernable flashing by... Flowering scenes of the land are cut with numerous headshots of Trudeau... The lettering ‘reason over passion’ is superimposed almost throughout the film... ‘to unite the leader and cement it with words... not so much to cement as spread them across a continent’.²⁵⁴ (Nowell 2001)

Notably, Wieland revealed her own “passion” for life and art as she turned Trudeau’s famous philosophical position “reason over passion” around. In a

celebration of the superlative, Wieland asserted that life ought to be about “passion over reason.”²⁵⁵

To follow the political narrative in works, Wieland confirmed her commitment to the task of “artist-as-critical documentarist,” thereby taking the theme of passion into the realm of nationalism.²⁵⁶ (Burnett 1983) While it is clear on one hand that the prime minister’s statement “reason over passion” suggests an injunction over “compassion,” it is also well-known that Trudeau held a strong philosophical view that human beings are equal in worth. With this in mind, his argument from reason stems from the Platonic/Stoic tradition. Martha Nussbaum, Professor of Law and Ethics at the University of Chicago explains:

According to this tradition...the most important thing in life is one’s own reason and will—what the Roman Stoic Epictetus calls one’s ‘moral purpose.’ This faculty of moral choice is the possession of all humans, and its virtuous use is always within our power, no matter what the world does. Moral purpose is a source of human equality: it is the possession of male and female, slave and free.

In Wieland’s exercise of imagination, by purposefully turning Trudeau’s often expressed reasoning, around—passion over reason—she meant to draw attention to sociopolitical issues in the context literary feminist values. For instance, where passion for life places high value on personal relationships, Wieland championed “the heroes Canadians knew so little about” and in themes such as freedom of expression, she emphasized love, and care for the planet, and she expressed a desire to communicate this with the wider public.²⁵⁷ Thus it is from a celebration of life and the land that Wieland made the highly accessible film about the Canadian painter Tom Thompson.²⁵⁸ (Nowell 2001) Furthermore, where the

individualistic theme of the love of life conjoin with the personal philosophical quest, Wieland championed human rights and ethical values by reiterating and defending the liberal democratic concept of freedom of expression and the theory of equality of opportunity.

While the literature of Canadian politics makes scant reference to the *great* philosophers, it is apparent that in all the talk of moral judgment, ethical values and equality of opportunity certain topics keep reappearing such as social justice, cultural equality, good judgment as knowledge and the necessity of public education, which all have a Platonic ring.²⁵⁹ The political conversation, in support of difference, cultural diversity, and political plurality is often expressed in philosophical prose. Obviously, Canada's political colonial reformers such as Louis-Hippolyte La Fontaine, Robert Baldwin, and George Brown carried ideas about ethical knowledge as they made the deep connection between the political experience and their own individual philosophical values. However, as they brought the patriarchal discourse—from the Scottish Enlightenment—into their own historical time, the patriarchal discourse was instrumental, eventually, in creating the harsh terms of Canada's Indian Act, which subjugates Aboriginal women and men under a colonial law that upholds the notion of European superiority. Nevertheless, as the notion of democratic representational governance upholds the practical application of philosophical values to effect social change, the colonial reformers fought for democratic values of equality of opportunity, implemented by governing from the idea of knowledge and opinion and, freedom

of expression matter. The dilemma of course is always that Aboriginal peoples are left out of the conversation.

Obviously, moral judgment from the view of Christianity shaded by Kant's categorical imperative appears in the practical application of Canadian law and social policies. However, as moral judgment carries a concept of fairness directed toward social and cultural equality, in the best interest of humanity, it is only in the twentieth-century that the complexity of abstract theoretical reasoning enters the more general sociopolitical conversation in Canada. This may be traced, in part, to advances in higher education, but more so to particulars of nation-building embedded in the political reform movement instigated by La Fontaine and other non-conformists as Saul elaborates:

La Fontaine did not pick his concept of social equality out of the air. It was already deep within the Canadian mythology, awaiting a new conceptual language. Some of it was buried in the centuries of experience during which Aboriginal egalitarianism seeped its way into life of the newcomers. Some of it had been laid out by others—by Louis-Joseph Papineau and Joseph Howe, for example, or through the anti-slavery movement of the late eighteenth century.²⁶⁰

In this narrative, a new conceptual language links an interrelationship between different cultures to build upon an idea that nation building is an ethical quest directed toward the interest of the public good. In carrying the values of a just society into the twentieth century the ethical quest had to support diverse communities in the name of cooperation and social justice.

In the history of the advancement of the arts in Canada, there is a long story about cooperation and well-being that in truth conjoins with the myth of

“survival” in a hostile and harsh climate. Complicated by a political environment that carries the theme of social justice and culture identity nationalism, the artistic conversation in Canada appears to thrive on expediency and diversity. Indeed, the theme of personal and cultural struggle and difference has been exploited by individual artists and writers throughout the centuries.

While stories emerge that paint colorful images of an adventurous frontier life of loneliness and heroic deeds of individuals adapting to the harsh, but decidedly exciting landscape, survival was considered an admirable accomplishment. New arrival in the British colony (1832), Susanna Moodie, for example, wrote of her love for the country, an admiration of the generosity of neighboring Aboriginal peoples, and “the indomitable energy of character of Canadians,” but she also described a life of extreme hardship on a rural farm as she conjured up images of a rough, almost imprisoned existence of exile in an inhospitable environment.²⁶¹ (Moodie 1989)

Conversely, in the Mohawk poet Pauline (Tekahionwake) Johnson spoke of the serenity of the lakes and rivers, gave public performances of her work, and wrote about equality “in the empowerment of women.” In what has been described as a postcolonial “a performative accomplishment,” Johnson addressed issues of race, heterosexual relations, and championed the theme of the female heroic.²⁶² (Veronica Strong-Boag 2006)

Into the romantic mix, artist Paul Kane illustrated journals depicting scenes of Aboriginal villages, the buffalo hunt, life at Hudson’s Bay trading forts, and the

fur brigade. Cornelius Krieghoff painted images of pioneer activities of the French “habitant” farmer, as if life was all one happy communal cooperative effort. Conversely, the habitant dialect prose style of William Henry Drummond presented French culture as backward and quaint; while the “utopian” poet Duncan Campbell Scott, well aware of the adverse affects of modernism on the lives of Canada’s Aboriginal peoples, reinforced romantic ideas from the past.²⁶³ (Vance 2009). In transformative art, the legendary members of the Group of Seven, actively worked toward anesthetizing the landscape in the promotion of originality. The distinguished twentieth-century novelist, Pierre Burton, popularized history by providing readers with thrilling stories of colonial settlement, seekers of gold, and the Canadian saga of building a national railway from sea to sea. Margaret Atwood, well known literary critic and novelist elaborates:

The central symbol for Canada—and this is based on numerous instances of its occurrence in both English and French Canadian literature –is undoubtedly survival, *la Survivance*. Like the Frontier and The Island, it is a multi-faceted and adaptable idea. For early explorers and settlers, it meant bare survival in the face of “hostile” elements and/or natives: carving out a place and a way of keeping alive. But the word can also suggest survival of a crises or disaster... and many Canadian poems have this kind of survival as a theme; what you might call ‘grim’ survival as opposed to ‘bare’ survival. For French Canada after the English took over it became cultural survival, hanging on as a people retaining a religion and a language under an alien government. In English Canada now while the Americans are taking over it is acquiring a similar meaning. There is another use of the word as well: a survival can be a vestige of vanished order which has managed to persist after its time has passed....But the main idea is the first one: hanging on, staying alive....our stories are likely to be tales...of the North, the snow storm...the land, the climate...in later writers [survival is] more internal;...obstacles to what we may call

spiritual survival, to life as anything more than a minimally human being.

In addition to Atwood's astute critique, there is a preoccupation with the theme of cooperation and collective engagement. This becomes apparent when group activity directs a focus on community voices to enter the public sphere especially to advance ideas about social change in support of multiplicity.

At the same time that aspects of the ethico political discourse entered the popular imagination, the voices of Canada's Aboriginal peoples were still marginalized. Until, that is, the final decade of the twentieth century and into the twenty-first century where, to coincide with postcolonial studies and a growing global interest in Indigenous Nationalism, the conversation is becoming more inclusive. While the political narrative is often toward the idea that culture may be directed toward the advancement of nation-building, it is often turned around to show that nation-building advances culture. In the next section I advance the idea that the country benefits from government patronage of culture as rhetoric of nation-building, because the arts stimulate self-expression; moreover, as a kind of critical critique, the arts advance multiple ways to build understanding about cultural differences. In the Platonic sense, the arts advance education by building stories from the imagination, but also from lived experiences, in what that truths may be interpreted from a different, albeit just as valid, cultural history.²⁶⁴

Funding for the arts and changes in higher education

It is note worthy that government incentives are directed toward creating a cultural interplay where artistic expression in Canada *is* supported and in return supports the economy. With such ideals in place, the historical experience directs attention toward a greater understanding about diversity in which community is about cultural equality that ought to uphold the values of a just society. It has often been said that these concepts are reflected in the way that critical art gets made in Canada. From a broad definition of cultural activity that encircles concepts of visibility, it is clear that certain “corrections” in higher education foment new interests in art intervention, not only as studio artists take up a new interest in the articulation of social issues, but also as sociopolitical attitudes change in line with changes in higher education.

Overall, the responsibility for public education in Canada rests with the provinces as this is stipulated in the British North America Act 1867. As a result, each province and each territory has a distinct system. Conversely, in accordance with the Indian Act, the responsibility for Aboriginal education remains with the federal government.

Toward the last decade of the 1940s, and well into the 1950s Canada experienced a surge in economic expansion. In 1949 an important commission, supported by “...two of the most influential civil servants in Ottawa—Lester B. Pearson and Jack Pickersgill,” was struck by Prime Minister Louis St. Laurent.²⁶⁵

(Vance 2009) The political connection between these men and later social and cultural innovations that they instigate should not be ignored. This is because the report of The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences, which they supported, will provide the groundwork for significant changes that will effect cultural developments in Canada well into the future.

Jonathan F. Vance elaborates:

In June 1951, the Massey Commission published its long-awaited report, one of the most significant in Canadian history. It quoted chapter and verse on how Canada's culture was either crumbling through lack of support or slipping away into foreign hands... Because of the American dominance in the test-book industry [Canadian] students knew the significance of the fourth of July [over] the first of July.... To turn the tide, the commission set 146 recommendations covering every conceivable aspect of culture. The National Film Board should receive extra funding to enable it to expand its staff and distribution networks, The National Gallery of Canada must put greater emphasis in outreach activities, like travelling exhibitions and lecturers... the CBC should remain supreme over the airwaves... a national library should be established... And most ambitiously, the government should create a fifteen-member Canada Council for the Encouragement of the Arts, Letters, Humanities, and Social Sciences.

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Although the report draws “enormous” attention to problems with Canadian culture, isolating the main problem was one thing, implementing the correct solution was another.

Initially, the government of the day tabled the report. It sat on the shelf more or less ignored until mid 1960s when, in a flurry of interest it was dusted off and used as the directive in advancing Canadian culture. All of this came as the result of Canada's pending celebration of the anniversary of confederation. The report of the Royal Commission on National Developments in the Arts Letters

and Sciences, better known as the Massey Report, was used as the consultant guide for a wide range of cultural projects and festivities that Ottawa was eager to fund.

In this narrative, while facts pertaining to the slow delivery of education and social programs may be explained in part by Canada's sparse population spread over difficult terrain, another deciding factor rests in the knowledge that the federal-provincial relationship is often conflicted. For the most part, inadequate funding for public education had been identified by the 1951 Massey report, but by the 1960s, the crises had not quite been resolved. Even in light of an economic surge, to use Marxist language, there was a gap in the sociopolitical landscape between production and reproduction of an arts and intellectual culture. The opportunity for government intervention, to match funding for higher education and to bring cultural programs in line with the economic surge arrived, coincidentally, with the planning for Canada's one hundredth anniversary from British rule. Indeed, Canada's centennial celebration created an enormous cultural industry. Jonathan F. Vance explains:

The Canadian Centenary Council in Ottawa was ready with all manner of help,.... it was simply a matter of bringing together interested people, and how the community could best create a lasting memorial to the anniversary of Confederation....in addition to six large performing arts centers over 200 hundred cultural facilities were built with centennial funding, including museum art galleries, libraries, and conservatories (this is in addition to 428 community centers erected, many of which were designed with space for local arts groups)...Ottawa set aside \$130,000 to purchase books for Canadian libraries....The commission also made grants to finance the publication of Canadian books,...over \$900,00 was funneled to writers

and publishers...new plays...new ballets...new music...new films...what mattered was effort and support.²⁶⁷

Many of the projects reflected the recommendations of the Massey Report making it clear that a cultural infrastructure was needed and Ottawa was keen to oblige.

Half a decade into the 1960s some municipalities had already started construction on physical infrastructures, for instance, in Vancouver, the city had already provided funding for new theatre incentives and with additional funds from the federal government, construction on the Queen Elizabeth Theatre was hurried along. In addition, by 1965 and supported by federal monies the finishing touches were being put on Simon Fraser University, a new liberal arts institution for the Province of British Columbia.

Located majestically at the pinnacle of Burnaby Mountain and set in splendid buildings designed by Canada's leading architecture firm, Massey and Erikson, the opening of Simon Fraser University (SFU) is described by one inaugural student as filling an academic gap that was both a timely and a mind altering experience:

Everything was absolutely new to everyone; students staff, systems, and buildings. It was not possible to consult a senior student for insight on what was to come because no one had experience on what had gone before. This in itself generated a form of unique commonality shared with others on the mountain. In a sense we felt that we were all part of a developing team. And evolving team members depend on each other.

—Ron Wesman, a student member of the 'charter' semester.²⁶⁸

Throughout the 1960s, existing universities throughout Canada had been hard pressed to provide adequate classroom space for young people wanting a post-

secondary education. Aside from building an entirely new and decidedly brilliant liberal arts institution in British Columbia, community colleges opened all across the country. By the late 1960s, in British Columbia alone, every regional district was announcing the opening of a new college. Eventually, these community colleges were awarded degree granting status.

Over the next decade, in the later 1970s, the Vancouver School of Art and Design changed its name to Emily Carr College of Art and Design and moved from its downtown location to a newly renovated industrial building in a federally funded redevelopment on Granville Island. With an expanded academic department and a well funded Outreach Program the art school eventually evolved into a university degree granting institution. The University of British Columbia, a decidedly science directed institution, expanded its history department and its studio art programming with a curriculum in consideration of social developments in art intervention. As an aside, the Granville Island redevelopment was intentionally designed as a new focal point for other cultural developments, such as community theatre and artisan studios.

Writing from a critical position directed toward thoughts on historicism, Rosalind Krauss considered changes in art education as being linked to a “different” way of reading cultural objects in consideration of:

... a new sensibility coming from abroad and challenging the historicists premises on almost all critical thinking in this country [the US] had been based....work on structuralism...and poststructuralism...created crucial turning points in the reading of narrative art...²⁶⁹

It is obvious now that Krauss was referencing the work of Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, and Jean François Lyotard. To turn attention away from the “option of the medium” toward the possibility of a reading of pictorial representation in terms of a cultural analytic, Krauss was a pioneer in her field as she offered alternative and relatively new directions in university circles. Moreover, because art departments were being developed in all the new colleges, in Canada, corrections in higher education created a significant paradigm shift in consideration of an art discourse directed toward creating social change.

In addition, with new institutions opening all across Canada, new sets of courses came on line such as social work and nursing; new directions in political discourse, women’s studies, and new schools for cultural studies. Consequently, with the introduction of new programs of mass communication, courses in film theory and developments in the social sciences, considerable attention was directed toward creating social change through the arts. In view of social and political divisions, artists became less interested in the canons of representation and aesthetics and increasingly concerned with artistic strategies directed toward critical cultural productions and the articulation of political situations within a category belonging to the control and production of knowledge.

As Iris Murdoch wrote of making education experience into some sort of a whole, it seems obvious that the more open access to higher education might be, new artistic descriptions of life, fantasy, and culture would follow. In addition, as there is an artistic tradition in Canada of “exhibiting against the grain” it is clear

that developments described by Murdoch stand for common interests about new cultural framing in light of new ideas about pluralism and multiplicity.

Accordingly, a new vision of understanding the concept of experience—in the realm of knowledge and production—opened the wider population to exciting and challenging counter-narratives within the creative environment. Taken together with the social movement of the 1960s and 1970s, a new interest in art intervention garnered financial support from governments as this was directed toward social commentary supported by the federal government of the day that was interested in promoting the concept of social change.

In all of this, the idea that art can make social change emerged in the mid to late twentieth century to conjoin with the political rhetoric about social reform within a heightened interest on the part of Canada's federal government. In the advancement of cultural values and social equality cultural programs were in turn, financially supported by the federal-provincial governments. It has to be said that political activism in Canada that gets financial support does in fact encourage a complementary atmosphere for experimental projects that continues well into the twenty-first century.²⁷⁰ In another sense, experimental art opens myriad opportunities to engage within an intersection between social history and cultural advancement through the application of mixed-media strategies that include interventionist art, documentary film-making, and photography.

Some of these expressive patterns grew from the late 1960s to correspond with emerging developments in installations art, minimalism, and conceptual art,

prominent in Canada and encouraged at the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax. Another example may be followed from the research and development in “new media” generating from the Banff School of Fine Arts, which also coincided with a growing interest in the fusion between film, video, and installation art. Other changes that stemmed from the middle years of the twentieth century grew to examine personal history in the context of social change where conditions in Canada presented a discourse on democratic freedom in common with the political philosophy of popular political leaders such as Lester B. Pearson and Pierre Elliott Trudeau.

Throughout all of this, the historical and practical application of government funding for architecture, the arts, and literature shows that the government of Canada is more than willing to serve as a patron of the arts. This takes the incentives away from market interests and directs government interests toward using the function of art to promote critical expression and cultural identity for the preservation of cultural values. Jonathan F. Vance offers these facts on funding culture in Canada:

By the mid-1960s, the link between culture and nationalism was widely accepted and the fact that nation-building had to include the arts, so long a mantra for the cultural lobby, had become the conventional wisdom....The inability to make a living in the arts had long been an obstacle to Canadians, but with new forms of government support and a more affluent and culturally aware public were changing that. As people began to think of culture as an industry, and a potentially profitable one at that, they began to see an even greater role for governments. Funding culture was no longer enough; government intervention was necessary so that the regulatory and protectionist power of the state could be put to work for the arts, just as it had long

done for any other product harvested or manufactured by Canadians.
²⁷¹(Vance 2009)

The fact is well-known that the federal government of the 1950s had already passed legislation to provide significant funding for the arts in light of plans for the first centennial of Canada's independence from British colonial rule. By the mid 1960s, it was already clear that an evolution of Canada's cultural bureaucracy had reached a new growth in an arts industry directed toward a new kind of nation building. While arts funding was creating a cultural industry, funding policies were more or less held at arms length from direct commodification of the cultural object, to quote Vance, "...cultural implications of book publishing," for example, "far outweigh the economic implications."²⁷² (Vance 2009)

The real history shows that from Vancouver on the west coast, to the Atlantic provinces in the east and all throughout Canada, a cultural building boom was going on that emerged from the 1950s and grew in the early 1960s as community after community took advantage of government funding in support of building a significant cultural infrastructure for Canada. All of this was financed by new government policies on the arts and education. All that was needed was an artistic community to fill these new venues that federal-provincial governments that were willing to support. Following Vance, this was also eagerly supported by "a more affluent and culturally aware public..."²⁷³ (Vance 2009) Beginning with the centennial planning and growing from the actual celebration of 1967, great changes in attitude toward cultural exchange took place, in Canada.

While this may seem only directed from an interest in building a stronger economy, it has to be acknowledged that from the 1950s and into the late 1960s the Canadian economy was already expansive. From the view of cultural involvement in world values, it also has to be acknowledged that the Pearson era—more or less from the late 1950s to 1963—not only introduced Canadians to a philosophy of “internationalism,” but in relation to the global economy and world politics the era opened the Canadian public to ideas about social justice and world peace

Royal Commissions: Domestic Decisions

All of Canada’s Royal Commissions are charged with bringing ordinary Canadian voices to the margins of the dominant discourse. The model of Canada’s Royal Commissions have one thing in common: the directive to communicate in dialogue with community in order to find out what ordinary Canadians think about legal, social, and cultural issues. Another thing they have in common is to ask people what attributes the government might instigate in order to support and to preserve Canada’s unique pluralistic democracy.

In one sense, philosophical perspectives link with political conditions that encourage new interest in nationalism directed toward the advancement of social change. In another, it also leads to constitutional alienation among minority groups, Aboriginal communities and government agencies, as I have already stated, clash when sociopolitical issues and domestic problems cannot be

resolved. When this occurs—and it does often enough—it is not unusual for governments to strike up a task force. In the long tradition of the Royal Commission, the public is called upon for opinion. In all such cases, appointed commissioners are meant to travel throughout the country and rather than speaking to any one issue or group, they are charged with gathering information widely and without prejudice. A commission report is an authoritative bonafide document. As such, the practical application of a Royal Commission's recommendation is often surprising.

For instance, Lord Durham's famous and precedent setting Report on The Affairs of British North America instigated the policy that reunited the British colonies of Upper Canada and Lower Canada together as the Province of Canada under the Act of Union 1840. Politically, when worker unions and governmental factions clash, there will be a task force commissioned to address that too. For example, The Royal Commission on the Relations of Labour and Capital, struck in 1886 by Canada's Prime Minister Sir John A. Macdonald, may only have created a statutory national holiday—Labour Day—but within a year, as a result of the commission's recommendations, changes were made to the labor act to support "...the right of unions to strike...and an amendment to the Criminal Code protected female employees from seduction by their bosses.²⁷⁴ (Gwyn 2011)

What is attainable by the Royal Commissions may be limited by different geographical and sociopolitical realities. That said, in fact, Canada has been slow in granting women and ethnic minorities full equality rights in comparison with

men. In characterizing practices of discrimination, the history of the Indian Act always “haunts” the margins of the promise of equal opportunity.

Taking a positive stand toward cultural and social equality, in the 1960s, Judy LaMarsh, a minister in Pearson’s Liberal government garnered support from the National Council of Women and pressed for clarity on articles in the BNA Act on equality. Typically, on February 16, 1967 the government set up the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. The terms of reference included the phrase “to ensure for women equal opportunities with men in all aspects of Canadian society.”²⁷⁵ When the report came out in 1970, it drew considerable interest, but from more than 166 recommendations, ten years later only a few had been fully implemented. Controversial issues such as domestic violence, universal day care, child poverty, the poverty of single parents had not been thoroughly addressed nor had they been resolved. Significantly, recommendation number 90, which pertained to Aboriginal equality and education, had only been partially implemented.

Almost three decades later, in 1991, the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples was set up. Embedded in the official Report of 1996, is the wholesale recommendation to correct the crises in Aboriginal education and to immediately acknowledge the concept of Aboriginal self-government. Indeed, in the interest of moving Canada closer to the reality of a truly multinational society, which Canada purports to be, Indigenous nationalism, ought to be recognized as Aboriginal peoples struggle to “transform the very nature of the states in which

they live.”²⁷⁶. (Cairns 2004) However, as the history of the colonized shows, while democratic federalism defends the concept of equality of opportunity to include cultural and social equality, language and religious rights, it has proven less effective, overall, in defending those rights of women, minority peoples and minority language groups.

Documentary film making and social change

In addressing the association between governments funding for the arts and education, a distinctively Canadian approach to funding documentary film-making may be found in the decidedly political mandate of the National Film Board of Canada. The NFB mandate clearly expresses the federal government’s desire to bring community activists together with national and international political activist. In order to meet this mandate, an entirely new training program was initiated in 1967. In an intense technical training program in video and documentary film, the artisans were to prompted open public discussion on social inequality and to raise awareness about principles of social justice.²⁷⁷ Under this, the Challenge for Change/Société nouvelle (CFC/SN), was fully funded, specifically to carry on the well respected technical training in documentary film work at the NFB.²⁷⁸

The innovative program developed through the NFB, conjoins with the liberal political agenda of the era that extended funding in education for the advancement of literacy and from the idea that social change might be

accomplished, extended the NFB's mandate to promote experimental media. A unique factor in Canadian social funding is directed toward the possibility of creating social change and political transformation through critical interventionist art.

To paraphrase journalist Naomi Klein, an integral part of the funding mandate was meant to support interventionist art practices that encourage "citizen participation" in filmic art, directed toward support for work documenting social change.²⁷⁹ Indeed, from the belief that documentary film opens difficult conversations to a wider public, films such as *Not A Love Story* (Bonnie Sherr Klein), *The Named and the Unnamed* (Rebecca Belmore), *Dancing Around The Table* (Maurice Bulbulian), and *Incident as Restigouche* (Alanis Obomsawin) all follow the directive toward social change to conjoin aesthetics with social activism through critical and ethical art intervention.²⁸⁰ Another funding incentive in film-making was directed toward decentralizing the production process. John Grierson, a pioneer of the documentary art film movement elaborates:

The National Film Board of Canada, for example, is engaged in a more considered effort in decentralizing the production process. They have a continuing program they call the Challenge for Change which is concerned with social problems at the local level. What makes it special is that it represents a genuine effort by the NFB to keep in contact with people at the grassroots....The basic tendency of the [CFC] program is to follow decently in the original cinéma-vérité tradition...and of making films 'not about the people but with them.'²⁸¹

While the documentarists themselves fit the description of critical interventionist artists in the tradition of advocacy, it has to be known that Canada has an

established reputation for advancing innovative commentator narrative in the non-fiction tradition of documentary filmic art. Erik Barnouw, a historical of American broadcasting and international documentary film conveys the legacy of the medium:

In most periods of documentary history, production has been controlled by groups in power. In some instances, groups newly achieving power have found it valuable in consolidating their position....In the 1930s, documentary began in a small way to serve non-government groups as a medium of dissent...in time lighter cheaper, equipment constantly tended to democratize [the] medium....In the 1970s the base of documentary activity was drastically broadened by the rise of the *video*....During the 1970s these advantages encouraged all sorts of people—alone or in schools...and community groups—to plunge into video production. Working in every conceivable genre, for every conceivable communication purpose, they inevitably included guerrilla film makers. New distribution systems—cable, public-access channel, public-service satellite—provided further incentive. An early experimenter was the National Film Board of Canada...its Challenge for Change program, had foreshadowed the social-action possibilities of video.²⁸²

Complementing the CFC/SN social narratives, a new surge in sociological feminism, in Canada, led by political reformer Kay Macpherson emerged. Supported by funding for publishing incentives, a new magazine, “Canadian Voice of Women for Peace,” entered the conversation with a mandate to question social injustices and to work for international disarmament. Together these movements brought new ideas about co-operation and world peace to the narrative on equal rights and opportunities for women. In addition, the activists’ shared the social agenda with a growing environmental movement that was opening a discourse on ecological awareness, pollution control and the conservation of natural resources.²⁸³ (Landsberg 2011)

Taken together, these programs, projects, and narratives generated wide spread interest in social and cultural developments that link with an exceptional surge in nationalism, circa 1968, in Canada that conjoins with the liberal political agenda of the era directed toward ensuring—in the much quoted words of Pierre Elliot Trudeau: “Canada must be a just society.”²⁸⁴ Despite the rapid growth in economic activity in Canada, the federal government of the day was also dealing with social inequalities caused by rapid urbanization and pressing issues of public welfare, complicated by a rising tide of poverty.

In a significant way, as the Trudeau political Liberals were searching for ways to eradicate poverty in a nation of wealth, social programs were increased, but they also sought innovative ways to open the public to wide spread social problems. From an avowed interest in strengthening federal responsibility directed toward cultural equality and social change, the federal Liberals extended programs directed toward democratic participation. As they tried to address welfare and economic inequality, they deliberately increased funding for the National Film Board of Canada. The outcome they were looking for was a way to draw attention to poverty and to intentionally foster social change from the view that new documentaries, directed toward addressing community needs, would raise social awareness. Zoë Druick, an associate professor in the school of Communication at Simon Fraser University explains:

The Challenge for Change/Société nouvelle (CFC/SN) program at the National Film Board (NFB) marks one of the institutions’ most notable undertakings. Established in 1967 and producing nearly 250 films over a more than ten-year period, the program continues to emblemize the

possibilities of a kind of filmmaking that is at one radical and public. The NFB itself utilizes the positive legacy of this moment to convey core values associated with newer incentives.²⁸⁵

Technically, the newer incentives included the use of use of hand-held video equipment, but more so, the new projects were directed toward recording community reaction to the reality of poverty in Canada. The direct cinema strategy was meant to draw attention to the government's well intentional attempts to instigate local regulation of welfare.²⁸⁶ Additionally, crediting the NFB with "inspiring participatory video productions in many places around the world," Druick cites the use of new technology as having encouraged an international movement toward the "eradication of poverty."²⁸⁷ (Druick 2010)

As an offshoot of the 1967 Centennial Celebrations, increased interest in technological advances in art also opened an invigorating discourse on social equality that encouraged questions about how the critical arts might be used in the service of preserving cultural values in the interests of the national identity.

Author and media researcher Janine Marchessault explains:

Nineteen hundred and sixty-seven was an important year for Canada. As a centennial celebration of Confederation, Expo '67 (Montreal) saw the convergence of technology and nationalism as never before. IMAX, the largest screen in the world, could, we were told only have been invented in Canada. The spectacular five-screen cinematic fest, devised by the National Film Board of Canada's (NFB's) Unit B, epitomized the image of nationhood: technological mastery, natural abundance, and an open multi-accented democratic participation. Its theme, in the Unit B tradition, was the wonder of human life.²⁸⁸ (Marchessault 2010)

While the theme of Expo '67 "Man and His World" contained a component that was tied to technological exploration, it has to be acknowledged that the overall

theme focused on the humanities—community living, health, welfare, culture—and this drew attention to the obvious need to explore causes of cultural inequalities.

One significant effect of federal intervention was that after 1967, government funding was increased for the development and the ongoing financial support for the National Film Board of Canada's CFC/SN incentive. Following Druick's research, this was "...from the belief that programs intended to eliminate causes of poverty in Canada could be greatly strengthened by a coordinated program of filmic activities."²⁸⁹ (Druick 2010) Directing a new focus on the technical developments in video, together with the tradition of film documentary, the CFC/SN participants were encouraged to focus their projects on bringing difficult social issues to the attention of the wider cinema viewing public. Additionally, as it was the stated intent, the mandate of the NFB encouraged a more reflective audience.

Citing the Expo '67 humanist theme as a decisive line of reasoning, Druick explained that certain social programs, such as new directions in social work, can be traced to the impact that the celebration had on the Canadian sensibility. While 1967 and the centennial celebrations are identified as the pivotal point around which a mood of nationalism circled, the late 1960s also fostered a change in social attitudes that definitively encouraged a focus "... on the poor, urban renewal, students, and Native Indians."²⁹⁰ (Druick 2010)

Indeed, in raising community awareness with a focus on explorations into differences, a dialogue opened between economic expectation and other values that encouraged experimental film-makers in the "...use of the trope of abjection."²⁹¹ (Druick 2010) As an example, Druick described the "dehumanizing" affects of poverty in documentarist Terence Macartney-Filgate's hard hitting 1969 film:

Up Against The System [in which]... the film repeatedly characterizes welfare as an institutional attempt to deal with the class differences produces by capitalism. Capitalism creates poverty; poor people are treated as filth, as the excess baggage of the system that produced them. The Capitalist system, then, is also a meaning-making system, that produces bestowing value on middle-class subjectivity, defined by the dominate practices of education, types of work, and styles of leisure, while simultaneously criminalizing, pathologizing, and patronizing working-class and non-working people. The image of filth is evoked several times. Shots of garbage and broken windows visually underscore the abjection of people forced to live in substandard conditions.²⁹²

Bringing ideas about education, work, and leisure to a critique of poverty is meant to direct attention toward human values in the interest of finding solutions for marginalized groups. For First Nations peoples and other minorities the literal version — adverse affects of social and cultural inequalities — in documentary film often works to confirm negative stereotyping. In turn it tends to work against entertaining thoughts about how to escape unequal social conditions and it often lessens possibilities of raising self-esteem.

In his work, Freire stressed the importance on an ethical relationship within cultural communications, with emphases on a critical understanding of oppression. In order to turn the situation from victimization around, Freire

strongly believed that people had to be brought to an awareness of the situation, but directed in ways that would not tie those people into the fabric of poverty and suffering. Indeed, equality of opportunity had to be always in the direction of hope. Freire explains:

One of the tasks of the progressive educator, through a serious, correct political analysis, is to unveil opportunities for hope, no matter what the obstacles may be. After all with out hope there is little we can do. I will be hard to struggle on, and when we fight as hopeless or despairing persons, our struggle will be suicidal.²⁹³ (Freire 2009)

An ethical dilemma of documentary arises wherever the relationship between the filmed and the film-maker where the subject become objectified in the eye of the camera for the sole purpose of featuring the powerless as victim. In this sense, the CFC/SN directive was clear: the documentarist was to represent social conditions from the view of raising awareness about difficult situations not in order to politicize the community. More so, the directive was clearly intended to encourage a more reflective audience. However, trying to solve the victim problem without skirting the harsh realities of poverty often created targeted images of communities living in filth and grime.

In her essay on abjection, Julie Kristiva carefully points out the difference between the use of hard hitting images and poetic metaphor. Kristiva's translator, Leon S. Roudiez explains:

As Kristiva's writing evolves, it also displays a greater variety in tone. In this essay [on Abjection] it includes the colloquial and the formal, the lyrical and the matter-of- fact, the concrete and the abstract...Usually, in expository prose, the context removes ambiguities that poetic language thrives on. Kristiva is not adverse to using polysemy to her advantage....The French word *propre*, for

instance, has kept the meaning of the Latin *proprius* (one's own, characteristic, proper) and also a new one: clean.... When I asked Kristiva which meaning she intended the answer was both....²⁹⁴

In the essay proper, Kristiva explains that in the use of the raw language of violence, "...it is not the lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection," rather it is cultural division and unjust system, of order that disturb identity.²⁹⁵(Kristiva 1982)

In the context of the artistic strategy of supporting, creating, or interpreting identity, the distinction between different levels of community, *is* where cultural differences are ordered. , *is*. This is where Kristiva claims that prohibitions against the individual create disturbances and where violence may be located and at that very level of impurity: that is what the abject describes. Pointing specifically to "...places that separate this or that social, sexual, or age group," Kristiva explains that in dividing one "from another one, by means of prohibiting a filthy, defiling element," the abject stands prominent with regard to the shameful.²⁹⁶ (Kristiva 1982)

While this function of the abject often appeared in films made by the NFB artisans and sanctioned by the CFC/SN, other films emphasized enormous cultural and economic problems and through the narrative of the politically divided community, examined through the discourse on the necessity for social change. Using images of direct and participatory intervention, these film-makers appeared to be less interested in theory and more in the factual social problems that prevent people from speaking for themselves. In this context, in response to

cultural criticism for the lack of Aboriginal voices at the NFB, the directive for an Aboriginal program was instigated. Noel Starblanket, a First Nations filmmaker explains that:

...Jerry Gambill (then associate direction of the Company of Young Canadians [another legacy of the Trudeau administration] was asked to seek and recommend young Indians from across Canada...to develop the National Indian Training Program for the National Film Board's CFC/SN program.²⁹⁷ (Starblanket, 2010)

The main problem, according to Starblanket, was that although films had been produced, "about Indians by the National Film Board...all of them have been made by *outsiders* looking in on the situation." (Starblanket, 2010) In order to change this tendency and to encourage individual aboriginal filmmakers to enter into the program, the "Indian Film Crew" (IFCS) was created.²⁹⁸

However, that part of the CFC/SN program was underfunded. Consequently, many of the new participants could not move beyond the initial technical training stage. In a 1968 essay, Starblanket explained the situation and left the reader with a poignant question:

There is a discontent with lack of funds for location expenses; even though we are becoming semi-professional filmmakers, we exist on the barest of living expenses. We are deeply interested in this communications medium and have discovered that we are dealing with a powerful outlet for emotion and a power that even administrations recognize. Because of our strong feelings about social change, government bureaucracy, Indians, etc., because we are a diverse group, because we are individualistic, there is difficulty in preventing the crew from splintering. But a greater danger is not that the group will splinter but that we may not be able to carry on our work with full independence. Our future is not assured. Is a strong independent voice for the Indian worth supporting?²⁹⁹ (Starblanket, 2010)

Sadly to say, despite all the talk about social justice and cultural equality in Canada, in 1968 there was little interest in hearing the Aboriginal voice. Moreover, in the context of government funding for the arts, even the directors of the NFB found it difficult to financially support controversial Aboriginal issues brought to the forum by Aboriginal film-makers.

A significant dividing line came in the early 1980s, at a moment when the First Nations singer/songwriter turned documentary filmmaker, Alanis Obomsawin, sought to address the ambiguity between the encouragement of community voices and the lack of documentation of Native people actually speaking out on the issue of Aboriginal rights in their own voices. To complicate the matter there was great reluctance on the part of Canada's federal-provincial governments to entertain talks about the concept of Aboriginal self-sufficiency.

Obomsawin, who had started with the NFB in 1967, had already produced powerful depictions of the determination for Aboriginal civil rights. Yet, when she proposed a newsreel style film to capture on film a controversial issue about Native concerns on a provincial prohibition against fishing rights and Aboriginal-self government, the NFB directors appeared reluctant to follow through with funds and turned her request for a film crew down.

Apart from separating the question of NFB funding from the philosophical position of "giving" voice to the voiceless, the researcher Lewis Randolph claimed that Obomsawin was denied funding from the NFB to make her film, *Incident at Restigouche*, because the question was not actually about "giving"

voice to marginalized groups or even about funding in isolation, the issue, from his view point appeared to be about racial profiling.³⁰⁰ Of crucial concern was not that Obomsawin was prevented from recording the Listugui Mi'gmaq First Nation peoples' resistance to the salmon fishing ban but, Randolph charged, the troubling detail appeared to be that the NFB management did not want her to interview the Quebec Minister of Fisheries. In this sense, Randolph maintained that Obomsawin was denied the use of a NFB film crew because she “was not allowed to interview white people.”³⁰¹

Of course Obomsawin pressed her case with the NFB directors and eventually gained access to the office of the Quebec Ministry of Fisheries. Accompanied by a complete film crew, Obomsawin interviewed the minister, Lucien Lessard, and captured on audiovisual film, his unemotional “personal apology” for “sanctioned attacks” by the Quebec provincial police on the Aboriginal community.³⁰² Notwithstanding the initial set back—due to so called funding cuts—Obomsawin’s critique of government interventions in Aboriginal cultural activities stand as a prime example of how to use documentary film to shed light on problematic economic and political interests that adversely affect minority groups.

In another example, where “budget cuts” stand as a political intervention, complicated the production of the film, *Cree Hunters of Mistassini*, directed by Boyce Richardson and Tony Ianzelo.³⁰³ Michelle Stewart, associate professor of cinema studies at SUNNY-Purchase New York, claims that the budget issue came

up precisely at the moment when unidentified “officials” in Ottawa might have learned that the text of the film was meant to “...give voice to Cree concerns [for] Aboriginal rights.”³⁰⁴ (Stewart 2010) The film was nevertheless made in 1974, it aired to critical acclaim and, significantly, it allowed the “Cree to speak for themselves. Stewart elaborates:

Following the rhetoric of ethnographic film *Cree Hunters* then presents the audience with what is considered to be a “closed” domain—a world considered generally and alien to white society and only “opened” by the presence of the camera and the filmmakers....scenes which feature interviews with Blacksmith and other members of the hunting community, do not serve an indexical function; they do not animate archival footage, not do they always agree with the narration. Rather, they serve the ends of those who appear onscreen.³⁰⁵

By the time *Cree Hunters*...was made, the kind of non-commercial direct-cinema, pioneered by John Grierson at the NFB, had become a key element of participatory documentary film-making. At the CFC/SN experiment, a pedagogical approach was taken toward technical training but also toward filmmaking that would create a didactical relationship between the meaning of the film and the intentions of the documentarists. As Stewart points out, the question of voice is complicated in films of advocacy and taken together, with the ease of use and transport of the hand-held video recorder, the direct-cinema technique provided the critical artist/film-maker with extensive power to record any incident of repression inflicted on community life.

By directing their cameras on political and economic issues their films obviously contributed to raising awareness about the possibility for social change.

In this sense, “advocacy film” is a contributing factor to the kind of “social transformation” championed by the supporters of the CFC/SN initiative, Stewart elaborates:

...this style of direct-cinema filmmaking was meant to enhance a dialogue between government and the governed. The utopian hope of the Board [NFB] at the time was that filmed communication could spur dynamic social change....In early CFC[SN] practice, this style of documentary filmmaking became the dominant methodology for ‘giving voice’ to the under represented.³⁰⁶

In all of this, the Canadian nation-state was constantly advancing the concept of multiculturalism not only as the symbol of a heightened sense of social justice but also at a time when federal funding for education and the critical arts was reaching a new high. The federal government was also promoting an official policy of plurality as the very model of cultural tolerance that ,in turn, encouraged interventionist artists to reach out to the community and characteristically to project interventionist art as the model for social change.

While unidentified “forces” in Ottawa may have had concerns about funding Aboriginal questions about “rights and representation,” Stewart praised the NFB for its fundamental commitment to affirm the “government’s concern for under-represented communities.”³⁰⁷ In the interest of participatory community documentary film-making, Stewart cited “direct-cinema practices” as a fitting artistic strategy to encourage localized participation. Additionally, Stewart attributed the relative ease with which the hand held recorder helped to encourage “...communities to speak for themselves.”³⁰⁸ (Stewart 2010)

It is significant to point out that Aboriginal documentarists working with the NFB had already produced cutting edge non-fiction films about cultural and social inequalities. With regard to advancing ideas about concept of Aboriginal-self government, however, the Liberal government of the day may have been nervous about its legal position in this regard. Indeed, Trudeau may have anticipated legal challenges to come, because as an activist and human rights lawyer he was fully aware of the flaws in the BNA Act and in the Indian Act, in particular, with regard to human rights violations and cultural inequality.

Nevertheless, government funding for documentary filmmaking in Canada rests on a solid commitment to the NFB and to the CFC/SN incentive. Subsequently, funding for the technology and training in “direct-cinema practices” provides Aboriginal peoples and other groups marginalized by social inequalities with a forum to voice their social and cultural concerns.

With concern for bearing witness to social injustice, Grierson praised the NFB for following through with its commitment to documentary ethics and to documentary film-making directed toward drawing attention to social change, as well as its support for attempts to localize community concerns. (Grierson 2010) At the same time, Grierson also had high hopes for documentary film-making elsewhere. Writing in 1972 and citing changes in technology as a way to decentralize filmic production, Grierson elaborates:

The cost of equipment now puts the 8mm revolution within the reach of most groups and associations....The professional standards need not be lowered....I have been looking into decentralizing possibilities in India and think I see one possible great development there. In India

there is a special imperative for decentralizing the filmmaking process. Filmmaking at the district level is, I would think, a logical development.... This means, among other peripatetic entertainments, the appearance of peripatetic teachers of filmmaking, moving modestly from district to district teaching....³⁰⁹

In a similar manner, the curator and cultural critic Geeta Kapur drew attention to the use of documentary film in India that more or less corresponds to the same time frame in Canada. Showing that India has a lively grassroots art community that moves between direct participation and documentation, Kapur wrote about work that is meant to speak of the nature of art's radicality. To start her exploration, Kapur stated that documentary film activity in India takes in more than:

...300 practitioners working to articulate and disseminate a critical relation of the nation and the state. In this is also the documentary and independent experimental video that suggests that the mode of critical address may now be differently devised.³¹⁰ (Kapur 2007)

Claiming a significant place for documentary film in India, Kapur pointed out that it is a "quick fire mode of communication at the global scale," that is more than capable of drawing attention to a dialogue directed toward pressing problems of India's pluralistic culture that was "deemed inadequately handled by the government."³¹¹ (Kapur 2007)

Describing the work of the internationally known filmmaker, Amar Kanwar, as typical of direct grassroots participation, Kapur characterized his work as a force medium that carried astute ideas about poverty and human rights violations. Kapur asserted that it is more than clear that the legacy of the promise of

economic liberalism and democratic freedom from the early days of India's independence from British rule—1947—had become distorted by economic interests in which the “state claims custodianship...for the well being of the nation.” (Kapur 2007) Moreover, by maintaining that the concept of democracy is so “...intertwined within the total dominion of global capital,” Kapur asserted that the struggle between, “the ‘norms’ of *civil society* and *political society* is simply a contradiction, which may not be adequately addressed any time soon.”³¹²

Nevertheless, discussing the critical work of art, Kapur identified well known political activist, Safdar Hashmi, known in India for street theatre pursuits, as an engaged interventionist artist who worked to expose political contradictions. Kapur cites the fact that Hashmi had managed to achieve “...a mediatic success in galvanizing opinion in the public sphere.”³¹³ (Kapur 2007) In addition, by acknowledging the importance of filmic language as a form of critique, Kapur also described the field of street theatre as a critical art. Representative of interventionist activities of the latter part of the twentieth century, Kapur explained how this exemplifies distinct socio-political actions in India that are driven in part by the global impact of the 1960s.³¹⁴(Kapur 2007)

Kapur also explained that bringing large groups of activist artists together to “share a single political platform” through performance art, in India, documents a move from the 1960s through the mid to late 1980s that identified a localized subaltern movement. Noting that this idea draws from an earlier movement, known as the “Indian Peoples’ Theatre Association” (IPTA) Kapur stated that the

movement sourced its “critical and creative dialogue” from a century or more of political and localized traditions that were already well established in India.

(Kapur 2007) Citing folklore and revolutionary activity on the part of the IPTA Kapur expanded the idea of localizing political activism, in art. Additionally, citing the IPTA as being influenced by a relationship between the ideologies of the “Marxist filmmaker Ritwik Ghatak,” whose work carried an impassioned political filmic dialogue, Kapur joins documentary film-making with the strategies used by the IPTA members. Expanding the IPTA sociopolitical critique, Kapur elaborates:

Riding the last wave of India’s anti-imperialist struggles IPTA lasted beyond independence (1947) and through the 1950s, though on a diminished scale. In cultural lore it became the originary movement of ‘true’ radicalism in the Indian arts as it cut across nationalist and communist and postcolonial/statist worldviews. Through the national and communist movements were not always in consonance, they followed a rubric of radical change, and IPTA made a direct *political* intervention, combining the fevour of both and situating the working people at the fulcrum of India’s liberation struggle.³¹⁵ (Kapur 2007)

The politics of the mid-twentieth century India lent a radical dimension to the already politicized atmosphere and as such it corresponds with socio-political movements elsewhere, in Canada, for example, the establishment of the official multicultural platform of the Liberal government of the day claimed support for cultural difference by upholding the concept of language rights. Where cultural policy finds a place in documentary film productions that parallel what Kapur described as a shared task between localized writers and documentary film-makers, education is a high priority.

In this sense, claiming a place for the language of film that brings a different kind of knowledge to the arts, Kapur says that it is a mode that best informs the localized situations of people. Citing the model of the small Maoist groups from the 1960s that continue to hold sway in the Darjeeling area and from the Naxalite movement in Bengal, Kerala and Andhra, lines Kapur's discussion in perspective with events unfolding in the twenty-first century.

In a country that is acknowledged as the largest democracy in the world, India carries the deep blemish of colonialism and the scars of political violence. Its indigenous "tribal" populations are often the brunt of economic biases that expose communities to exploitation in light of globalized capitalism, but also to political factions' intent on undermining India's vulnerable democracy.

Early in the first decade of the twenty-first century, the social activist artist, Sanchayan Ghosh travelled to a remote mountain village in Darjeeling where recent military deployment, against a Maoist group, had indescribably disrupted community life.³¹⁶ The project was sponsored through the non-government operative [NGO] Khōj artists' workshop, in New Dehli whose mandate is to bring artists and communities together in activities that encourage work directed toward raising awareness about global economic and political issues. Motivated by the hope of drawing attention to how little responsibility the outside world takes in helping to re-imagine disrupted live, Ghosh worked with women and children of the remote community in an attempt to reweave an assemblage of traditional life. Ghosh encouraged the community to install a traditional hand-loom in one of the

abandoned military tents. The project was meant to stand as a metaphor in honor of the ancient craft of weaving. To this artistic text; Ghosh drew attention to the theme of self-determination through an extended narrative that turns on the idea of passive resistance. Exemplified by the long history of the “Non-Cooperation Movement,” led by the Indian Nationalist leader, Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, the hand loom stands as a poignant reminder of the efficiency of human agency. But it also stands in testimony to how ordinary lives become insignificant as the military entangled community life. In the sense that traditional weaving technology holds a domestic place in India, the hand loom stands as crucial evidence of self-sufficiency and the very survival of the community. Ghosh explains:

...in every household in every woven sheet, blanket, every garment, shawl, coat, and coverall, from the planting of the seed, the spinning of the flax or silk to thread and on to the finished woven object, the very fabric of the community is embodied in that ancient technology.³¹⁷

While it was the artist’s intention to bring attention to the plight of a community struggling to reinvent itself in the wake of military disruption, Ghosh also commented on how modern technology, the mechanical loom, for instance interrupts community functioning and how military technology disrupts conditions of lived experiences; not to mention the fact that military deployment plays havoc on ecological systems.

In a similar sense, Kapur claimed a place for localized grassroots activism. Documented in film and video-narratives that revitalize well known stories in relation to lived experiences, Kapur sets her critical work in the context of:

...fresh affiliations in the form of affirmative or, more properly, partisan action at the grassroots level. Some of this action is ‘documented’ in the very process of formation by filmmakers and videographers who are working independently, or with national and international NGOs [non-government operatives]. Covering the sub-terrain of a nation’s neglected populace, this work looks towards human rights within renewed forms of normative discourse, and establishes the legitimacy of a micro-politics that promotes self-knowledge and empowerment for the subaltern subjects.³¹⁸

The documentation of knowledge, through video-narratives, helps to bring secular civil conflict to confront socialized problems of a “plural culture” in the realm of political experience from the historical past. As Kapur described, from the India of independence from British rule to the “supposedly left-liberal government of Gandhi” of the 1970s, the call for democratic inclusion has helped to position artists “in the public sphere to engage moderately but significantly with urgencies of the political moment.”³¹⁹ (Kapur 2007)

In the same era, the American activist and writer, Lucy Lippard, drew attention to modes of expression directed toward social change in the United States that also stems from the 1960s. The troubling political mood of the mid-twentieth century placed cultural framing in America within the legacy of social change.³²⁰ (Lippard 2007) Stating that change “...takes many definitions within the arts,” Lippard proclaimed that the conversation in “...the ‘community-based’ arts, otherwise known as ‘interventionist’ or ‘dialogic art’ has more quietly contributed to social change since the 60s” as it claimed a place for the “disenfranchised” voice. Lippard elaborates:

An astounding array of work has been produced with every imaginable ‘community’ (ie. marginalized or disenfranchised groups). Suzanne

Lacy alone has made a long series of visually striking public performances aimed at social change in social policy, based on years of work with poor women, elderly women, homeless women, incarcerated women, teenagers, cops...and more.³²¹ (Lippard 2007)

While Canada may not be able to claim a similar organized feminist activism in art, such as the American Feminist Art Movement, localized activities in Canada that span the same era, build solidarity toward significant value judgments that occupy the social space of political “solidarity” directed toward ensuring equality of opportunity.

In another sense, numerous art communities and collectives reinforce the idea that critical art ought to be a group activity, such as the documentary efforts of the NFB artisans, for instance. Indeed, in collectivism there is a portrayal of common goals with a political agenda. In the early years of the 1970s Vancouver became the unlikely site from which to build an international peace/environmental campaign that quickly spread world wide. Rex Weyler, writer and journalist explains:

... from the first voyage into the Pacific to ‘stop the bomb’ to the risky mission to ‘save the whales’ to struggles with money and ideology that accompanied success, Greenpeace is a remarkable achievement: a gripping story; a snapshot of the mid-20th-century zeitgeist; a fascinating study of media manipulation; an uncompromising look at the sometimes brutal internal struggles of activist organizations; and above all, an inspiring call-to-arms that deepens our understanding of what it means to be politically engaged.³²² (Weyler 2005)

Best known for its direct action in political intervention, Greenpeace activism has proven crucial in persuading people to stand up for the environment. While it is obvious that the extraction of natural resources transforms economies, but to

continue to do so without regard for a healthy environment is simply an act of unconsciousness that is a threat to local communities, not to mention the global environment and the biosphere of planet earth. Amongst communal activities, issues of global climate change and social change appear to be constants that many Canadians remain committed to.

Describing blanketing adverse affects of social inequality, this sort of political activism is often supported by government arts grants. Exemplified by the celebrated National Film Board of Canada and its 1967 Challenge for Change/Société nouvelle incentive, social activism suggests a kind of cooperation in the struggle for social, economic, and environmental justice. In addition, when people come together, with the theme of rediscovery, in support of diversity, critical art practices open the public to collectivism as way to view the world. In this sense, the well known N.E. Thing Co., the work of the group General Idea, and the legendary Vancouver based collective Western Front, which is one of Canada's leading centers for contemporary art, stand as exemplifiers of the way that critical art gets notice in Canada.

While it is clear that the concept of creating social change through art is not new, the way that art gets made in Canada often articulates social change in many different ways. Moreover, because problems keep coming up, project driven critical art in Canada offers alternatives that are capable of articulating social change in ways that are still valid. In addressing project driven tendency in Canadian art, apparent developments in collective associations turn up in places

like arts festivals, film revivals and especially in government funded group activities. The recent “Beat Nation” exhibition at the Vancouver Art Gallery in Vancouver for example, has provided a new place to look at how Aboriginal artists respond to contemporary political issues. “Indeed, the contemporary American curator, Denise Markonish, sums up “the way that art gets made” in Canada, as belonging to a unique form of artistic expression, but also as being the result of government funding that:

...goes more toward a European model, which has a similar system of museums and government support. This seems to lead to a more project-based, experimental kind of work rather than market-driven work, which is what the States is mostly after.³²³ (Milroy 2012)

Taking some examples from historical documents it is clear that the Canadian art bureaucracy promotes a certain kind of aesthetic that is not market driven. From early incentives to the current era, there is the notion that the relationship between culture and identity creates a sense of nationalism that is never far from the surface.

A key part of this is founded in the philosophy of “giving” voice to the voiceless, but more so in the practical application of the theory of freedom of expression that is supported by government funding in the form of arts grants. Another key to understanding cultural and artistic expression in Canada that appears to be well grounded in a sensibility of cooperation and the ethical relationship between the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity. More so where participatory engagement is directed toward a

dialogical exchange of different voices of opinion, a readiness listen and to be heard is demonstrated in the public interest in interventionist strategies.

It is not uncommon to hear scholars, social scientists, and historians refer to a fundamental American view about sociopolitical struggles, of the last century, as paramount to the North American experience. To quote, Lippard, this was identified “long ago as a wake-up call” about social injustices that was spurred on when “...artists were sparked into action” in the United States by the Civil Rights Movement, the War on Vietnam and the Women’s Liberation Movement.³²⁴

While it is apparent that in the United States the situation of confrontation and mass demonstrations exploded in the highly charged years of the late 1960s to carry on well into the 1970s. These confrontational activities were justified by people who were dissatisfied with organized government that apparently turned a blind side to human rights’ violations. To follow Lippard’s analysis, the “morally compromised war” fanned outrage that eventually grew to “the international movement against the war on Vietnam.”³²⁵ In the spring of 1967, for example, Lippard explains:

...Artists and Writers Protest...based in New York, produced Angry Arts Week—the first large public-art antiwar campaign. One of its most memorable manifestations was a long solemn procession of black body bags. Attending police were as moved as the spectators, and flowers were laid on the bags as they passed by. Another component was the *Collage of Indignation*. 150 artists worked simultaneously on 10’X6’ canvasses that filled the gallery at New York University’s Loeb Student Center with both subtle and screaming images on various political subjects.³²⁶

With the additional rise of the American Feminist Art Movement, a unique turning point appeared in political activism in the United States that rose up to express a specific kind of American cultural experience that marks the era in ways that do not quite fit with the Canadian historical experience or for that matter, with the Canadian political rhetoric of the same era.

As I have already pointed out, in the summer 1967 Canadians and people from around the world flocked to Canada to attend Expo'67—the Montreal Universal and International Exposition. The one hundredth anniversary of democratic freedom marked Canada as holding the unique distinction of making democratic history by extracting itself from colonial rule without having to go to war. (Saul) Canadians were caught up in an exceptional wave of nationalism. Indeed, Canada was in a celebratory mood and Canadians were caught up in a new and heightened political awareness about democracy, political pluralism, world peace, multiculturalism, bilingualism, social justice, and freedom of expression. At the end of the tumultuous 1970s' it was Canada's fortune to have a political legacy prefigured by colonial reformers and refined by a political agenda such as Pearson's stand on world peace, ecological awareness, and a federalist doctrine to acknowledge diversity in the name on unity.³²⁷ (Bothwell 1989) Trudeau's leadership specialized in civil rights and constitutional reform and from his insistence on social justice; the theory of equality of opportunity took on a significant role. Trudeau explains:

Elsewhere in the world decolonization was proceeding apace....At a time like this, what led me to politics was not a desire to fight for

freedom; in a way that was already yesterday's battle. In my thinking, the value with the highest priority in the pursuit of a Just Society had become equality. Not the procrustean kind of equality where everyone is raised or lowered to a kind of middle ground. I mean equality of opportunity. For where is the justice in a country where an individual has the freedom to be totally fulfilled, but where inequality denies him the means? And how can we call a society just unless it is organized in such a way as to give each his due, regardless of his state of his state of birth, his means or his health? ³²⁸

From the politics of feminism, circa 1970, the question of gendered language moved the political debate from the realm of bilingualism, where cultural equality and language rights are protected, to the material realm of the body. While Trudeau maintained an admirable stand on language rights, individual language rights were not protected, and certainly later, in the 1980s, caused some confusion in the “formula” for interpreting the charter.

In the examination of literature and film, it is clear that the voice offers guidance in community and where control of knowledge is contested, alternative discourses claim a place for a responsible sensitive awareness toward the community. As Paulo Freire writes, “Often educators and politicians speak and are not understood because their language is not attuned to the concrete situation of the people they address.” (Freire 1992) In the sense communities that are multicultural and multi-gendered, understanding often depends as much on how they are speaking as to whom is speaking. Michele Landry offers a critical detail:

Repeated studies of youngsters from kindergarten to college come up with the same result: when students are asked to describe man in space or primitive man, or urban man, or man in society, they will talk about males—and usually about warlike, aggressive males. Less biased words and phrases, like society, or space, or peoples, on the other hand, evoke images of women and men in a variety of peaceful and

cultural pursuits. Every time we insist on using “man” to denote all human beings, we are thumping into children’s minds a distorted version of the world, one that defines humans as male, males as dominant, real universal, and females as a kind of variant or subspecies.³²⁹

Sociological changes, embedded in Canada’s official policies on bilingualism and multiculturalism are far from dull. They set the legal rules that uphold the fact that Canada *is* a multinational country. While officialdom champions cultural values that differ from community to community, there is a heightened sense of awareness that common social values ought to guarantee equal opportunity for all Canadians regardless of sex, ethnicity, language or religion.

In this sense, the argument for a practical application of the theory of equal opportunity, based on responsibility, skirts the limitations of moral law because it does not normalize historical determinations of culture and gender. In practice, the theory of equal opportunity also bypasses the essentialist position by avoiding expressions of oppression and victimization. In this way diversity and difference are compatible with the concept of freedom of expression that is enacted through an obligation, in the Kantian sense, of always standing in an ethical relation with the “Other”. Consequently Trudeau argued that equality of opportunity does not sublimate the “Other” into the same “middle ground” but opens a respectful discourse on the possibilities of social change in the direction of democratic freedom. In this sense, to quote Ewa Ziarek “...the “Other” can motivate democratic struggles against racial, patriarchal, and economic domination.³³⁰

By holding fast on liberal values, Trudeau promoted the policy of opportunity for all, and throughout the 1970s promised to entrench fundamental human rights in a Canadian charter that would redefine freedom, responsibility, and would protect equality before the law in way that all Canadians could understand. Obviously a utopian dream, and by the end of the decade and nowhere nearing the achievement, the Liberal Party lost seats to the Conservatives. Forming a minority government under the leadership of Joe Clark's Conservative party and with an agenda, of neo-conservative policies, a revised conception of justice entered the political discourse directed not toward individual expression, but based in moral judgment, family values; and a conservative ideal directed toward the greater good in the name of majority rule. Taken together, with the provinces dragging their heels, the quest for a distinctly Canadian constitution with an entrenched charter of rights and freedoms was abandoned. This was short lived however, Lorraine Eisenstat Weinrib elaborates:

Joe Clarke took a more flexible approach to both to federalism and the Charter....As fate would have it...the Conservative minority fell unexpectedly, and in 1980 [a] re-elected and re-energized Trudeau stool poised to deliver nothing more than his classic version of patriation and a Charter...³³¹

Democracy in action: Government policy and the political state

While there have been myriad studies on the need for political reform in Canada, the beginning of the mid-twentieth century saw the democratic community ready to “do justice;” coinciding with a surge in economic and

conjoining idealism of the “New Left” with reinvigorating interest in liberal values, Canada stood on the podium of Social Justice. To recap, “cooperative federalism” moved toward the political left in the 1960s and as constitutional change entered the political discourse, Lester B. Pearson, the leader of the Liberal Party of Canada, initiated a drive for social change. This framework held the liberal agenda and under the leadership of Pierre Elliott Trudeau, in 1968, Canada’s federal governance was administrated by liberal social values for the next sixteen years plus four.

In addition, social awareness, equal access to education, and an egalitarian approach to building a “fair society,” were “hot” button topics.³³² (Saul 2009) Albeit slow to mature, practices that might be called, alternative arrangements had already been in place in Canada from the time of colonial reform. With economic growth in the early twentieth century, circumstances changed. One way to widen the circle of fairness was to increase spending on education, to advance new liberal policies on bilingualism and biculturalism, to ensure minority language and education rights, and to encourage the arts. More so, to move along the path to the “practice of justice,” Pearson, recruited three political dissidents and defenders of the New Left, from the under culture of Quebec; Gérard Pelletier, Jean Chartrand, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau. In doing so, the Liberal Party of Canada not only gained the support of the popular vote in Quebec, it also drew support of social activists and human rights advocates for its stand on an open political discourse on language, religion, cultural equality, the status of women,

power conflicts, capital punishment; birth control, homosexuality, divorce, abortion, and same sex marriage.³³³ (Weinrib 1998)

As Pearson's justice minister, Trudeau set out to change the rules of engagement and to modernize the penal code. Trudeau saw to the abolishment of the death penalty, the decriminalization of homosexual acts and the use of contraceptives; and, his ministry revamped Canada's draconian divorce laws. The latter three legislative bills may seem insignificant, but to place the private in the public was, one sure way to ensure that people could not be harassed for private acts, such as same sex dance partners or the purchase of birth control systems.

In the same era, Liberal policy sought to separate the state from religion and through changes to divorce laws, the welfare of women and children was improved. More so, upon divorce and under the new laws of equal property disbursement, women were ensured equal share in the accumulated family wealth. With other policy changes, single parenting, same sex marriage, healthcare, and universal pensions all came forward, all directed toward achieving the higher aim: social justice. To quote journalist Jacques Hébert, one of the things the Trudeau government did that had never been done before was to give voice to categories of Canadians who preciously had little or not voice.³³⁴ Participation in the full production of a just society was denied, however, to Canada's Aboriginal peoples' who were, and to some extent still are, subjugated under the terms of the Indian Act.

Pearson's agenda was weighted on the side of social welfare, his term in office saw the introduction of universal health care, the Canada Pension Plan, Canada Student loans, and his government expanded funding for technical education and post-secondary institutions with a focus on expanding access to higher education facilities throughout Canada. Pearson also set the ground work for policies on bilingualism and biculturalism that would take place of prominence over the following decades, all of which extend well into the twenty-first century.³³⁵

Turning his attention to constitutional conflictions between the province of Quebec and the federal government in Ottawa, Pearson—always the diplomat—strongly believed that “...French Canada must become more integrally part of the Canadian political and economic system.”³³⁶ To this end, Pearson directed the liberal democratic agenda toward healing a growing rift between Ottawa and the provincial governance of Quebec. Taking his agenda into the realm of constitutional reform, which will occupy Canadian politics well into the twenty-first century, Pearson recruited, as I mentioned, three political activists into the Liberal Party of Canada; Jean Marchand, Gérard Pelletier, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau.³³⁷ Already well known for his social activism, founding editor and a contributing essayist to the influential political journal *Cité Libre*, lawyer and human rights advocate, Trudeau, entered national politics in 1965. Lorraine Eisenstat Weinrib elaborates:

By the time he moved into public life, after a short period as a law professor, he had clearly articulated his political thought and honed his considerable analytic and polemical skills....Trudeau came to support the values of individual freedom and self-fulfilment and to champion a world-view free of state imposed nationalist, religious preferences. His emphasis on individual freedom merged with an attention to cultural identity, an opposition to nationalism, and a defense of federalism—all elements of his constitutional politics.³³⁸

While Trudeau's stand on federalism is well known, what is less understood is Trudeau's endearing regard for the protection of culture and language rights. Conjoining his intellectual practice with an enthusiastic exploration into the possibilities of liberal democratic politics, Trudeau strongly believed that federalism — as a means of securing the continuity of Canada's nation-state — would endure. Trudeau strongly believed that "...cultural identity was as necessary as individual freedom to the flourishing of the individual, the group, and society at large."³³⁹

In defense of fundamental human rights, Trudeau clearly understood that statutory reforms should belong to the realm of a constitutional bill of rights, but constitutional amendment could only be made in the parliament of the United Kingdom according to the terms of the BNA Act 1867. Trudeau made a deep personal commitment to political reform directed toward the achievement of a constitutional program with a "rights-protection" clause embedded in a charter of rights and freedoms. However, more than ten years would pass before that quest could be realized; the quest to patriate the BNA Act would engage Trudeau in political wrangling on a grand scale. Trudeau's personal standpoint may be summed up by a statement he made in 1968:

...Canada must be one, Canada must be united, Canada must be progressive, and Canada must be a just society.³⁴⁰

For Trudeau, the values of a Just Society go hand in hand with the philosophical concept of democratic pluralism and the exercise of the freedom of expression. As a political activist, Trudeau saw social injustice where inequality worked to limit the exercise of individual fulfillment denied the opportunity of expression and marginalized minority groups to the edges of poverty. In a short essay that sums up what he considered necessary to achieve social justice, Trudeau elaborates:

Canada seemed to me to be an ideal country for a policy of greater equality of opportunity. A young country, a rich country, a country of two languages, of ethnic and religious plurality and of federative structure, Canada also possessed a political tradition that was neither entirely libertarian nor entirely socialist, but rested on an indispensable partnership between government and the private sector and on direct action by the state to protect the weak from the strong, the disadvantaged from the well-heeled.³⁴¹

On the basis of his own philosophical thoughts in the context of nation-building, Trudeau strongly believed that a policy for equality was crucial to the pursuit of justice. In reality, reaching the goal of equality was far from certain. Clearly, the historical pattern in Canada turns on the ideal of fairness with respect to citizens' rights, but even in the heady days of the Trudeau administration, the assurance of equality would go terribly off track.

Even a brief exploration into the reasons of political antagonism in Canada requires a return to the map of events that began with the Pearson administration. In this section I draw attention to Pearson's appointment of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, which was struck in response to political

pressure by the so called “resurgence” of the women’s movement. As I have already mentioned, although Canada was experiencing an economic surge, minority groups realized disadvantages. With an increased political concern for adequate social programs, there were serious concerns raised by human rights advocates and social feminists about the future equality for Canadian women. A website on the history of rights contains this timely information:

In April 1963, when Judy LaMarsh became Minister of National Health and Welfare in the Pearson Administration, she indicated to the Prime Minister the need for a public inquiry on the status of women in Canada...³⁴²

Initially Pearson was unconvinced, but under pressure he eventually agreed to meet with lobbyists that were expressing the need for official recognition of the social reality of Canadian women. Marginalized by economic inequality, struggling against domestic violence, and subjugated in many realms the lived experience for women in Canada was far from just. In this context, Pearson agreed to launch the Royal Commission on the Status of Women. Typically the meetings were held all across Canada:

...hearings were held in 14 cities over a 10 month period, grabbing the attention of both media and the Canadian public. Among the major impacts of the Royal Commission was the fact that it values and gave a platform to women’s voices. The result was a ground swell in awareness about the situation of women.³⁴³

Suffice to say at a time when there were no caucus committees to address racism or domestic violence, and where patriarchal divorce and custody laws ruled over advocacy for children and women’s rights, there were no women’s health programs and no women’s studies in any university. In an atmosphere where

fixed cultural stereotypes out maneuvered equality in hiring practices, the 1970 report of the Royal Commission was timely. However, it was not welcomed in all segments of society and a serious backlash against the argument for equality erupted. Bothwell et al explain:

Many newspapers ignored it editorially, others were condescending, and a few were critical. The *Calgary Herald* blamed ‘vocal militants who made a fetish of women’s rights’ for this unnecessary commission. ‘Men and women are not equal,’ the *Herald* declared. ‘Nature has ascribed roles to women which makes it impractical for them to be regarded on the same basis [as men] in many instances.’ Besides, most women would not trade ‘exerting an immeasurable, if subtle, influence on society...to compete out right in all things with men.’³⁴⁴

In an era where prejudices should have been loudly obvious, targeting the feminist movement for social change was problematic. From an opposing side, arguing that the commissions report would soon be “anachronistic,” the argument for equality rights was deemed to be outdated. From the view of marginalization, with concerns for the future of equality rights for women, journalist and social activist, Michele Landsberg elaborates:

The most significant factor...was the slowly entrenching backlash and the increasing power of the conservative movement...The more laws we got through legislatures and the courts [for equal wages and, against, racist sexist hiring practices] the more equality we demanded and won, the more our female presence began to fill medical schools and legal offices—the more those with established power resisted us. The first prime minister to cut back our Trudeau-era funding was Brian Mulroney.”³⁴⁵

As leader of a decidedly neo-conservative movement based not on equality of opportunity or on social and environmental justice, but on economic progress, Brian Mulroney’s Conservative Party policies enmeshed the political discourse in

a serious constitutional debate that strung out for more than a decade. Mulroney's conservative administration would not slow the drive for equality of opportunity, however, but it would set free trade policies in place that weight on the side of the "investor" relationship to the detriment of public health programs, social welfare, and the natural environment. Many of these free trade agreements have ignited the interest of environmentalists, human rights advocates, minority groups, and indigenous communities concerned about the future of the planet, not to mention worries about unethical treatment of non-human entities, animals, and the alarming destruction of ecological systems.

At the time when the RCSW reported, the outlandish suggestion that equality rights would be outdated fits with the misconception that women's participation in politics was, at that time, well established in Canada; indeed, it was not. Suffice to say, women in politics were vastly in the minority and they often worked their lifetime—not necessarily with the support of their male colleagues—defending equality rights of others while women's rights were being ignored. In the heady years of the 1970s women took on a more participatory role in politics. Lisa Young an author and political science teacher elaborates:

Women were involved in Canadian political parties throughout most of the twentieth century, but until the 1970s their participation tended to be channeled into supportive roles. Women's involvement in the two major parties (the Liberal and the Progressive Conservatives) took the form of activism in ladies' auxiliary organizations that supported the party but played no role in directing it. By the late 1960s, attitudes about women's roles in society were coming into question, and this led women inside the parties to challenge the character of their involvement in party affairs. In 1970, the Report of the Royal

Commission on the Status of Women encouraged this, advocating that the parties should disband their ladies' auxiliaries and encourages women to participate in the mainstream of party life. Through the 1970s women's organizations in the parties were converted to feminist organizations that promoted women's participation in the parties on an equal footing.³⁴⁶

Young also pointed to the gender gap between parliamentary representation and population which showed that the imbalance is more acute in federal or provincial governments, but less so in local jurisdictions.³⁴⁷ (Young 2004) Young asserted that "...if women are to realize the liberal democracy's promise of citizenship, the electoral arena must be opened to women's participation on an equal footing."³⁴⁸(Young 2004) Aside from exposing deep gaps or omissions in party politics, Young also drew attention to the report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women, from 1970, which recommended that political parties "...should encourage women to participate in the mainstream of party life."(Young 2004)

Although the commission's report made recommendations directed toward bringing equality standards up to date with economic progress and political values, implementation on the part of governments was hopelessly slow. Among the 167 recommendations, legal issues such as sections of the Indian Act that guarantee adequate housing, health care, and education, had not advanced beyond poverty levels; and, on the topic of gender equality, the Indian Act actually violates basic human rights. Ten years later, controversial issues such as domestic violence, universal day care, child poverty and, the poverty of single parents were still "hot button" issues. In short, the official report confirmed the suspicion, to

quote Patrick Watson et al, that “For all its many democratic virtues, Canada had been slow to in granting citizen’s rights to women.”³⁴⁹(Partick Watson 2000)

Indeed, what emerged from decades of political experience is that economic advances had provided certain kinds of material fulfillment, but the quality of life and equal humanity for minority groups and women—guaranteed by an amendment to the BNA Act in 1920—had not yet been achieved. The 1970 report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women created a critical framework in which concerns about sex and gender discrimination coincided with the popularity of the Liberal Party of Canada under the leadership of Pierre Elliott Trudeau. Taken together with the political narrative of participatory democracy instigated by the Liberal government and in the context of constitutional reform, the Trudeau years had some success in expanding the notion of cultural and social equality.

As I examine sociopolitical and cultural activities from the historical development of the equality guarantee, I draw attention to those places in the 1970 report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women where rights claims take on a new dimension in light of the political debate on creating a charter text for Canada with rights-protection. Indeed, report of the Royal Commission on the Status of women has been the catalyst that forced the government to set up the Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, which led to the participatory role that Canadian women played in the great

charter debate. From 1973 on, women played a leading role in securing women's rights in the charter.³⁵⁰ (Landsberg 2011)

Although equality rights are embedded in various colonial acts preceding Confederation from Trudeau's "...hope for a wide-ranging Charter of Rights and Freedoms," in the wider political content the charter debate becomes central in the context of advancing the concept of equality of opportunity. While Trudeau strongly believed that the pluralist framework of Canada's federalism would be strong enough to uphold the concept of freedom, which would sustain the argument for a charter of rights, entrenching the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity in support of a "rights guarantee," proved a difficult task. This, it has to be known, is because in order pass the charter into constitutional law, unequivocal support for the federal proposal had to come from the provincial and the territorial governments.

To remind us of the principles of hegemony where, to follow Antonio Gramsci's line of reasoning, the relationship between the state and civil society are constantly in flux, in the Canadian context commitment to social change may also be examined in light of changing social and cultural practices. However, Lyotard argued that not every situation can be identified by struggles against the ruling authority. Ewa Ziarek also claimed that hegemony does not always explain the many forms of political oppression.³⁵¹ However, following Edward Said's influential line of reasoning, "...Gramsci has made a useful analytic distinction between civil and political society."³⁵² (Said 2003) Explained as a kind of

consensual agreement between the state and society, cultural influences may advance a strong political commitment toward effecting social change and in the Canadian context, Gramsci's theory of hegemony does help to explain how liberal humanism, with its focus on the fulfilment of the potential of individualism has made it easier for Canada's Liberal politicians to center cultural policies on the concept of social justice as a way to transcend sociopolitical conflicts.

In writing about Canada's "official" policies on multiculturalism and bilingualism, I draw support from Chantal Mouffe's opinion that the strategy of multiculturalism provides a "non-essentialist" perspective capable of countering certain arguments about subject positioning.³⁵³ (Mouffe 1992) Furthermore, because this category of identity does not transcend politics, an ethical relationship exists between Canada's federal Liberal government's stand on multiculturalism, through the avowed protection of freedom and human rights, the practical application of the theory of equal opportunity stands out to contest essentialist condemnations.

I believe that this position on equality also skirts the limits of Lyotard's *differend*, because although some situations appear irresolvable, the promotion of equality based on responsibility does not normalize historical determinations of culture and gender. Instead the realm of difference is compatible with the concept of freedom of expression in the Kantian sense of an ethical relation with the "Other". Consequently, to follow Trudeau's political reasoning, it remains the responsibility of the individual to transcend the problematic. This places the

concept of the “Other” in an entirely new position in light of an “elaboration of a different concept of alterity.” Ewa Płonowska Ziarek explains:

In postmodern political vocabularies, the category of the Other, most frequently associated with women and people of color, synonymous with objectification, exclusion, and domination. It is either a negative foil for the identity for of those who count as political subjects or a fetishistic screen for the projection of social antagonism. In this context the task of feminist politics of difference has been to transform the institutional conditions of inequality and to demand the status of the subject for those who have been ‘othered.’³⁵⁴

The “task” that Ziarek sets is to learn how to negotiate between extremes and to learn to fill binary gaps—among other things—by accepting responsibility for “...self/Other beyond objectification.” This also ought to challenge the domination position of power and knowledge, which Ziarek deems “appropriative,” to oneself. (Ziarek 2001)

Such an account, of taking responsibility, falls in line with an ethics of equality of opportunity to reopen what Jean Chrétien called, the ethical connection between “the role of the government to foster a Canada with two official languages,” and the assurance that “all Canadians have access to federal services,” i.e. health, welfare, family services, and education.³⁵⁵ (Chrétien 2010)

The basic philosophical question in this sense does not go beyond politics; the practical involves demanding an end to inequality not from the philosophical position of “giving” voice to the voiceless, but by refusing to identify the status of the subject as one who has been “othered.” (Ziarek 2001)

The ethics of difference in Canada, hinges on the possibility self-articulation through the practical implementation of a policy of equal opportunity. From

Trudeau's position, power and knowledge enters the equation on a more level ground when the political role in education imposes an obligation to respond to social and political injustices. Here is where Trudeau found an opportunity to effect social change by adapting the theory of equality of opportunity to his argument for the need of a Canadian charter of rights and freedoms.

To the individual, the failure to rethink one's own position is not the fault of the state. Trudeau often drew attention to the fact that state has assurances in place, but, to paraphrase, he also stated that the law cannot guarantee the concept of equality if the individual cannot accept personal responsibility the state can go no further. (Trudeau 1987) Trudeau's standpoint projects a view of human agency as the conception of "man" in the realization of a "conception of self," which appears to follow existentialist principles, explained by Jean-Paul Sartre:

...Man is nothing else but what he makes of himself. That is the first principle of existentialism. And this is what people call its 'subjectivity,' ...man primarily exists...before all else, something which propels itself towards a future and is aware that it is doing so. Man is indeed a project which possesses subjective life....Thus the first effect of existentialism is that it puts every man in possession of himself...responsibility squarely on his own shoulders...[but also] responsible for all men.³⁵⁶

Trudeau's position was not without risk; however, but qualifying his position on individual agency and by always referring to the need of a charter, he sought to guarantee equality rights. Trudeau wrote that "justice in a country," made little or no sense when the "freedom, to be totally fulfilled," could be countered by the experience of "inequality [that] denied...the means." In Trudeau's considered opinion, a distinctly Canadian charter would vastly contribute to the assurance of

equality of opportunity while it would increase the quality of Canadian democracy. More so, a Canadian constitution would reconfirm the inherently pluralistic dynamics of Canadian federalism through what might be described as hegemonic flow of power between federal-provincial governance.

Consequently, what is at stake is the identification of state and nation not as gender, ethnic, cultural separation, but as distinctions that balance each other in a positive quest for guarantees of freedom, cultural equality, and social justice. What begins to provide an alternative way to “articulate justice,” apart from dominating power (hegemonic) formulations, rides side by side with the argument for equality of opportunity for all men and women and does not impose restrictions. As it does not transcend conflicts, it also tends to get around aspects of philosophical humanism. (Althusser 2000)

From his ethical stand on social justice and from a legal view on equality of opportunity, Trudeau advanced his belief, that although fulfillment in freedom within civil society may be an individual struggle, a charter would guarantee “...equality of rights and treatment to all people and equal justice for minority groups, and the disadvantaged”; more so, it would “defend a free and democratic society [in which] real power in Canada belongs to the people.”³⁵⁷ (Chrétien 2010)

Process and substance: the charter text with rights protection

While it is well known that, from 1968 through 1982 Trudeau directed his political career toward incorporating the “elements of a charter of rights and

freedoms into the Canadian constitution.³⁵⁸ (Trudeau 2009) And it is known that Trudeau's philosophical views helped to shape practical political policies. What is less well known is the extent to which, as a political activist and as a member of a minority French speaking community, Trudeau gave considerable thought to the concept of equality as central to the experience of human rights developed through ideas and reflections based upon lived experiences.³⁵⁹ As Trudeau's principal secretary for seven years, Jim Coutts explains:

As a young man he spent much time travelling widely in Europe, Africa, Asia and the Middle East—alone, with no baggage and very little money, finding odd jobs and learning the local language were tests he set for himself....Trudeau's views on individual freedom, minority rights, and the need for a strong nation-state were partly shaped by his observations as a traveler. He was a student of history, but he also witnessed outbreaks of aggression, civil war, and political turmoil. The passion he brought to North-South developments incentives, for example, was rooted in early travels where he saw the horrors of suffered by "the wretched of the earth."³⁶⁰

Trudeau knew from lived experience that without a constitutional bill of rights to protect equality of opportunity and freedom of expression, a court ruling could only go so far. Carrying his reputation as an intellect and speaking from knowledge, Trudeau obviously enjoyed a good argument on this topic of human rights. In a legal sense, Trudeau upheld his belief in the qualities of distributive justice. If his opponent turned out to be incapable of rationality, he might just walk away. Trudeau's famous shrug became the icon of his personal style. Should his interlocutor fail to understand the necessity for social justice, Trudeau would often enrage them with this classic dismissal. Trudeau made his position explicitly clear:

I have long believed that freedom is the most important value of a just society, and with the exercise of freedom its principal characteristic. Without these a human being to hope for true fulfillment—an individual in society could not realize his or her full potential. And deprived of its freedom, a people could not pursue its own destiny—the destiny that best suits its collective will to live. ³⁶¹

Trudeau's political position, on the need for constitution change, was based on his personal expression. For instance, in 1947, writing in the journal *Cité libre* he noted that change “defined as progress” is an expression of “civilization's slow march to freedom.” (Trudeau 2009) In terms of a philosophical stand, Trudeau's deep beliefs measure values as ethical judgment based in rational thinking about community and compelling principles of social justice. Lorraine Eisenstat Weinrib elaborates:

Trudeau's political ideas about rights took shape in academic study filtered through experience. Quebec premier Maurice Duplessis presided over an authoritarian...régime that held the province back. When he left Quebec to study and travel, Trudeau set out to reflect upon and experience other cultures, ways of thinking, and modes of governance. His political views meant that [for a time] he would get no academic employment...it gave Trudeau time to write and work as an activist lawyer in the fields of human rights and labour law. By the time he moved into public life, after a short time as a law professor, he had clearly articulated his political thoughts and honed his considerable analytic and polemical skills. ³⁶²

In one sense, out of work, under employed and denied a professional teaching position for his tenacious disagreements with local and provincial politicians, Weinrib characterizes Trudeau as holding a reflective personality based on a living albeit antagonistic relationship between the individual and the state.

Trudeau personally experienced the struggle for equality from the position of a cultural minority and in this sense he understood the true meaning of marginality

that holds a person back. In another sense, Trudeau's political philosophy fits well within the early concepts of Canadian federalism, wherein political reformers such as La Fontaine and Cartier held tight to the concept of a nation-state capable of bringing ethnic and cultural multinationals together in a constitutional pluralistic democracy directed toward social justice for all constituents.³⁶³

(Laselva 2004)

Drafting a new constitution that would contain a written charter of rights and freedoms of all Canadian citizens took shape not only from Trudeau's considerable legal knowledge, but also from an ethical ideal embodied in his understanding of the uniquely Canadian experience of political federalism. On one hand, Trudeau deemed that federalism was capable of dealing with difficult economic challenges. On the other, it had to justify capability when it came to upholding ideas about social justice, cultural identity, different value systems, and freedom of expression. In Trudeau's considered opinion:

...federalism is a superior form of government; by definition, it is more pluralist than monolithic and therefore respects diversity among people and groups. In general freedom has a firmer foundation under federalism.³⁶⁴

From the argument that Canada needed a charter of rights in order to fulfil one goal of the original Canadian Constitution 1791, Trudeau insisted that it could not be achieved without provisions for language and education rights, but more so the charter had to enshrine basic human rights, freedoms, and cultural identity: otherwise, the goal "to allow its citizens' to consider the whole of Canada their country and field of endeavor," might never be fulfilled.³⁶⁵ (Weinrib 1998)

Although Trudeau had early, in the 1950s, expressed a desire to patriate the BNA Act, he was only able to reinstate the promise of a “renewed” federalism in light of the Liberal majority vote in the province of Quebec. Indeed, “bolstered by a mandate of seventy-four out of the seventy-five Quebec seats in parliament” and in the Liberal majority win in the 1980 federal election, the Trudeau Liberals immediately began the process of constitution reform from a political position of power.

What Trudeau did not count on, however, was the extent to which his plan would not draw support from the provincial legislators nor did he expect resistance to the clauses that address cultural guarantees. This opposition came not only from certain elected federal ministers, but also from the provincial premiers—each with his own interests—including the Quebec premier, René Lévesque—an avowed separatist—who would reject any plan that might strengthen the Canadian Confederation.³⁶⁶ (Cohen 1998) The political debate embroiled the country, before agreeing to sign on to an amending formula, explicitly defined as a necessity by the “rules of Canadian federalism” carried in text of the British North America Act 1867 or to sign on to an accord for an amending formula, the provincial premiers held out on agreeing to the text of a charter of rights and freedoms; shamefully in order to work leverage against the federal government.

Journalist, and at that time a foreign correspondent for the *Globe and Mail*, Andrew Cohen, worked it out:

Having won the referendum, Trudeau unveiled his plans to bring home the British North America Act, entrench a Charter of Rights, and establish an amending formula. Everything was negotiable, he said—rights, roles, and responsibilities—and he meant those of the provinces too. The debate over the next eighteen months would give shape to Trudeau’s Canada....It would take place in parliament, the courts, and intergovernmental conferences, generating a cacophony of threats, cries, and laments...³⁶⁷

The provincial premiers wanted more power for the provinces. In a decidedly nasty struggle for power, they pressed for economic benefits over equality rights. When it became abundantly clear that to gain an economic edge the provincial premiers would forfeit the clause to guarantee rights and freedoms equally to male and female persons, the premiers were charged with tactless selfishness. Cohen explains:

They would do what the premiers had always done in these negotiations—trade rights for fish. It wasn’t patriation or the Charter that mattered to them it was the divisions of power it was what they could extract from Ottawa. Without concession there would be no consent....The premiers presents a list....Forestry, communications, the fishery, and other areas of federal jurisdiction were all demanded by the provinces as the price of their agreement.³⁶⁸

From Trudeau’s philosophical view the rights of distinct groups are a necessity they have to stand to be recognized in the draft constitution. Moreover, agreement had to reflect the multiplicity of Canadian society; the constitution had to protect the stability of the multinational accord that grounds Canada’s pluralistic democracy. To do other wise, would mean the inclusion of a “derogatory” clause, which in Trudeau’s opinion, “...was incompatible with an authentic charter of rights and freedoms.”³⁶⁹ (Trudeau 2009)

In order to get a better grip on Canada's natural resources, the provincial and territory governments pressed for a notwithstanding clause where they might gain political and economic power over the federal government. Indeed, the provincial premiers' would hold civil and legal rights hostage. In an all out attempt to safeguard basic human rights, grassroots organizations, Aboriginal leaders, political feminists, and human rights advocates, all argued the case for equality. In the struggle to entrench an air tight assurance to equality and equal access to federal programs across the boundaries of provinces and territories, the advocates' spoke not from the position of the "single-issue" "greater-good" sentiment, but from inclusivity and from different political and ideological allegiances.

To complicate matters, the debate between federalists and separatists had gained momentum and in the referendum debate, 1980, Trudeau typically encouraged public participation. Jean Chrétien, Trudeau's justice minister elaborates:

A campaign of almost two months touched extremes from the initial despair and disorganization to the almost joyous collaboration...from initial lack of interest to the great enthusiasm of larger rallies, from mistakes caused by the inexperience of volunteers unused to such strong emotions to the unexpected success of the federalist women....The result was an unequivocal expression by Quebeckers of their will to belong to Canada...During the referendum campaign Prime Minister Trudeau...formally promised constitutional reform...patriation [of the BNA Act], a constitutional charter of rights and freedoms....³⁷⁰

Upon the defeat of the referendum, for Quebec separation, Trudeau immediately reopened the discourse on constitution reform. In an all out effort to maneuver out

of the political deadlock between the federal government and the provinces, the prime minister asked Chrétien to meet individually with Canada's provincial premiers. The result was encouraging, to quote Chrétien:

The reception was...excellent: all were prepared to proceed immediately...and I stressed the need for a charter of rights, for patriation, for finding an acceptable amending formula and for entrenching minority language and education rights in all provinces....The result of my trip across the country was agreement on an early federal-provincial meeting of first ministers to set an agenda for what became a summer of intensive federal-provincial constitutional negotiations. Three weeks of negotiations were scheduled for July—the first in Montreal, the second in Toronto and a third in Vancouver...to resume mid-August in Ottawa in preparation for a final first minister's conference at the beginning of September 1980.³⁷¹

While Chrétien had managed to negotiate an agreement on form and content—an admirable feat in itself—there was little assurance that Canada's provincial premiers would accept Trudeau's declared determination to entrench a "rights package" in the context of patriation of the BNA Act, nor was there any certainty that "they would agree to a "charter of rights with an amending formula."³⁷² (Chrétien 2010)

In this categorically hostile political environment, Trudeau decided to proceed on his own. Ignoring the premiers, he garnered support of parliamentary members of the New Democratic Party and of the political left. In referring to the question of unilateral action, Trudeau sought legal advice of the Supreme Court of Canada.³⁷³ (Chrétien 2010) While waiting for the reply, Trudeau struck a

parliamentary committee to garner support from public opinion. Chrétien explains:

...the substance of the constitutional resolution was referred to a joint committee of the Senate and the House of Commons for study and recommendations. The story of the joint committee is an extraordinary example of the political process working as it should. In 56 days and 267 hours of hearings, the committee received representations by 914 individuals and 294 groups. Its proceedings were televised.³⁷⁴

By the end on the day, so to speak, the Supreme Court had come up with a decision, the federal government could legally proceed unilaterally, but as this action was deemed “unconventional” in the long run, it might prove too controversial.³⁷⁵ (Bothwell 1989) As such, in all probability Westminster might not approve the proposal and the necessary patriation enactment required as a “British statute,” might well be refused. (Bothwell 1989)

Obviously a problematical situation, but meanwhile the joint committee had come up with a draft Charter of rights and freedoms. However, upon close inspection “lawyer Mary Eberts” and others, warned that because the draft charter did not clarify gender equality, it was “flawed.”³⁷⁶ Michele Landsberg elaborates:

Reel back to the end of the 70s: Pierre Trudeau was prime minister and feminism’s peak hour was about to happen. As Trudeau planned to “patriate the constitution”—bring it home from Britain—and create a Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, feminist lawyers and leaders buckled down to pore over every clause and comma determined to nail women’s rights permanently in place. It was Canada’s good fortune to that a cadre of bright young women, dedicated feminists, had graduated from law school...here were women who could parse...language for hours....³⁷⁷

While political views were supported by legal and economic arguments, it is well known that after studying the draft charter, members of the National Advisory

Council on the Status of Women (NAC) found it lacking; among other things it did not address the need for an equity clause.

A brief was prepared by the NAC and presented to the prestigious joint committee by “executives of the National Action Committee on the Status of Women.” The concept of equality was ridiculed by the chair of the joint committee. Landsberg explains:

Senator Harry Hays...said in full view of the cameras [words which are part of the formal record]...‘You should have a section on children and babies. You girls will be out working, and there will be nobody home to look after them.’

Within days, a national ad hoc Women’s Constitutional Conference was set up in Ottawa and with expert constitutional legal advisors, they “poured over the Charter” and they came up with detailed and sensible proposals for an equity clause.³⁷⁸ (Landsberg 2011)

In the context of the political, Gramsci’s principal of the “organic” intellectual cannot be over emphasized. For while legal views and philosophical values help to clarify and enrich a deeper understanding of the need for the equal rights clause, in the charter, what matters is the “really progressive” group process and the methodology that brought grassroots activists together with historical researchers and legal experts; not just to advance a democratic ideology, but in all reality to actually “cause...the whole society to move forward” toward achieving the goal of Social Justice.³⁷⁹

In consideration of extolling the power of the “organic vanguard,” it must be recognized that while “...it manifests itself ‘spontaneously’ in the historical

period,” it also “exhausts its function,” there by creating the necessity to reform from time to time. David Forgacs, a Gramsci scholar and cultural theorist explains:

Every social group...creates together with itself, organically, one or more strata of intellectuals which give it homogeneity and an awareness of its own function not only in the economic but also in the social and political fields....As soon as the dominant social group has exhausted its function, the ideological bloc tends to crumble³⁸⁰
(Forgacs 2000)

In this way an “organic” intellectual movement operates in much the same way as an ad hoc group, it forms, it draws in others, and together they create social change. Placed in the Canadian context, it was a decidedly “organic vanguard” that came together in Ottawa on February 14, 1981 and in a “public” conference that was “democratic and flexible” they drafted an amendment to address basic equality rights, that under the law directed toward the protection and guarantee of the equality rights of male and female persons.³⁸¹(Landsberg 2011)

Prime Minister Trudeau would not budge from his philosophical position, he would not defer on the equality clause and, he insisted on the entrenchment of minority language rights and mobility rights.³⁸² (Bothwell 1989) Trudeau would not entertain the return to an idea of Macdonald’s centralized state, nor would he consider breaking the pluralism that federalism brings to Canada’s unique form of democracy. As Chrétien writes:

The prime minister could not accept...a vision of Canada as a country founded by the provinces with the federal government existing at their will...the repository of real power in Canada is in the people of the nation as a whole [and] recognition of values and ideals, shared by Canadians wherever they live.

A politics of inclusivity had to be embedded in the constitution, basic human rights and equality rights had to be enshrined, and the right to move between provinces had to be assured; mobility rights include the right to leave Canada altogether should anyone choose to do so. With a full account of freedoms, Trudeau's explanation of constitution rights presents the charter as a noble symbol of democratic plurality.

While Trudeau never appeared to react to feminism, it is through his insistence on individual rights that his philosophical stand always carried a deeper understanding of the need for cultural equality rights, which implies equality rights between the genders. Trudeau's philosophical argument was always on the side of cultural and minority rights and it went well beyond single-issue, greater good or ideological affiliations, through the practical application of the theory of equality, Trudeau always pressed for individual rights.

It is important to see the philosophical motivations behind the arguments for equality. While Trudeau's Jesuit training, places emphasis on the writings of Aristotle, Trudeau's liberalism carries the theme of justice, obviously from a Kantian view of responsible duty to humanity. Freedom, in the sense that it is a "cultivation" for one's own valued well being, deriving from ancient philosophy wherein freedom ought also to be directed toward the valued well being of others.³⁸³ In the sense that Trudeau's own admission of value judgment stems from his own reason and his oft quoted "reason over passion" statement, its source may be found in Platonic philosophy. While Trudeau did not necessarily

speak of Platonic or Stoic positions, it is clear that human equality as a valued worth stands paramount along with his sense that as Canada is a pluralistic community of people sharing attributes, social values ought to be acknowledged. In addition, reason over passion suggests an “indifferent” moral purpose.

Professor Nussbaum explains:

...Stoic ‘indifference’...should be seen as closely linked to the Stoic’s egalitarian cosmopolitanism. All humans are equal in worth, and we are not fundamentally members of families or cities but *kosmopolitai*, members of the ‘city-state of the universe.’ This means that we should have equal concern for all; and that equal concern is incompatible with special attachments to kin.³⁸⁴

From a philosophical position, Trudeau’s concern for equality was incompatible with “giving” special recognition to family pacts, “ethnic or cultural traits for political purposes,” yet he stood fast on the idea of distributive justice and he also championed individual rights of freedom of expression.

Indeed, supported by his justice minister Jean Chrétien, Trudeau argued for organizational issues and not for awarding special values. In the question of the provinces Trudeau opined that to justify special value to the provinces would undermine La Fountain’s egalitarian argument that is deeply embedded in Canada’s unique form of democratic pluralism.

Just as it appeared that the other elected representatives would never support his decision, Trudeau called a meeting with the provincial premiers. It took place November 2, 1981, in Ottawa. This new round of federal-provincial constitutional negotiations carried on over several days. From numerous accounts, the debate was intensely complex. For instance, certain premiers wanted a legal clause to

override any potential interference from special interest groups, such as organized workers' unions; some wanted Senate reform, others were opposed; Quebec wanted special status, the premiers wanted an economic edge over the federal government; and, they all wanted a clause that would give the provinces a veto option: Indeed, they wanted a notwithstanding clause.

It is well known that the November 3rd meeting dragged on late into the night. After adjournment, the participants continued talking. A series of “informal” discussions took place, both with the prime minister and between the federal ministers and the provincial premiers.³⁸⁵ (Chrétien 2010) On the evening of November 4, “several senior ministers met at 24 Sussex Drive, the home of the prime minister. At the same time, various provincial ministers and federal officials met elsewhere.(Chrétien 2010) By the morning of November 5, 1981 a constitution agreement seemed possible. Trudeau’s Justice Minister Jean Chrétien elaborates:

The deal itself was the product of compromise and negotiation. The federal government agreed to a formula which required in most cases that seven Provinces with a 50 percent of the population approve constitutional amendments. Where provinces wished to opt out of constitutional change affecting their powers, except for education and culture, there would be no fiscal compensation and therefore no reward for opting out. As far as a charter of rights was concerned the provinces accepted the charter that had been studied and amended by the joint parliamentary committee....The major and controversial change to the Charter was the inclusion of a notwithstanding clause which would apply to fundamental freedoms, legal rights and equality rights....However there could be no opting out...from the obligation of governments to provide education for French language minorities outside of Quebec and English language minority in Quebec, nor could there be opting out of the guarantee of mobility rights.³⁸⁶

The most powerful argument was the “notwithstanding clause,” the proponents held that it would serve to discourage trivial challenges to the constitution and that it would ensure the continuance of the principle of representation. In this sense, the notwithstanding clause guaranteed that the elected representatives, not the courts of law or the judges, would have the final say on important matters of public policy.³⁸⁷ (Chrétien 2010) The provincial override would also give the first ministers’ considerable leverage in economic developments between the provinces, the federal government, and international trade agreements.

However, because the notwithstanding clause compromised the new equality clause written into the constitution draft, the “deal” appeared to undermine Trudeau’s philosophical position on the guarantee of equality rights and fundamental freedoms. When social activists, civil rights advocates, Aboriginal leaders, and academic feminists had an opportunity to examine the agreement, it was clear that the compromising “deal” would negate the guarantee of basic rights; the government had acquiesced. By agreeing that the provinces could override individual equality at their own discretion, “...fundamental freedoms, mobility rights, and equality rights” were, once more, in jeopardy.³⁸⁸ (Chrétien 2010)

The notwithstanding clause undermined fundamental rights on two critical counts: it diluted full equality rights for women; and, it provided less protection of Aboriginal rights. Getting the rights of people back into the draft charter was crucial. The philosophical debate centered on reason and the law, but human

rights activists' pressed the provincial first ministers' to renounce their veto option and political feminists' concentrated on getting the equity Clause 28 back into the draft charter. Michele Landsberg explains:

In their haste to sign an agreement in which they could over-ride fundamental freedoms...the provinces apparently overlooked a separate clause, section 28, that guarantees that men and women should enjoy all rights equally....women rallied again, gathering in Ottawa and phoning[sic] activists from coast to coast...intense lobbying of the premiers made them grudgingly back off.³⁸⁹

It was more than a telephone campaign, government officials actually argued that a separate gender clause was not necessary, but the notwithstanding clause already proved that those other clauses were also at risk. The lobbying played out in private spaces and on public grounds. Patrick Watson provides more detail:

This time they staged vigils outside premiers' offices, and raised money to send delegates halfway across the country to other provincial capitals. The national parliament encouraged them, but it was the direct fight of the women themselves that carried the day. In the end the provincial premiers declared that Clause 28 would be exempt from provincial override. Along the way, in another battle equally important, the native peoples' rights were spelled out as well....³⁹⁰
(Watson 2000)

In terms of a set of initiatives that assure solutions to problems, it was necessary to entrench Sections 15, 25, and 28 in the Constitution Act 1982. In addition, Part II, Section 35 and Section 35.1 of the act, ensures the recognition of Aboriginal treaty rights. Moreover, it affirms Canada's legal commitment to consult with Aboriginal people on proposed constitution amendments. All in all, reaching an agreement on the draft constitution was a great victory for social feminists, and human rights advocates.

Following decades of debate, constitutional change meant that the charter draft was finally a reality. The constitution debate that began with the colonial reformers' of the 1800s finally came to an effectual conclusion in 1982. Together with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, firmly entrenched in the Constitution and along with the requisite amending formula, Canada was ready to make a presentation to London. Under the specific terms of the Canada Act, in 1982, the British Parliament was able to proceed with the next step: the patriation of the BNA Act 1867.

Subsequent to Canada's long constitutional history and in recognition of a well established public and legal tradition, the British North America Act was, at last, patriated. In the presence of witnesses, Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau, representing Canada and Justice Minister Jean Chrétien met with Queen Elizabeth II, representing the British Crown, and on April 17, 1982 "...at a rain swept ceremony on Parliament Hill," they signed the proclamation that severed Canada's last legal colonial link with the London authority.³⁹¹ (Gibbins 2004) The patriation of the BNA Act was a great triumph for Canada. Pierre Elliott Trudeau writes:

The Constitution Act of 1982...essentially enshrined the values, which back in 1968, I had defined as those that should be represented in the constitution of a Just Society....The government I led fought from 1968 to 1982 to incorporate the elements of a charter of rights and freedoms into the Canadian constitution....And Mr. Chrétien, as minister of justice fought to have our Charter accepted by the provincial governments that were ferociously opposed to it.³⁹²

The philosophical debate throughout centers the argument on the necessary condition of human value and worth. From Kant's formulation of the "unconditional value of the freedom of the human will," the political experience in Canada carries a psychological approach to the reality of responsibility to the rule of law. From Kant's perspective, freedom has to be consistent, in other words, freedom for one ought to mean freedom for others. The Canadian political debate holds freedom, equality, and justice up as the highest good. Political reformers such as La Fontaine (the greatest good a government can give the people is education), Brown (an anti-slavery platform), Baldwin and Cartier (divisions of authority), all argued from a philosophical position that reasoned judgment could balance the problematic notion of "unconditional" value.³⁹³ (Guyer 2007)

The long argument for the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity flows from the historical past to come to a fruitful conclusion in the entrenchment of Canada's new Constitution 1982, where equality is enshrined in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. But will it hold up to scrutiny? Will the equality clause survive a constitutional legal challenge? In the next section, we will see moral and reasoned values put to the test as the first challenge to the constitution comes in 1983 in the context of Canada's Indian Act.

After the constitution: the concept of Aboriginal self-government

After 1982, Canadian Society was “barraged” with questions directed toward national unity. Keeping with Trudeau’s commitment on participatory governance commissions on women and youth, education and health, and a series of questions directed toward the “cultivation of a national spirit” went out to the public as if in anticipation of a challenge to the new Charter. Specifically because the question of equality in Section 15 of the charter leaves sexual equality open to interpretation, civil rights advocates were concerned. In light of the enormous task of entrenching a charter of rights and freedoms, that problematic may appear insignificant. However, in the context of the terms of the Indian Act, it became increasingly clear that a troubling and complex relationship existed between Section 15 and Section 28. Indeed, in contemporary philosophical and political debates, this problem continues to bring up the question of the meaning of true equality.

Specifically the issue of equality from clause 28 pertains to equality of opportunity, but it is also relevant to basic human rights of freedom and self-efficiency. In turn this ought to address the concept of Aboriginal self-government. Although both Sections 15 and 28 seem adequate, when human rights advocates and constitutional lawyers examined the charter text, they found that freedom for some appeared to exist only at the expense of others. Given this state of affairs the Trudeau Liberals were soon faced with the first challenge to

Canada's new Constitution. In the context of Canada's Indian Act 1867 an amending formula would be put to the test.

Typically, the government deflected the challenge by striking up a task force. Charged with information gathering, the government followed up with a series of intergovernmental conferences directed toward finding an appropriate amending formula for the brand new constitution. In his leadership role, Prime Minister Trudeau assumed the chair of the Federal-Provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters, set for March 8-9 1983. Holden in Ottawa, Trudeau invited Canada's Aboriginal leaders to attend. Significantly, he invited Aboriginal leaders to participate in the process nation-to-nation. From the "official" spoken transcripts Trudeau welcomed the participants and in his opening remarks said:

...it is certainly fitting that the first time we meet is to consider amendment to the Canadian constitution; we do it in order to begin to define rights of our aboriginal people. I was asked, as Prime Minister to invite representatives of the Indian, Inuit and Metis people to participate in discussion on this item. So, I determined that the representatives of the Assembly of First Nations, of the Inuit Tapirisat of Canada and the Native Council of Canada should sit here and be invited under section 37 of the constitution to participate... Today we reach a significant landmark in our restless search for ways to bring the Canadian constitution into concord with the realities of which face our country, our governments and our peoples... We are finally dealing for the first time with a constitution which is our own, close now to all Canadians, to the many peoples of ethnic groups who make their home in this broad land. We are dealing with a constitution which still needs to define the place of our aboriginal peoples in Canadian society.³⁹⁴

—Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau,
Prime Minister of Canada.

Couched in his opening speech, Trudeau referenced the triumph of the patriation of the BNA Act, but he also “officially” welcomed Aboriginal participation in the proceedings, which was an unprecedented invitation. Aboriginal participation in official proceedings had only occurred a few times and this was in colonial times. Specifically, 1701, 1763, and 1764; other than that, Aboriginal participation in the decision making process had not been sought.

In addition, as Aboriginal rights are indeed enshrined in the narrative of Canada’s historical experience, Trudeau shed light on the situation: If we think back to the time when the contact between aboriginal and non-aboriginal peoples began, we know that the rights of aboriginal peoples were not written down in formal documents, but were being exercised freely by the aboriginal groups found in various parts of the country. As the newcomers began to occupy the country, it was they who gave expression to those aboriginal rights in legal documents of their own devising. The Royal Proclamation of 1763 was one such legal document and so were treaties concluded with various Indian nations or tribes.³⁹⁵

—Right Honourable Pierre Elliott Trudeau,
Prime Minister of Canada.

While Canada’s prime minister alluded to the struggle for supremacy between the French and the British, he rightfully attributed the 1763 British Royal Proclamation as the legal document that enshrines Aboriginal rights to a land and water base in British North America.

At a later meeting held April 2, 1984, Georges Erasmus, speaking on behalf of the Assembly of First Nations, offered an alternative interpretation:

As Indian First Nations we have an inherent right to govern ourselves. We had this right from time immemorial (i.e. centuries before the arrival of the Europeans) and this right exists today. Neither the Crown in right of the United Kingdom nor of Canada delegated the right to self-government to the First Nations. It existed before Canada was itself a nation. Parliament did not create our right to self-government.

The inherent right of North American Indians to sovereignty was first recognized by the Two Row Wampum in 1650, and later by the Royal Proclamation 1763 which speaks of, ‘The several Nations or Tribes of Indian with who we are connected...’ and by subsequent Treaties. The purpose of that Proclamation and the treaties was not to give rights to the First Nations but to give rights to the settlers.³⁹⁶

—Georges Erasmus, National Chief, Assembly of First Nations.

In a reference to the fact that the Aboriginal peoples understood the treaty arrangement on an entirely different level, Erasmus explained that for a people used to their own council, a significant difference of opinion rests on interpretation. On one hand this revolves around boundary patterns defined by colonial and grants, acquisitions pertaining to resource exploration, and resource management. On the other, there are broken treaty agreements, failed negotiations and, in the western provinces, the lack of treaties altogether. This last issue harkens back to the Royal Proclamation of 1763 whereby the Crown avowed not to enter upon Aboriginal lands before adequate treaties were legally in place, but in reality, exploration and settlement blatantly ignored the boundaries of British law.

Over the course of the first conference 1983, on constitutional rights of the Aboriginal peoples of Canada, Chief David Ahenakew described having lost land to government policies; he clarified the Aboriginal position at the outset: Indeed, “...without Indian lands and resources...the Federation would have no economic base, no gross national product, and no national economy.”³⁹⁷ To paraphrase, it is only through an economy built upon the exploitation of natural resources — Aboriginal resources, stemming from the fur trade in North America and the

exploitation of timber metals and water — that the colonies of British North America were able to create a unified federation. Never having severed ties with the British Crown, the terms of the Royal Proclamation 1763 it falls to the Canadian Crown, herein to take the necessary legal and ethical steps toward compensation and reconciliation. Thus, Chief Ahenakew called the delegation to task:

...situations have accumulated over centuries of ignoring, bypassing and pushing aside the sovereignty and jurisdiction of Indian governments. Your governments have been in charge. They have built massive bureaucracies, spent billions of dollars and the result has been political, economic, social and cultural devastation of Indian peoples in our communities.³⁹⁸

—Chief David Ahenakew, National Chief of First Nations.

In the long argument for the practical implantation of the theory of equality, Canada's historical bloc worked from the idea of meritocratic leadership to set conditions for the realization of a just society. (Saul) Yet, subjugated under the harsh terms of Canada's Indian Act, equality rights and Aboriginal rights remain unresolved. In one sense, dimensions of the "political opportunity" structure offer multiple ways to assess social issues, for instance, factors that guide action include openness and fair policy.

In the context of the Indian Act however, subjugation and cultural suppression, including p Personal choice and community choice are highly controlled under which Foucault labeled "biopolitics" where every aspect of life is controlled by government policy. In another sense, the importance of cultural framing places the question of opportunity directly in the path of social change.

More so, in the context of the entrenchment of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms the broader interpretation frames the conversation within the theory of equality of opportunity but significantly within an entirely new—to Canadians—a rights discourse. Stephen Brooks, author and political science teacher elaborates:

Canadians...it is claimed...are willing...to limit individual freedom in pursuit of social order or group rights...Canadians are often portrayed as less assertive about their rights as individuals and more concerned...with social order...Canadians' greater willingness to permit government restrictions...does not mean that they value freedom less, but they are more likely...to believe that real freedom often requires that...all citizens are entitled to such things as public education and health care in order to help equalize the opportunities available to the well-off and the less-privileged. Canadians, some argue, have what might be characterized as a positive conception of freedom, one that requires the governments to act rather than get out of the way.³⁹⁹

Prior to the entrenchment of the charter, arguments for civil rights hinged on existing institutional and cultural support systems. While that does uphold such things as cooperation, peace, order, and good government, it also adheres to undergirding belief that, in law, that court appointed judges ought to act in accordance with practices established by British judicial authorities.⁴⁰⁰ A whole new legal and cultural environment opened with the concept of constitutional rights. In the era directly following the introduction of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms, there was considerable interest “...directed toward making legal knowledge more widely available to the general public,” to quote Raymond Bazowski.

In the context of the charter, the fundament right of expression played out in the famous case of *Delgamuukw v. The Queen* which sets conditions wherein

lawyers for the Gitksan Wet'suwet'en argued for the inclusion of knowledge of fact from lived experiences and from individual stories. In this groundbreaking case, it was affirmed that cultural knowledge is justifiable knowledge on the basis of the right of freedom of expression.⁴⁰¹ (Culhane 1998)

Turning back to consider Aboriginal rights in the 1982 charter in the context of the first minister's constitutional conferences on Aboriginal rights, the concept of equality and of Aboriginal self-government seemed too elusive for the government representatives to grasp. Following Alan D. McMillan and Eldon Yellowhorn, "The constitution conference debacle was just one more example of Canada's refusal to accommodate the aspirations of Aboriginal People."⁴⁰² (McMillan 2011) The line of argument for equality of opportunity developed so vividly by Trudeau, now seemed inadequate in light of McMillan's critique of the conference proceedings.

Typically the argument from the provinces, harken back to the days of La Fontaine, Baldwin, Cartier, and Macdonald. On one hand, as a provincial premier, Macdonald advanced a polemical platform for greater autonomy for the provinces, but Cartier stood firm on the concept of democratic pluralism for Canada. Cartier disavowed cultural assimilation as he took a stand against "cultural isolation."⁴⁰³ On the other hand, Macdonald vied for "...a highly centralized state that would reduce the provinces to little more than administrative unites and that would confer almost imperial powers on Ottawa."⁴⁰⁴ (Laselva 2004)

Macdonald's stand appears to be a reflection on Edmund Burke's innovations on British policy and when carried into the stronghold of Canada's conservative politics, it sets certain conditions for Confederation modeled on a distinct British "Tory" concept wherein "...the idea of union...transcends the group, the class, or section."⁴⁰⁵ (Bickerton 2004) Indeed, as we shall see, this notion will come up again in contemporary Canada where, in the philosophical and constitutional debate, the neo-conservative tendency to stay with the status quo, tends to make for complications in the drive for equal opportunity for all. Moreover as we see in the "greater good" argument a framework for a focus on economic concerns draws more attention than commitment to specific social issues.⁴⁰⁶

However, in terms of the concept of Aboriginal self-governance and from the insistence of Aboriginal communities for the recognition of their status as a Nation the debate over distinctive rights from the liberal argument for the equality of peoples; "forbidding" administration issues rise up to complicate the implementation of constitutionally recognized equality rights and rights of Aboriginal self-government.⁴⁰⁷ (Kymlicka 2004) Indeed, what is left unaddressed, in the intense argument for equality, belongs to a discriminatory section of the Indian Act that also addresses women's equality rights. Jo-Anne Fiske explains:

...the state had imposed universal patrilineal criteria for band membership. Upon marriage, a woman was reassigned to her husband's band. Children born in wedlock were assigned to their parents' band. Children born out of wedlock to status women became members of their mother's band (providing that no objections were raised and the ministry approved); sons born out of wedlock to non-

Indian women and Indian men were register in the father's band, but daughters of these unions were denied registration. Other provisions of the act reinforced women's subjugation. Until 1951, women were excluded from the band electorate and barred from public meetings. Indian Affairs agencies exercised considerable discretionary power over property inheritance. They allotted housing, agricultural land, and other valuable resources to the benefit on men.⁴⁰⁸

Although the historical “verbatim” archive of the constitutional conferences on Aboriginal rights is brimming with riveting speeches and filled with fascinating information, I am going to connect images with voices taken from the work of the videomaker, Maurice Bulbulian.

A major Quebec filmmaker, Bulbulian was a participant in the prodigious Challenge for Change (CFC/SN) program at the National Film Board of Canada. Commissioned to follow the proceedings of the four conferences that were called to address Aboriginal constitution rights, Bulbulian's 1987 film, *Dancing Around The Table*, brings a documentary quality that adds a personal touch to the relentless and sometimes bitter proceedings. Opening the film with a printed text, Bulbulian reinscribes the historical significance of Canada's legal dependence on the British authority prior to the patriation of the BNA Act 1982.

*London 1980 Native people representatives claim before the British Parliament that Canada's proposed constitution ignores fundamental rights. The results of these actions: —the recognition of existing aboriginal rights in the constitution; and—a written agreement came on the part of the Canadian Government to discuss such rights through the process of Constitutional Conferences.*⁴⁰⁹

—Maurice Bulbulian,
Dancing Around the Table, opening scene

Appropriately enough, the text provides content for the human rights struggle in the context of the long argument for the need to acknowledge universal equality and for the recognition of basic Aboriginal rights to nationhood as these are entrenched in colonial acts and in The Canadian Confederation agreement.

Bulbulian's video film is also structured around his own political mission to raise public awareness to issues on inequality and the unjust treatment of minority groups and Aboriginal communities. Well-known for his work at the CFC/SN, Bulbulian showed a distinctive "didactic" incentive toward raising awareness about inequality. Programmer, film critic, and teacher of film studies at Concordia University, Thomas Waugh explains:

[Bulbulian] was developing a deep cinematic understanding of citizens struggling with economic, geographical, and cultural displacement and marginality...[his] encounter with Aboriginal groups...to build cinematic bridges with disposed subjects...all the works show Bulbulian's intense identification with his subjects of all generations, whether collective or individual, thanks to his mastery of direct-cinema collaborative techniques, the uncompromising rigour of his artistic vision, and his humility and generosity as a community intervener.⁴¹⁰

Working on the side of ethical relevance for discretion, Bulbulian directed close attention to multisensory perception using movement-image strategies and the technique of direct cinema; he carefully depicted the plight of marginalized, exploited communities, of rural Quebec. It is also well-known in documentary circles that his films helped to stimulate a growing sense of Quebec nationalism in the 1960s.

Taking advantage of the direct cinema technique and turning his focus toward more selective issues Bulbulian strengthened his “social-science-inspired non-voyeuristic method” to direct attention to the discursive transfer of knowledge.(Waugh 2010) Often beginning the cinematic dialogue with an interview and through close editing and selective images, Bulbulian brings human rights issues directly to the front of the conversation. In the context of showing details pertinent to the overarching issues—social injustice and human rights violations, for instance, Bulbulian directed the strategy of direct cinema to advantage the storyteller.

Although *Dancing around The Table*, is meant to follow the political proceedings of the conferences on constitutional issues, Bulbulian departed from the conference hall, to meet with Edna Pearson an elder of the Kwakiutl Nation and her son, Bill Wilson, a participant in the constitution conferences. Opening his film with the “landscape trope,” Bulbulian frames a long moving vista shot of ocean and coastal mountains. Playing the image and sound track off each other, Bulbulian situates the location without naming the place. Instead, a text that simply notes the location is somewhere in a coastal inlet of British Columbia. Turning the camera to focus on Edna Pearson, Bulbulian carefully records her musings on life.

In one long filmic sequence they are featured together within the confines of a medium-sized water taxi, where Edna Pearson explains the purpose of the travel is to visit her traditional home at Kingcome Village on the west coast of British

Columbia. The filmic process that plays upon movement-image and time-image helps to situate Pearson's story within the history of the dispossessed. Without saying it, this is the horrific story of residential school and Aboriginal children who were taken away from home and family life. Opening the cinematic dialogue with a coming home story, Edna Pearson reflects upon a different kind of knowledge, the kind that comes from lived experiences. Musing about the family she once had and the village that sustained itself on the abundance of the natural harvest, the politics of Canada's staple-based economy becomes a central thesis. The natural resource base that anchors Canadian economic history, hangs on trade with Aboriginal peoples beginning with partnerships and then exploitation. This topic helps to center Bulbulian's defensive claim that in the context of story telling, documentary film can reveal a different truth.

Over the long boat ride home, to Kingcome Village, Pearson draws comparisons with how one should live when fishing, hunting and gathering centers life on aspects of cooperation. Pearson also talks about the abusive exploitation of the forests by foreign timber corporations and points to how, blinded by advantaging operations for maximizing profits, the company managers cannot see the damage that "clear-cut" logging does to the overall health of the wider ecological system. Citing the forest as the necessary natural provider, Pearson draws attention to the essential link between the health of the forest and the continuance of human life. It can be said that Bulbulian's films describe a sensual form of touch through considerations of representation that bring physical

contact through the direct cinema technique to provide the viewer with a close up image of the plight of the marginalized and the dispossessed.

As the boat ride comes to an end at Kingcome Village, Bulbulian focuses the filmic sequences on the contemporary life in a remote and sparsely populated community. In this segment, Bulbulian utilizes the documentary voice-over technique, so favored at the NFB and pioneered by John Grierson. Erik Barnouw explains:

The documentary film maker, dramatizing issues and their implications in a meaningful way, could lead the citizen through the wilderness...this implied a leadership role [for the film maker]...Grierson's recruits, almost without exception, were socialistically inclined activists....The characteristic Grierson documentary dealt with impersonal social processes...fused by 'commentary'...that articulated a personal point of view....⁴¹¹

Thus, in Bulbulian's exploration as video film-maker-advocate, the voice-over is used to convey deep feelings of remorse and cultural loss to carry on the Grierson tradition of "making real excursions into the local realities," in documentary films that politicize the cinematic production without compromising the boundaries of the community.⁴¹² (Grierson 2010)

Giving the villagers a chance to account for a diminishing way of life, Bulbulian adds the voice-over commentary to explain why certain ritual and ceremony traditions had fallen away. Specifically citing the prohibition against the potlatch ceremony, Bulbulian brings Bill Wilson's voice in to describe the powers of the Indian agency that was capable of destroying treasured cultural objects, ancient masks, and time honored regalia; all the while the film sequences

present similar objects in current use. Through intercutting contemporary images with some historical footage, Bulbulian purposively invokes visual images to activate the viewer's sense perception in a way that ought to open thought to the unjustified subjugation of Aboriginal peoples.

Moving from the study of memory and cultural experiences, Bulbulian turns to the conference hall in Ottawa and in the context of the 1983 first-ministers' conference, on constitutional rights of Aboriginal Peoples, he concentrates on the equality issue. Intercutting with segments of the second conference holden in 1984, Bulbulian carefully emphasizes the multisensory quality of film. In one long segment Bulbulian focuses on an emotive outburst by Richard Hatfield, premier of the province of New Brunswick that arouses comment from Mary Simon, Inuit representative from Quebec.

In the filmed sequence, Hatfield articulates his frustration with the conference process overall, but specifically; he criticizes a rebuff, from the preceding day, on the equality issue. The camera stays on Hatfield to record his disappointment with the fact that the ministers' continuously brush past the concept of Aboriginal self- government. By engaging the sensual quality of film, Bulbulian makes the emotional experience available to the viewer, thus bringing emotional information that is missing from the "verbatim" transcripts that I mentioned earlier.

For instance, as Hatfield articulates the difficulty of bringing sexual equality within the parameters of a written charter for freedom and rights, his raised voice

reveals a deeper concern for basic human rights, “the matter of fact is,” he declares, “Aboriginal women do not have any real equality.”⁴¹³ An equally emotive voice rings out, “And yet, we are talking about a fundamental right.” As the camera swiftly pans images of the participants, we are given a sense of experience that can only be viewed. Utilizing the moment to emphasize the sensitive issue of human rights, Bulbulian adjusts the camera focus to rest on the person of Mary Simon and, to capture her full expression. The sound is cut so to interject a full moment of complete silence—if the very air had been sucked out of the room—as we watch the struggle for composure.

Shot thus, Bulbulian takes full advantage of the sensual situation to raise the level of attention to the equality question. When silence is broken, it is Trudeau’s voice we hear before the camera swings back past the images of the other participants to settle on the prime minister. After a long pause Trudeau begins, “I wish,” he says, hesitates and begins again:

I wish you and your sisters would take it out of your heads that somehow we are deliberately trying to frustrate the concept of equality. At least in the law, everybody has assured you here that we are not. You know, in a sense you are equal when you think you are equal; and if you are not equal the law won’t change much.⁴¹⁴

An obstacle to consensus is the difficulty of looking at the issues from a shared vision of equality. On one hand, Trudeau’s political stand always championed the philosophical concept of democratic fairness, equalized opportunities, and freedom of expression. In the context of federal-provincial negotiations, Trudeau had always to stand on the side of the federal government against neo-

conservatism that sought greater autonomy for the provinces, which would always include gaining greater access to natural resources. From the Aboriginal viewpoint, the federal government had failed its duty to provide an adequate land and water base, failed to protect human rights and it has failed to respect the concept of Aboriginal self-government.

In the context of the conference, Trudeau ironically deflected the question of the fundamental human right to self-sufficiency to the issue of equality of opportunity, which was already enshrined in the 1982 Charter. The paradox was not lost on Mary Simon.

Maurice Bulbulian linked the human rights theme with intercut images of community and cultural relevance to demonstrate the capacity and the power of documentary film to reveal social injustice and its painful effect on the personal life. In this sense, as Bulbulian refocused his attention on Mary Simon, the camera caught a still moment of humiliation. As Simon regained her composure, she slowly began her reply to Trudeau:

I, [pause] I consider myself an equal. I am an Aboriginal representative that represents both male and female persons, in northern Quebec. I have always tried to be unbiased toward who I represent because I feel that as people we have one interest and that is our collective and individual rights. And all I am saying here is that as one who represents both sides, I'd like to see the equality clause once and for all settled.⁴¹⁵

Simon reconfirmed that everyone has a vested interest in upholding valued concepts of equality, and by taking the issue straight back to the need for political

acknowledgement of equality, she implied that Canada's legal obligation is to make provisions for an equality clause in an appropriate amending formula.

So ended the first conference; holden March, 8-9 1983 on constitutional rights of Canada's Aboriginal Peoples. The commission came away with an amending formula and several recommendations that were implemented and from all appearances significant progress toward achieving the goal of social justice and equality of opportunity had been realized. However, the next year the concept of Aboriginal self-government was on the agenda again and the sexual equality issue appeared in the top place.

Federal-provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitution Matters continued

While the constitution act of 1982 confirmed existing Aboriginal treaty rights and defined Aboriginal people as Indian, Inuit and Metis, the 1983 amendment refers to existing Aboriginal rights upheld by the constitution. The troubling question of women's equality could not be answered with any certainty according to Section 28, because the Indian Act of 1867 and the consolidated "colonial Indian policies" of 1876, established a framework for the subjugation of women. Jo-Anne Fiske explains:

...This framework was premised on the paternalistic notion that, although Indian people were 'wards of the state' requiring 'protection,' they would eventually become 'civilized' and assimilate into the broader society. The Indian Act...exercises exclusive power [it]...embraced the patriarchal terms...which stipulated that Indian women who married non-Indian men would have their and their

children’s status revoked...The Act was amended in 1951 to further disadvantage women; now any women losing status through marriage also lost her band membership and her rights to reside on the reserve, to inherit reserve property, and to share in the band’s resources.⁴¹⁶

Already an marginalized nation, for well over two hundred years, the unequal treatment of women under terms of the Indian Act stand out as being utterly contrary to Canada’s policies on cultural equality and social justice for all. In 1984, Aboriginal women in Canada, to quote Fiske, still “faced the dilemma of identity” and still “struggled for self-determination.”⁴¹⁷ (Fiske 2006)

In the context of the second conference on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters, the chair, Prime Minister Trudeau, invited Sandra Lovelace from the Tobique First Nation to speak directly to the issue:

...Every time sexual equality is mentioned it is always pushed to the side or our leaders want to move on to another issue. Everyone wants collective rights except for native women’s rights. The non-status issue could be resolved today by ending this injustice done to native women, by immediately reinstatement and entrenching sexual equality in the constitution. I am not against and native group’s rights, but this issue could be dealt with once and for all. I fully support Indian self-governments and once sexual equality is achieved we can work hand in hand in unity....⁴¹⁸

—Sandra Lovelace Maliseet representative
from New Brunswick

The overwhelming reality about unjust discriminatory practices rests in the survival of the Indian Act. In response to a growing awareness of an international interest in “Indigenous nationalism” in the late 1960s Trudeau’s minister of Indian Affairs, Jean Chrétien, drafted a federal White Paper on Indian Policy meant to throw out the Indian Act and to incorporate “status Indians” into the Canadian society as “ordinary” citizens. Denied full membership in Canadian society for

over a hundred years, the policy paper appeared as another government ploy to extinguish what few rights Aboriginal peoples still held tightly.

On the other hand, defendants of Aboriginal self-government, make a substantial argument that a true interpretation of equality has as much to do with an ethical question as it has to do with psychology. It is fitting that a “felt” expression of equality has a lot to do with the conception of value and worth. In the historical experience, Aboriginal peoples have been subjugated as “wards” of the federal government and for more than a century interest in status has been a governmental focus. To complicate the relationship between economic marginality and valued self-sufficiency the state has been painfully slow to recognize and accept the concept of Aboriginal self-government. In addition, it is well known that harsh terms of the Indian Act compromised psychological health, but more so the lives of Aboriginal women. Jo-Anne Fiske explains:

While it has been recognized that ‘state policy toward the Indians, more than anything else, stands out as the most salient factor in explaining the relationship between Native and white Canadians’ and that Indian women, in particular, have been subjugated to destructive racial and sexist policies, no systematic analysis has been offered of the impact of state policy on gender relationships. The paternalistic relationship between the state and the Indian women is of particular salience in understanding their social position, for the Canadian Parliament has assigned Indian women fewer fundamental rights than their male peers and has subjugated them to different definitions of their legal Indian status for more than a century.⁴¹⁹

The Indian Act clearly conflicts with the charter, but to repeal the act would immediately endanger treaty rights. In the growing opposition to “acculturation” without equality, a new wave of Aboriginal leaders, such as Jeannette Lavell and

Sandra Lovelace, worked to have the White Paper withdrawn.⁴²⁰ (McMillan 2011)

In the context of the constitutional conferences on Aboriginal Matters, Lovelace was only able to speak to the issue of gender equality. Although there appeared an agreement that acknowledgement of a shared understanding of equality and self-sufficiency ought to engage the level of responsibility, at the end of the second conference, George Braden from the Northwest Territories had this to say:

It is unlikely that aboriginal leaders will achieve all they had hoped to accomplish in these two short days of talks. Time is limited and the agenda is comprehensive, but this conference should be viewed as a very positive beginning towards the final resolution of these long outstanding grievances which have been a source of frustration to the aboriginal peoples of the country well before Confederation.⁴²¹

—Honourable George Braden, Minister of Justice and Public Service, Northwest Territories.

The penultimate conferences took place April 2-3, 1985. The “verbatim” transcripts list “Self-government for the Aboriginal Peoples” at the top of the agenda, next “Sexual Equality Rights,” then “Mandate for Continued Discussions” and, forth, “The Nature of an Accord.”⁴²² Suffice to say an accord was not reached. The final conference took place March 26 1987, by this time Trudeau had, in all sense of the word, retired from government. The Tories were in control of the federal government and the Conservative Party leader, Brian Mulroney, now prime minister, took over the chairperson’s responsibility.

So far, to date, the First Ministers Conferences on Aboriginal Matters had accomplished a few small tasks: they had agreed to meet, they had acknowledged existing treaties, and an amendment was made to the charter to ensure sexual

equality these were so small feats. However, the Indian Act still held with regard to Aboriginal women's inequality, and the concept of Aboriginal self-government was still on the agenda.

In 1987, Mulroney appeared to be in no hurry to come to an accord with Canada's First Nations. If anything were to come to fruition, on the topic of self-sufficiency, it had to come at this final hour, because under the constitution act section 37, only four conferences were set; an extension would require another amendment. Mulroney and the elected members of Canada's federal-provincial governments were in no mood to proceed any further.

The visual images in Bulbulian's documentary *Dancing Around The Table* clearly reveal the confrontational political position between the elected officials and the Aboriginal leaders. Bulbulian takes full advantage of the camera to record the fact that the Aboriginal leaders were supported by an impressive collection of community members standing around the edges of the conference hall.

The documentary film as a genre directs attention towards certain facts that Bulbulian takes full advantage of. By intercutting interviews with elders and images of village life he situates the impossible relationship between the "depth" philosophy of the languages of community, and the "empty principles" of political rhetoric, to quote Bill Van der Zalm, premier of British Columbia. Hanging the political rhetoric on facts of economic theory, Grant Devine, premier of Saskatchewan, spoke of effective "ethical" cost-accounting; Pickford of New Brunswick expressed his disdain for indigenous knowledge and countered with his

superior political position; and, Vander Zalm stated outright that, at this last and final conference, the province of British Columbia would not sign an accord.

Representing the “characters” from the government as antagonists, Bulbulian carefully “cross-cut” filmic sequences from the conference with more compassionate scenes of Aboriginal leaders meeting in various off site locations—both before and after the conferences—which took place over the three year span, plus two. In one long sequence, Chief Joe Mathias is featured speaking at a gathering at the community of Nuuchahnulth on the south west coast of Vancouver Island. Speaking out about his disdain of the premiers’ collective ignorance of Canada’s legal obligation, Bulbulian records Mathias reminding the Aboriginal group members that they have a political constituency that is valid, thus, he insisted, the struggle is far from empty political rhetoric it is a reality that demands action.

In a similar sense Bulbulian features Georges Erasmus, representing the Assembly of First Nations, reminding the conference congregation that, “As First Nations we have the inherent right to govern ourselves Neither the Crown nor the United Kingdom nor Canada delegated the right to self-governing...it existed long before Canada was itself a nation.”⁴²³ And, we hear Bill Wilson’s voice urging the elected officials to hear the legal consequences should they, “fail once more,” to stand up to their obligatory duty to come to an accord with Canada’s original peoples; all this is over-shot with images of young people dancing out ancient clan stories. The action caught on video tape took place during a modern

potlatch ceremony in a traditional longhouse (great building) at an unnamed location, sometime around the mid 1980s. When we hear Ethel Pearson speak of various forms of knowledge, we see a ritualistic Raven “crackling” out his knowledge of the natural world.

In many ancient memorials the animal symbols have dual personalities, for example, Raven “...demonstrates his dual personality” when the head and wings are depicted as “raven-like and the body is human in form.”⁴²⁴ In various stories, it is out of curiosity that Raven released humanity—imprisoned in a clam shell—into the whole world and, it is Raven that liberated the sun. In ceremonial mechanized masks Raven is often depicted holding the ball of the sun in his beak and when activated by strings, pulled by the wearer, the sun rolls forward to symbolize its path across the sky to the very edge of the world. In other stories, the sun is not the “all powerful fire ball,” but something small that “walks across the sky wearing abalone earrings to get light,” in such a story, the artist KESU’ explained that the sun is not powerful or fearsome, but something closer to cooperative sharing, but he did not explain the origin of the light.⁴²⁵ (Cranmer 2012)

In the documentary Maurice Bulbulian captures on video-tape a modern potlatch ceremony that reveals the richness of the village life and community life. With Ethel Pearson’s voice-over, the mythical Grizzly Bear “stands” frightfully tall demanding “courage” from the human beings and Killer Whale “sounds” deep supernatural powers made natural. To paraphrase Pearson, the Wild Forest

Man/Creature mask is the uncivilized part of humanity as it is meant to contrast with “wisdom of the ages” represented by knowledge of the elders who speak of egalitarianism, cooperation, and community spirit that, if not cultivated, would fall away into the wildness symbolized by one “crazed” by lack of human interaction. Meanwhile, “sharp eyed” Eagle, mythical and supernatural depicted in the Thunderbird soars high to oversee the whole situation. Overall, the social and political organization is emphasized in a highly cooperative ceremony where the animals symbolize the fact that certain marriage arrangements may only take place between opposites’ and the accumulated feasting and wealth, given away, is meant to enhance the status of ranking individuals, but also to emphasize, “...the groups’ greater prestige.”⁴²⁶ (McMillan 2011)

If you think about another era or culture, Aristotle’s time, for instance, the strange masks and regalia stand as close to symbolizing virtues and values as Greek theater present stories that stand for strength, courage, curiosity, cooperation, and wisdom. One of the “wild man” masks, in the Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia in Vancouver, for instance is from a time well before the banning of the potlatch. Anthropological research shows that it came from Haida Gwaii, the Queen Charlotte Islands located past the northern tip of Vancouver Island. The elaborate development of Haida art follows traditions that can be traced back centuries. The mask on display could well have been carved by a close ancestor of the contemporary artist KESU’ whose own wild man mask, in a slightly modified form, has the similar

characteristic of a line bounded by strict traditional articulation of the relationship between myth and the movement of the dance of life and tradition taking place in current time. (Cranmer 2012)

As it is well known that nineteenth century colonialism had an instable appetite for control, therefore with the banning of the potlatch, the abstractions and symbolism of another culture, most commonly known as “religion,” was imposed upon the Aboriginal communities. Replacing an ancient “earthy naturalism” with a political economy and a religion hostile to polytheistic (as in India) and replacing one depending upon a spiritual balance with nature (as in an Aboriginal practice) the new immigrant/settler society imposed the values of a Eurocentric colonialism. With the banning of the potlatch tradition the ancient symbols of an Aboriginal society and their “religion” ideals were packaged up by iconoclast enthusiasts who deemed that the objects ought to be purged of their original meaning.

By comparison and so dry now, the masks and regalia displayed museum style, hang row upon row or rest upon glass shelves all locked behind glass doors, but they had come from a once and rich living environment of sounds and smells, of foods and smoke, of the typical community ceremony. Significantly, recognizing that the stories formed the life line of the Aboriginal societies, it is highly probable that the surviving ancient masks were used in the same way that today, in revived ceremonies; the masks are meant to represent the living community, albeit another community different from the European western world;

but just as valid. Thus as a living art, so to speak, individual clan beliefs, virtues, and values are brought to the wider society as the images of courage, responsibility, and cooperation which are constantly within sight of each other and shared to the wider society in attempts to draw attention to different environmental, political and social values.

In any other sense this could be Aristotle's "conception of rationality," which provides a ground for ancient wisdom that to value the whole of life, through which we have to imagine a possible relationship between our situation and the "other." Martha Nussbaum explains:

To value each separate constituent of the good life for what it is in itself entails, then, recognizing its distinctness and separateness from each of the other constituents, each being an irreplaceable part of a composite whole. A rational Aristotelian adult will have a reasonably good understanding of what courage, justice, friendship, generosity, and many other values are. He or she will understand how, in our beliefs and practices, they differ from and are noninterchangeable with one another. Suppose now that a proponent of ethical progress suggests that things can be made neater by doing away with some or all this heterogeneity. He or she will reply that to do away with this is to do away with the nature of these values as they are, and hence with their special contribution to the richness and fullness of the good life. The proposal threatens to impoverish our practical world: for we have said that each of these items makes its own distinctive contribution, one that we cannot get by trading it in for something else. Can it be rational to deliberate in a way that effaces this distinctiveness? To purchase neatness at such a price appears irrational rather than rational. Would we want to be, or to have, friends who were able to deliberate efficiently about friendship because it would get them-selves to conceive of it as a function of some other value? The really rational way to choose, says Aristotle with great plausibility, is to reflect on and acknowledge the special contribution of each item, and to make the understanding of that heterogeneity a central part of the subject of deliberation. Evasiveness is not progress.⁴²⁷

Again, in the context of Bulbulian's film, the relationship he seeks between the viewer, image, and the political cannot be over emphasized. In the fourth and final conference, held in 1987, Bulbulian carefully inter-spliced dialogic movements to provide a contrast between the rhetorical talk of Canada's federal officials and provincial premiers, with the formal speeches of the Aboriginal leaders. For the rest of the film, Bulbulian brought in other images to intercut moments with a well selected undated sequence, meant to draw attention to an object that represents the ancient generosity of North American indigenous peoples. In this sequence, the venerated Algonquin elder, William Commanda, keeper of the ancient wampum, held out the wampum as the symbol that stands as a promise and as a prophecy. Widely believed to have existed well before the great impact of the fur trade, the wampum represents the unfolding of events in time and described as an enduring circle of fire. The Seventh Fire—as the Algonquin elder and former chief of the Kitigàn-zibi Anishingnàbeg First Nation, described it—stands in part as testimony to the narrative of European domination contact and of Aboriginal survival.

The wampum stands as a symbol to attest to the fact that Aboriginal peoples hold a different way of imagining the world. To them the term “land use” means a cooperative sharing of the resources with other humans and other non-human beings—animal, vegetable, mineral, water, earth, wind, rain, sky. From a spiritual modality an Aboriginal practice is described as a social way of being on the land which includes respect for the environment, respect for the political, and socio-

economic traditions of the original peoples as well as an accommodation of the other.

As the keeper of the wampum, Commanda began to describe each of the Seven Fires that represent an era in human history. Bulbulian purposefully cross-cut the sequence with images of the elected officials, fidgeting, heads down, eyes shadowed, looking away in shame faced contrast to William Commanda's voice speaking to respect wisdom, spirituality, and a need for environmental awareness directed toward the greater good outcome for planet earth.

In the closing hours left to the conference, when it finally came to the decision making hour, Canada's Conservative prime minister, Brian Mulroney, agreed to reconvene the meeting in camera thus, we hear Bill Wilson's voice reminding the viewer that the Aboriginal representatives are, once more, denied participation or witness to the conversation that effects their future. When the "official" party reassembled, Prime Minister Mulroney simply stated, although "unfortunate," his group failed to come to an accord; thus, the last and final First Ministers Conference on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters ends March 27, 1987 on a negative and less than hopeful remark.

The preceding examples frame the colonial history that needs to be told in order to keep track of difficult stories otherwise lost to time simply weakens the struggle for cultural survival. Because there is little association between dominant "official" histories and narratives that stress the collective discourse of knowledge resting in Aboriginal societies, Bulbulian enacted his own sense of conscientious

sociologically oriented documentary directed toward bringing memories and ancient knowledge and not to let them slip, simply because they are considered irrational or irrelevant or emotional.

In the long argument for equality of opportunity there has been, in the history of nation building in Canada, great emphasis placed on the modern notion of universal unity, explained rationality as good government. But, mired in modernity are ideas about cultural hierarchy, the exploitation of natural resources, superiority of Western Eurocentric colonial views, the exploitation of human and non-human labor, and the supremacy of technology.

One final concession must be made to the argument for political liberalism that in Canada which attempts to bring a multicultural agenda to the intersection of a political ideology that in practice, asserts to be democratic and pluralistic. Through an eclectic mixture of Scottish philosophy of common sense, Kantian ethico-political idealism, and an admixture of Aristotelian and Platonic thought, the liberal political ideology attaches great importance to civil and political rights, problems keep arising that are attached to colonialism. Nevertheless, ethics directed toward an ideal constitution and a dialogue that corresponds to reason, associated with a quest for knowledge and justice, undergirds the Canadian Constitution and the entrenched Charter of Rights and Freedoms which defends the democratic idea of freedom, equality and the freedom of expression.

Carrying the notion that dissimilar people can live together, share resources, and dreams while respecting and sustaining their differences, corresponds with

ideas about citizen participation in social change that corresponds with practical application of different levels of human practices—economic, political ideological, scientific—to which I add, artistic practices that are both critical and interventionist. Despite the political narrative that includes an irenic text (Pearson and world peace) and official policies directed toward ensuring language and cultural rights (Biculturalism and Bilingualism) and the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity (Trudeau), problems keep coming up. In new directions and inspirations from feminist or ecological perspectives in combination with Aboriginal practices used in combination with social relationships that are already considered obvious (multiplicity, pluralism) liberalism in Canada stands as a philosophy as well as a political ideology, which in practice, struggles to uphold the values of a Just Society

CHAPTER THREE

Other Research

The battle against binaries is above all against the primal binary of male and female (man and woman), the demise of which must be questioned in order to demolish the metaphysics that surmounts it and dominates all existential questions.⁴²⁸

—Geeta Kapur

From experience and practical insight, many activities tied to the philosophical question of human living describe or prescribe how one ought to conduct oneself in a world of change. Positing those imaginary stories, lived-experiences, and the

ability to hear advice from elders and friends heightens historical awareness, my long exploration is based on a practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity in the defense of the freedom of expression in artistic practices that are both individualistic as they are interventionist and critical. Centered on a liberal concept of political obligation and an Aboriginal concept of cooperation and consensus, it goes without saying that I think the liberal concept of freedom, justice and equality when conjoined with consensual accounts of practical reasoning ought to enrich our lives. The communication that it encourages ought to enrich the philosophical discourse as it provides a more solid ground for reflection. It is not so much an argument to break impossible polemical binary thinking between reality and non-reality, but given a chance to explore shared reasoning through non-fiction and creative story telling, chances are offered to hear lived-experiences, which in turn affords the opportunity to listen to the advice/wisdom of others. Moreover, because in a system of cooperation there is no voting, the practice of egalitarianism is pluralistic.

In the previous chapter I inscribed a liberal view of democracy through the concept of political responsibility in the actions of Canada's colonial reformers. Bringing the idea of cooperation and good government to the twentieth century I exemplified the "legitimate" operation of political power through a liberal call for social justice. Through my encounter with the theory of equality of opportunity, I argue that it provides a place to think about the effects of ethical judgment in constructing an image of citizenship where gender and sexual difference, on the

level of an essentialist construct, might be proved irrelevant. What turns the necessity of linking the historical discourse with social conditions, to follow Marx, is to find connections between and political information and specific levels of human practices.⁴²⁹ To do this through art objects and literature, in light of the crises of social conflicts of any era, brings a world with stories, with an experiential dialogue, with cultural politics, with lived experiences, that is capable to bear witness to injustice as well as to justice. In such a world, sociopolitical issues conjoin with the need for environmental understanding without which many versions of “real truths” may never come forward. Aristotle offers guidance toward developing one’s own theory of procedure along similar lines. Martha Nussbaum explains:

...there is no general true answer....Beyond this content of rational choice must be supplied by nothing less messy than experience and stories of experience. Among stories of conduct the most true and informative will be works of literature, biography and history....⁴³⁰
(Nussbaum 1992)

Nussbaum adds a caveat, “Good deliberation” she says, needs a contrast; rationality without experience might produce knowledge, but “practical perception...gained through a long process of living and choosing,” is needed to expand “resourcefulness and responsiveness.” (Nussbaum 1992)

In reply to ideas about celebrating 1492 as a historical marker for North America, Aboriginal leaders called to the stories of experience—the process of long living on the land in one location for eons—wherein truth matters recorded

in the context of political accords, treaty agreements, and boundary settlements differ from official political accounts. Indeed, the limits of juridical power are apparent in the misplaced use of the power of the Indian Act—especially in the education sector—and in the apathy of governments unable to act ethically even as the rhetoric claims responsibility. Indeed, social conflict, exemplified by the historical discourse, shows that Aboriginal communities are constantly in crisis.

Artist, writer, and curator Gerald McMaster elaborates:

In the fall of 1989 Georges Erasmus, then National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, was invited to speak at a conference in Ottawa called ‘Towards 1992’ which was sponsored by the Secretary of State. The audience consisted mainly of conservative multi-ethnic non-Native Canadians from the business and professionals communities. Everyone was talking and exchanging ideas about how to ‘celebrate’ 1992....Georges Erasmus’s bitter question, ‘For God’s sake, won’t you listen! What have we got to celebrate?’ suddenly woke everyone up to indigenous issues. What are the implications of the last five hundred years for indigenous people?⁴³¹ (McMaster 1992)

In part, replies to this question became articulated in an arts project that was designed specifically to “engage indigenous” Canadian artists to address such issues as “discovery, colonization and cultural critique. The works of artists such as Jane-Ash Poitras, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, and essays by Gloria Cramer Webster, Alootook Ipellie, and Loretta Todd stand as witness to concerns, reflections, on social and cultural values, and as a cultural critique of colonial practices of five hundred years. Gathered together through a project titled INDIGENA, which was created for the Canadian Museum of Civilization, the collected works were exhibited in 1992. (McMaster 1992)

In an alternative effort to address colonialism and decolonization sociopolitical and cultural issues an extensive research project was struck in 1991 known as the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP). According to the report, the consultants were “directed” to proceed with “one over-riding question: What are the foundations of a fair and honorable relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people of Canada? What the commissioners found out was a profound lack of understanding on the part of Canadians and a totally misguided political policy pertaining to the administration of the Indian Act, on the part of the Canadian government:

We held 178 days of public hearings, visited 96 communities, [and] consulted dozens of experts, commissioned scores of research studies, reviewed numerous past inquiries and reports. Our central conclusion can be summarized simply: *The main policy direction, pursued for more than 150 years, first by colonial then by Canadian governments has been wrong.*⁴³²

As a nation — a founding nation — the voices of Aboriginal peoples have been overwhelmed by the dominant Eurocentric discourse. As a political group and a cultural group that have values and lifeways that are distinct from those of other Canadians, historical political practices of colonialism and neocolonialism have been directed toward assimilation rather than toward the recognition that “*Aboriginal peoples are nations.*”⁴³³ Indeed, the historical practice of assimilation has damaged the Aboriginal communal spirit, but rather than hanging cultural difference on the trope of abjection, the commission offered recommendations

toward the acknowledgement that the perception of a life lived in a different social way may indeed enrich the larger social and cultural landscape of Canada.

In the ensuing years, many recommendations of the RCAP have come to fruition. We recognize it in numerous cultural policies directed toward the protection of cultural property, the advancement of Aboriginal programming in public education, training in early childhood education, incentives for adult education and in the visual and performing arts; especially in training in public media such as, television and broadcasting that provides air time for an Aboriginal presence. In federal funding for northern programming initiative of the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation (CBC) for instance supports northern stations and the Aboriginal Peoples Television Network (APTN) stands as another example.

From the narrative of lived-experiences, in the context of the commodification of natural resources for example, the dominant governments have not lived up to most, if not all, treaty arrangements, thereby marginalizing Aboriginal communities both economically and culturally in their own land. These facts, I believe, are best told through cultural stories that are held in material objects of creation such as art, architecture, film, and in traditional objects of ceremony and ritual. By drawing attention to cultural politics of community, communication, and the creative arts that are held within a framework of Aboriginal practices, values and philosophies of marginalized

groups may challenge the ethnocentric languages of Western superiority and European domination.

Obviously such a claim rests on a value judgment, but by drawing attention to political policies that purport to sustain justice, yet often fail in practice, I seek those critical art practices that intervene on the part of the economy of expression, which moves between the material object of perception and concepts that correspond to knowledge, wisdom, experience in the manifold differences that exist between different cultures in the changing global world. Overall, the process of engagement that is specific to cultural information, and to everyday practices, present minorities with voice that might differ from the dominant norm, but being non-the-less valid, the power of art and documentary film encircle concepts of visibility through cultural activities to foment new interest and awareness about how to live in a changing world. Nussbaum elaborates:

...there may be some views of the world and how one should live in it—views, especially, that emphasize the world’s surprising variety, its complexity and mysteriousness, its flawed and imperfect beauty—that cannot be fully and adequately stated in the language of conventional philosophical prose...but only in a language and in forms themselves more complex, more allusive, more attentive to particulars....only in a form that itself implies that life contains significant surprises, that our task as agents, is to live as good characters in a good story do, caring about what happens, resourcefully confronting each new thing. If these views are serious candidates for truth, views that the search for truth ought to consider along the way, then it seems that this language and these forms ought to be included within philosophy.⁴³⁴(Nussbaum 1992)

In the previous Chapter, I examined the connection between philosophy and Canadian politics in so far as the liberal concept of freedom of expression is

supported in a practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity. From the federalist perspective of what it means to live together yet separate, government funding for the arts has been fostering opportunity directed toward projects about creative living. In the sense that the Canadian political agenda hangs on ideas and policies of multinationalism and bilingualism, cultural politics suggest a view of life that includes the idea of a community, social sharing, and cultural equality.

Where knowledge is defined by lived experiences, it is those lived experiences that guide social functioning organized around the functioning abilities of individuals. Obviously a humanist ideology, to paraphrase Althusser, which is based on the problematic of “*human nature*,” but also on philosophical examples such as the writing of Aristotle. However, I also build upon conceptions by which, in practice, alternate between philosophical questions about how to live in a global and changing world and how emotive and reflective material may also carry truths, especially inspired from the work of social ecological activists’ who hold out hope for a good outcome for planet earth, David Suzuki, Val Plumwood, Vandana Shiva, for example.

In my text, as I indicate the representational character of artistic activity that continues to show, or to make assertions on the basis of knowledge and beliefs that art is both a borderless and timeless language I also champion the idea that critical artistic practices are capable of sociopolitical and cultural commentary that may direct social change toward a good outcome for planet earth. With that

said, my approach has been to champion practical ability and wisdom found in community and in art that that is often overlooked. By emphasizing the connection between content and context in the knowledge that artistic documents enter the social realm, I champion the well-known artistic strategy of juxtaposition.

As Martha Nussbaum has used it, juxtaposition is useful to posit that Native wisdom is knowledge that an Aboriginal person may pass along through the centuries. In my research, I parallel this notion of knowledge with Nussbaum's explanation of an Aristotelian conception of practical wisdom.⁴³⁵ (Nussbaum 1992) Indeed, it could only be a level of degree that a conceivable knowledge may or may not be accepted as fact or truth. But in the realm of historical documentation, truths about Canada's Aboriginal peoples have been twisted to shape with the dominant conversation. The degree of knowledge is raised a level when there is a refusal to admit or to acclaim cultural difference as belonging to the realm of knowledge may understood only by Western philosophy. One obstacle preventing agreement about Native wisdom appears in the clash of cultures where different ideas and values collide.

Martha Nussbaum points out that Aristotle's call for temperance rested in finding a balance between extremes. Here, Aristotle's idea of practical wisdom plays an important role in education as a place for training in good values directed toward making good citizens.⁴³⁶ (Loomis 1971) In narratives of the Nlhaḱ kápmx First Nation, a society living in the Nicola Valley and along the Thompson and

Fraser rivers of south central British Columbia, the story or plot line often follows the theme of respect for nature, ethical judgments of morality, and the encouragement of proper human behavior.⁴³⁷ (Hanna 1995) Where there is an important aspect of community and everyday exchange, a conversation is advanced in narrative that ought to be considered knowledge; yet in light of over five centuries of powerful stories and in cultural objects that ought to be considered art, it appears difficult to explain how art contributes to knowledge in a way that might interest an academic review of the political issue or how a minority standpoint might differ, but still be of value from traditional political theory of patriarchal knowledges. In some sense the academic conflict could be removed simply by accepting cultural difference in the same way that Aristotelian practical wisdom and an Aristotelian perception is accepted as receiving knowledge and guidance for the past (Nussbaum 1992).

Given that art of the modern era leads to a paradigmatic change in the perception and cognition of expression, fueled by a market economy—deemed to drive all sorts of production—it is difficult to say exactly how art of the twenty-first century might add to knowledge and still convey or hold some aspect of truth. Boris Groys offers some conditions for relevance outside of the commodity market by arguing that although art is always “under the ideological regime,” it is also made in the present.⁴³⁸ (Groys 2008) However, Groys also states that art often remains a “paradox-object” which is frustrating because, in the struggle to get around the market economy, “...every modern art work was conceived with

the goal of contradicting all other modern artworks in one way or another.”⁴³⁹

(Groys 2008) In a negative sense Groys explains that because modern art takes in its account everything and anything that is not art, the logic of its inclusion denies its position as a pluralistic gesture. Groys elaborates:

Modern art operated not only as a machine of inclusion of everything that was not regarded as art before its emergence but also as a machine of exclusion of everything that imitated already existing art patterns in a naïve, unreflective, unsophisticated — nonpolemical — manner, and also of anything that was not somehow controversial, provocative, challenging. But this means: *The field of modern art is not pluralistic field but a field strictly structured to the logic of contradiction.* It is a field where every thesis is supposed to be confronted by its antithesis. In the ideal case the representation of thesis and antitheses should be perfectly balanced so that they sum to zero.⁴⁴⁰ (Groys 2008)

While Groys argues from the idea that art can be resistant to “external” pressure, suggesting an autonomous projection that follows a thesis/antithesis modality, he upholds an idea that where the power of art’s autonomy lies in the ability to contest, react, and contradict “...strategies of comparison,” the context of “aesthetic judgment” comes into play.⁴⁴¹ (Groys 2008)

In a conversation based on the notion of a “fundamental equality between all visual forms,” the argument for plurality falls short because, strictly speaking, the word stands for the multiplicity of forms, voices, principles. As Groys argues for the recognition that all forms of art ought to be granted equal aesthetical rights, he appears to be saying that because expressive pluralism does not correspond with the philosophical account of a “purely aesthetic value judgment” it cannot find the kind of resistance to outside pressure that a dialectical critical art

might. While the logic of plurality appeals to the idea that meaning may be open to “infinite” interpretation, Groys maintains that “modern and contemporary art is as good as it is paradoxical.”⁴⁴² (Groys 2008)

In this sense, by suggesting that modern and contemporary art maintains “...the perfect balance between thesis and antithesis,” Groys discredits the argument from plurality in connection with the view of difference because on one hand, it is incompatible with the notion of objective “pure aesthetic judgment,” and from the fact that modern art does not escape from “generalization,” the pluralistic argument has to “take sides,” which pits one artist against another. Thus “with the goal of advancing commercial success on the art market,” or using art as a “tool of political propaganda,” the power of “difference,” in the name of plurality, becomes, in Groys’ view “distorted” toward either the political propaganda or the market place.⁴⁴³ (Groys 2008) One way around this dilemma, he opines, is to imagine art’s power as a “paradoxical” position where it is “affirmative” and “critical” both at the same time. In his view this allows art to be both an “image” and a “critique of the image,” thereby producing the “perfect balance” in what Groys calls the “paradox-objects” and what “we call modern works of art.”⁴⁴⁴ (Groys 2008)

In Groys’ text, the “high level of generality” apparent in the claim for plurality in modern and contemporary art, compromises the field of multiplicity because, as he states it, any discourse on pluralism merely stands as a binary teeter-totter; now on one side of market driven economy, now on the side of the

political. Alternatively, Groys claims that, “The modern artwork positioned itself as a paradox-object...as an image and as a critique of the image,” it automatically abolishes the conflictual relationship between market driven art and political propaganda. By being distinct and different at the same time modern and contemporary art has its own power, manifest as a “balance of power” that operates at the level of the Hegelian philosophical standpoint. By referring to a higher authority, Groys employs the dialectical discourse to locate conflict, in art, between two “alienated” poles; action for making it and reaction to it. As both positions are inadequate to resolve the binary, it turns consciousness back on itself; in other words, “the image is a critique of the image.” (Groys 2008)

While Groys’ argument for an art of “balance,” projects the idea that critical art, “...participates in the struggle for power,” he posits that an art of difference simply represents power, thus far from being “good” critical art, an art of difference cannot resist “outside pressures” because in his opinion, it has to align with the market economy or it becomes ideological as political art.⁴⁴⁵ (Groys 2008) By maintaining a “paradoxical” position, critical art can maintain its resistance to outside pressures thereby to play a participatory role in the “struggle for power” simply because it seeks those places where “the balance of power...reveals itself.”⁴⁴⁶ (Groys 2008)

In light of almost five decades of powerful interventionist feminist art that goes partly unacknowledged, a key element for the argument for pluralism is obviously the fact that because feminist art that does not fit with the dominant

language, it does not fit within the codes of modernism; therefore dismissed. Since feminist art is considered pluralistic, it emphasizes varied differences among cultures—western, non-western, men, women, ethnicities, language groups; therefore dismissed. As feminist art draws upon a pluralism of world-versions, not the least being political, pluralism that emphasizes the division of authority and political powers is also dismissed.

From the viewpoint that the doctrine of pluralism operates at a level of generality, and therefore unable to escape “generalization,” the value of the complex history of experiential knowledge and “other” ways of knowing is also dismissed. Yet pluralism that retains the multiplicity of voices is capable of addressing conflict and ought to be acknowledged along with the related task of acknowledging philosophical difference, Martha Nussbaum lists “explicit” positions for pluralism:

1a. *Pluralism as multiplicity with conflict.* Sometimes this multiplicity of goods generates a tension... Here we do get some true statements of the form “X is both good and bad”—but without logical problem, since the good and bad features of the object are distinct, though contingently impossible to separate. Again there is no threat to objectivity here.

2. *Pluralism as Contextualism*....in connection with what we might call an Aristotelian contextualism: what is good for you in your circumstance is not necessarily good for me in mine....Judgments must always be sensitive to concrete circumstances; but given this, there is no reason why we cannot say that this, and not that, is ethically good.

3. *Pluralism as Multiple Specification of the Good.* This position notes that important ethical principles frequently operate at a rather high level of generality, and are susceptible to many concrete specifications, not all of them simultaneously instantiable and each adequate for realizing that principle in practice....Pluralism here would consist in

saying that all of them are good, though they are in many ways incompatible....Here, again, pluralism does not in any way compromise objectivity.

4. *Plural world-versions without contradiction.* This view claims that there are many alternative versions of the world that have value and validity. There are standards of rightness by which we can narrow the group acceptable versions, but we cannot rationally opt for any of the acceptable ones over any other.

5. *Plural versions with contradiction.* This is a pluralism that leads to ethical confusion....Wanting to accept and believe all candidates for truth...[this] reaches the verge of giving up on reason based ethical judgment.⁴⁴⁷ (Nussbaum 1992)

From a feminist standpoint the notion that modern art is not pluralistic brings up the problem of difference that also implies difference between cultural realms, of the past and present. Obviously issues of concern. On one hand, providing a ground for the complexity of the history of experience, pluralism stands as a place to argue for a system that recognizes more than one guiding ethical principle. On the other, following Nussbaum, although they may not be compatible, there are many “alternative versions of the world that have value and validity.”⁴⁴⁸ (Nussbaum 1992) In this respect, pluralism that exists, or defines feminist and interventionist art, enters the twenty-first century as an international language to link the “range of differences” with multicultural activities that also differ from the tenets of modernism.⁴⁴⁹ (Reilly 2007)

While Groys makes a case for “self-contradictory” elements in modern art against the notion of pluralism, he also points out a prohibition in modern art that denies tradition from an elitist view on the “the status of art” that has to depend “always on the context of its presentation in a museum collection.”⁴⁵⁰ For

example, Groys finds a “paradox” here too because “the collection itself is unstable, constantly changing and in flux.”⁴⁵¹(Groys 2008)

In making a transition between art as living experience, or art as expression, the art object stands as not only as a mediating site capable of “resistance,” to quote First Nations film-maker Loretta Todd, but also as a place where Aboriginal artists may come to terms with a dismissive art history that has footnoted Aboriginal art, and an aesthetic pursuant to the freedom of expression.⁴⁵² (Todd 1992) The art object stands as an object of contemplation, nevertheless, perhaps even capable of capturing the viewer’s attention to “linger” long enough to “render the mind passive,” enough to reinscribe possibilities of the Kantian manner, to follow Jean-François Lyotard.⁴⁵³ (Lyotard 1994)

From Lyotard’s analysis of “language games,” myriad possibilities come forward to carry knowledge from the past of a different, but never the less a valid proposition. But more so, when the cultural/art object is only defined within modernist practice, thereby to uphold dominating ideas of aesthetic value, the political significance of the work that is “commonly called *tendentious*” following Benjamin, interferes with the relationship between art and cultural politics to become even more complex. From an Aboriginal/indigenous view point, Loretta Todd elaborates:

By reducing our cultural expression to simply the question of modernism or postmodernism, art or anthropology, or whether we are contemporary or traditional, we are placed on the edges of the dominant culture, while the dominant culture determines whether we are allowed to enter into its realm of art.⁴⁵⁴ (Todd 1992)

In shaping and reclaiming art as a multifaceted object that belongs to cultural pluralism, and to community as communication and lived realities of difference, Mary Longman, offers a similar critique of competing ideologies that aid in “fracturing” identity.⁴⁵⁵ (Longman 2006) From postcolonial theory that identifies cultural crises as a “global phenomenon amongst colonized peoples,” Longman questions the privileging of a cultural critique that undermines the power of the art object, as such, which claims a relational place in the physical and spiritual world.⁴⁵⁶ (Longman 2006)

There is an irony, I think, in the element of the structure of the art object that comes from the imagination and belonging to the lived experiences in representation—projection, intuition, feeling, descriptive words, poetic words, mimetic gesture—yet all belonging to the world of expression in which ethical and cultural values have been measured by a decidedly Eurocentric domination. Under changing conditions of viewing, the art object may be part of a whole, it may create wholeness from parts, and in its singularity it may be pluralistic. In the sense that instability marks a facet of modern art, Groys does not seem overly interested in the fact that art is also a living experience. As an expression of thought, feeling, and conditions of relationships, the art object—literature, film, painting et al—brings a pluralistic way of making “world-versions,” that have exciting possibilities. Indeed, when applied to ethics and to social justice cultural objects ought to inspire “illuminating” ideas with reference to how one should live.⁴⁵⁷ (Nussbaum 1992)

To claim that modern art is about “contradicting all other modern artworks” may be true, but in the sense of modern and contemporary art being pluralistic, the text opens politics of difference, to follow Nussbaum’s invitation—as is said of Aristotle—to a relationship “...in which the claims of each ethical belief and each passion of experience will be taken seriously and respectfully examined.”⁴⁵⁸ (Nussbaum 1992) From the view that arts’ pluralism may be inherently experimental, technical, and sympathetic to lived experiences, it appears therefore open to multiple modes of interpretation that retains, to follow Nussbaum, a multiplicity of voices within various accounts of “plural world-versions.”⁴⁵⁹ (Nussbaum 1992) All of which cannot but enrich social life and also the philosophical conversation

Moreover, as I find artistic documents that are not necessarily historicized in the modern art canon, I try to link multiple perceptions of expression in art that is overlooked, yet still functions in the word of vision and expression as a critical language. In addition, from the belief that the politics of pluralism carries an important aspect of knowledge that explores tensions back and forth between experiences and projection, I think there is a place where community and everyday exchange through artistic communication ought to be considered as knowledge.

While this sort of art draws attention to the struggle for recognition, as art is defined by a historical canon, an art that stands out-of-the- market-economy is also “bound up” in the struggle for recognition. Groys elaborates:

...all signs, forms, and things as legitimate objects of desire and, hence also as legitimate objects of representation in art. Both forms of struggle are intrinsically bound up with each other, and both have as their aim a situation in which all people with their various interests, as indeed also all forms and artistic procedures, will finally be granted equal rights.⁴⁶⁰ (Groys 2008)

What Groys does here is to draw attention to the opportunity for equal rights on the “level of aesthetics and aesthetic value” which, agrees with my opinion, it that should not be different from the argument for equal rights on the level of politics. Indeed, as Groys says that politics of equal rights engage inclusivity on the level of aesthetic value because it is “a necessary precondition for any political engagement,” follows my argument for the practical application of the theory of equal opportunity (Groys 2008)

As I have already explained in my initial introduction, a transdisciplinary methodology drives my inquiry into critical practices where emphasis is placed on the significance of lived experiences. Where stories about the struggle for equal rights exemplify the social nature of all cultural productions, a central theme may be traced to values and world outlooks that have a significant impact on the daily conduct of community and individuals. In the realm of modernists’ theories of change, development and underdevelopment in Canada, may be explained strictly in terms of trade—the staples thesis—while the semi-break from British colonialism that created a federalist system of “good government,” resigned the people to “accepting” governmental intervention into every day lives, but it also conditions for pluralism and cultural equality.

On one hand the system is often described as inefficient and backward, on the other, entering into the post-industrial era, an economy structured around “service” is far from “intervention” into everyday lives. In the sense that “service” meets with an egalitarian socio-economic view that public monies ought to come back to the people in the form of basic services—universal health care, pensions, education—the term “welfare” embedded in colonial politics is brought to the postcolonial era. To paraphrase Trudeau, in which a liberal constitution, in practice, ought to uphold the rights and welfare understood as *eudaimonia* happiness, well being, contentment, of all members of a civil society, in the name of value in the pursuit of Social Justice. ⁴⁶¹ (Trudeau 2010)

In the view that justice will eliminate social conflicts associated with inequality, the argument sways from an essentialist sense of equality to expand on the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity. In the field of postcolonial theory, where certain components of postmodernism encircle the problem of essentialism, attention is drawn to the practical relationship between specific cultural differences where to situate story telling that exemplifies history as a living experience, promotes a sharing with others interpretations and concepts of reality in “differences of the social structure” to quote Althusser.

As culture has verbal and non-verbal symbols, appropriate to “...a civilized nation” and directed toward making “better citizens,” to quote Vance, much attention in Canada has been directed toward federal funding for the arts. ⁴⁶² (Vance 2009) Moreover, connecting social change and the theory equality of

opportunity as a rallying call in the political sphere of Canada during the latter years of the twentieth century, the momentum of social change also raised the expectations of Canadians.

While modernization theory connects change to industrial and post-industrial developments, new possibilities emerged with technological advances. Through the power of the art, and in the work of Marshall McLuhan, new criteria for knowledge and perception were encouraged. McLuhan elaborates:

As our proliferating technologies have created a whole series of new environments, men have become aware of the arts as ‘anti-environments’ or ‘counter-environments’ that provide us with the means of perceiving the environment itself... Today technologies and their consequent environments succeed each other so rapidly that one environment makes us aware of the next. Technologies begin to perform the function of art in making us aware of the psychic and social consequences of technology. Art as anti-environment becomes more than even a means of training perception and judgement... Media study opens doors of perception... An inclusive list of media effects opens many unexpected avenues of awareness and perception.⁴⁶³
(McLuhan 2003)

Technology, along with changes in higher education helped to create optimism that knowledge and information, in the name of justice, could advance social change. Placing significant interest in the relationship between language and culture, Canada implemented legislation on bilingualism and biculturalism to advance “official” policies on multiculturalism directed toward assuring the promise of cultural equality for all Canadians.

On one hand, the focus on mass media and communication technologies detailed in the work of Marshall McLuhan draws attention to the loss, overall, of an oral culture. On the other, traditional societies and minority groups cling to

story telling as a means of expressing world views and as a way to interpret knowledge as a cyclical phenomenon that may be passed from generation to generation. In the sense that certain components of postmodernism and postcolonial theory encircle each other to draw attention to story telling in art as a living history, aspects of personal expression reappear and resurface to reinscribe abstract theoretical models into presence where narrative and “voice” inhabit interstices between sensory perception and subjective knowledge to claim a place for story telling as a living experience.

In “fashionable contemporary theory,” ideas about “the death of world appearance” and “...the ‘death’ of the subject itself” were introduced in postmodern terms, through Jameson’s social analysis ⁴⁶⁴ (Jameson 2003) Thus bringing to an end outmoded ideas about an “autonomous” “bourgeois” “individual” capable of subjective knowledge. ⁴⁶⁵ (Jameson 2003) Additionally, in a turn to technology, personal expression was also thought ended. Frederic Jameson, a leading twentieth century Marxist intellectual elaborates:

The end of the bourgeois ego...no doubt brings with it the end of the psychopathologies of that ego as well....But it means the end of much more — the end of style, in the sense of the unique and the personal, the end of distinctive individual brushstroke (as symbolized by the emergent primacy of mechanical reproduction). As for expression and feelings or emotions, the liberation in contemporary society, from the older *anomie* of the centered subject may also mean, not merely a liberation from anxiety, but a liberation from every other kind of feeling as well, since there is no longer a self present to do the feeling. ⁴⁶⁶ (Jameson 2003)

From the claim that the postmodern featured an “impersonal” style that contributed to the loss of the private/personal expression, Jameson opined that the “waning of affect” apparent in postmodern culture was an effect of “a separation within the subject,” synonymous with a poststructuralist proclamation in which an “organizing” interior “core identity” was simply declared to be an “illusion.”⁴⁶⁷ (Jameson 2003)

In addition, using the language of psychoanalysis Jameson replaced the notion of “depth” experience, from psychology, with the concept of multiplicity of “surface” in images connected in the context of a postmodern aesthetic which is conjoined in new discourse theory wherein the concept of “textual play” enters the conversation.⁴⁶⁸ (Jameson 2003) Jameson also identified sanctions against inquiry influenced by situated knowledge exemplified by “...expression...linked to some conception of the subject...within which things are felt which are then expressed by projection outwards.”⁴⁶⁹ (Jameson 2003) From the notion of the “decentered” individual, however, Jameson favored a “real” historical past over the alternative, which was a “radical poststructuralist position for which the subject never existed in the first place.”⁴⁷⁰ (Jameson 2003)

Contrasting the “depthlessness” of a “Warhol work” with modernisms “high seriousness” and “felt” expression, exemplified in “van Gogh’s well-known peasant shoes,” Jameson cited this work as a carrier of a world-view of a class of people structured around the “misery of agriculture.”⁴⁷¹ (Jameson 2003) Taken obviously from Heidegger’s assertion (*Basic Writings* page 158), that the “pair of

peasant shoes” show an “object-world” that depicts “their lived context,” the absence of individual interpretation at the “level of content” is identified as the “impersonal.”⁴⁷² Jameson deemed, characteristically, that the cultural climate of late seventies and early nineteen-eighties was typical of an eclecticism that leveled experience to assimilation close to the humanist ideal of unity.⁴⁷³ (Jameson 2003)

In addition, locating the postmodern as a “cultural dominant,” Jameson declared it to be both a political position and an aesthetic of various “flat-life” positions exemplified in “pastiche” and in overt commodification.⁴⁷⁴ (Jameson 2003) Nevertheless, in support of my position, Jameson uncovered properties to parallel lived experiences that carry a multiplicity of possibilities “in history” to link the “postmodern” in art with a life-world in the context of the “larger” lived world through the reinvention of new “conception of practices, discourse and textual play.” (Jameson 2003) In support of my view on discourse theory, Jameson’s work marks a major stage of capitalism which is linked to three aesthetic dominants—reality (experiences) expression (autonomy), and the eclectic (postmodernism).

In my exploration these correspond to sociopolitical periods that fall close-in-line with colonial nation building, as I have explained, that completes a set of three possibilities, which that fit well within the Canadian historical experience as multinationalism, multiculturalism, and cultural diversity that supports plurality in art directed toward the freedom of expression. Taking the idea of the multiplicity

of styles, techniques, and the plurality of forms to a postmodern rejection of the claims of universality, Jameson posited that the postmodern aesthetic *is* the “cultural logic” of “critical art in the postmodern period of late capital.”⁴⁷⁵ (Jameson 2003) That the question of meaning, although displaced by new technologies, stays within the context of a period, Jameson discussed the postmodern as a historical condition in contra distinction to a negative critique of history.

To follow Donna Haraway’s reading, “the ‘Textualization’ of everything in poststructuralist, postmodern theory has been dammed by Marxists and socialist feminists for its “utopian” disregard for the lived relations of dominations that “...ground the ‘play’ of arbitrary reading.”⁴⁷⁶ (Haraway 1991) While such practices may open coded historical texts, Haraway cited the loss of individual interpretation—a subjective reading—as being integral to the “terrible historical experience of the contradictory social realities of patriarchy, colonialism, and capitalism”⁴⁷⁷ (Haraway 1991) Indeed, this conjoins with Freire’s observations of power that work to keep a people downtrodden. Thus to deny “depth” would equal a denial of the reality of the body.⁴⁷⁸ (Haraway 1991) On the other hand, critical revisionists such as Griselda Pollock, Lynda Nochlin, and Rosalind Krauss see “breaks” in a historical continuum that hold wide possibilities for the re-assessment of art history narratives. Griselda Pollock, world renowned art historian and scholar of postcolonial studies explains:

Shifting the paradigm of art history involves therefore much more than adding new materials—women and their history—to existing

categories and methods. It has led to wholly new ways of conceptualizing what it is we study and how we do it. One of the related disciplines in which radical new approaches were on offer was the social history of art. The theoretical and methodological debates of Marxist historiography are extremely pertinent...⁴⁷⁹ (Pollock 1993)

As Jameson recognized the “reality of appearance” as belonging to the modern conception of universalism, he posited that the postmodern reality is more contextual; in other words, it could be an accommodation for a social perspective engaged in the politics of knowledge. To follow Jameson, “This shift,” understood “in the dynamics of cultural pathology,” could be characterized as one in which, “...the alienation of the subject is displaced by the fragmentation of the subject.”⁴⁸⁰ (Jameson 2003) Thus contextualized in the “world of organized bureaucracy,” individual interpretation holds no certainty. Jameson explains:

Such terms inevitably recall one of the more fashionable themes in contemporary theory...and the accompanying stress, whether as some new moral ideal or as empirical description, on the *decentering* of that formerly centered subject or psyche.⁴⁸¹ (Jameson 2003)

With the inception of global cultural studies, to follow Spivak’s reading, “The tendency to conflate poststructuralism and postmodernism,” may be traced to Jameson’s penchant of bringing economic narratives of late capitalism, and class analysis, in line with the critique of individual interpretation and cultural history that helped to shape the international discourse of the late twentieth century.⁴⁸² (Spivak 1999) Spivak juxtaposed the claim for “...orders created by the practice of theoretical work *itself*...” with Jameson’s statement that as “...everything in our social life...can be said to have become ‘cultural’ in some original yet

untheorized sense,” to make a space to consider the historical framework. Spivak explains:

...although Jameson seems to be against a mere periodizing view of history, there are examples of a stolidly isomorphic theory of the relationship between modes of production and styles and their concomitant cultural explanations that Jameson himself acknowledges as crucial to his argument...⁴⁸³ (Spivak 1999)

This reading does not clarify whether Jameson was against bringing history and culture together or if, in the interest of long range economic theories, he was interested in cultural shifts that are relational only to economic theory. What is clear, by bringing closely related theories together, Spivak claimed to see where Jameson appeared to “conflate” the world of structuralism and poststructuralism with the undergrid of theories of labor and economic shifts that do meet at interstices where cultural production may be included in the narrative of social change.

In the poststructuralist theoretical discourse, unique identity, individual expression, and personal interpretation are abandoned in support of an ideological position wherein the subject, lost in time, has no identity. To the pronouncement that “autonomy” was destroyed by late capitalism, Jameson added this caveat:

This is not to say that the cultural products of the postmodern era are utterly devoid of feeling, but rather that such feelings—which is may be better and more accurate to call ‘intensities’—are now free-flowing and impersonal.⁴⁸⁴ (Jameson 2003)

In bringing the narrative of cultural autonomy from the realm of modernism, perceived as a network of controlling practices, and to identify the shift in

perspective that marked an intellectual and artistic revolt against artistic representation of modernity, Homi K Bhabha suggested that Jameson's text supports the notion that the "cultural logic of late capital," apparent in the postmodern aesthetic, to offer a substantial position in transforming "cultural style" into "a politically effective discursive space."⁴⁸⁵ (Bhabha 1994) Bhabha, Professor of English and scholar of Post-colonial studies elaborates:

What is at issue is the performative nature of differential identities: the regulation and negotiation of those spaces that are continually, *contingently*, 'opening out', remaking the boundaries, exposing the limits of any claim to a singular or autonomous sign of difference — be it class, gender or race. Such assignations of social differences — where difference is neither One nor the Other but *something else besides, in-between* — find their agency in a form of the 'future' where the past is not originary, where the past is simply transitory. It is if I may stretch a point, an interstitial future that emerges *in-between* claims of the past and the needs of the present. ⁴⁸⁶ (Bhabha 1994)

To claim a movable past, that would open wider possibilities for the "present," Bhabha pointed to Jamison's analysis of the global economy. Due to rapid economic growth in numerous "third-world" cultures, Bhabha maintained that a stable class structure had not yet formed and had not yet acquired a "genuine class-consciousness"...or a social objective."⁴⁸⁷ (Bhabha 1994)

In the face of new international space that identifies discontinuous historical realities, and to signify interstitial passages, the process of cultural difference is considered to create an "in-between" space. This space has been inscribed as being meant to create temporal break-ups that are identified as helping to weave the global text into the histories of art and to conjoin art as a sociopolitical

interventionist strategy in the struggle to make basic logical connections between art and history. In the shift from art history to art as history and to cultural studies, art activism emerged to combine opposing positions in ways that embed culture within society and to give some autonomy to expression as it may be placed within the context of culture as a product of society and as a reflection of society, in the name of freedom of expression.

Rosalind Krauss, an American art critic and theorist, located links within the context of a new sensibility (continental philosophy) coming from abroad, to challenge, "...the historical premises on which almost all critical thinking of this country [the US] had been based."⁴⁸⁸ (Krauss 1986) Krauss's praise of the work of poststructuralism, in its role of creating crucial turning points in the reading of narrative art, which offered a wide opportunity to investigate the body of work that entered into a dialogical account of cultural and social change. In the sense that the turn toward various critical theories, also marked a change in higher education in Canada, myriad opportunities opened to expand the horizon of traditional intellectual thought. Krauss referenced the work of Roland Barthes, Jacques Derrida, and Jean-François Lyotard, thus turning her attention toward analyzing art in cultural terms rather than from the notion of any given medium.

Departing from Clement Greenberg's notion of the medium, considered as pure form, Krauss's work offered the art teaching curriculum new and plausible ways to consider art as a social and cultural construct. Drawing attention to the fact that art is the carrier of *multiple* meaning, Krauss promoted a notion about

“an aesthetics of extension,” wherein a relationship between theoretical problems involved considering image and subjectivity in the same cultural space.⁴⁸⁹

(Krauss 1986) In this realm of research, where the reappearance of identity leads the viewer away from allegorical meaning, Krauss directed her attention toward alternative narratives. On one hand, tracing a biological trajectory that curved toward the usefulness of a singular meaning, “self as origin,” for example, Krauss identified a distinction that could be made between claims for “present experience” and that which could be removed from “a traditionally laden past.”⁴⁹⁰

(Krauss 2003)

On the other hand, in the sense that meaning is always, “a highly fluctuating and ambiguous space of multiple planes of representation,” Krauss identified a growing tendency toward the use of the “grid” posited not as pure form but as a pure “cultural object.”⁴⁹¹ (Krauss 1986) Drawing from a long list of artists, including Eva Hesse and Agnes Martin, who used the grid to bring back the “promise” of arts “autonomy,” Krauss elaborates:

... for those for whom the origins of art are not to be found in the idea of pure disinterest so much as in an empirically grounded unity, the grid’s power lies in its capacity to figure forth the material ground of the pictorial object, simultaneously inscribing and depicting it, so that the image of the pictorial surface can be seen to be born out of the organization of pictorial matter. For these artists, the grid-scored surface is the image of the absolute beginning.⁴⁹² (Krauss 1988)

In citing the work of Hesse and Martin Krauss helped, I think, to introduce their work to the wider art world. In addition, in the complexity of cultural practices of the mid to late twentieth century, Krauss directed new interest toward ways in

which interpretation adds dimension to any work of art, but she cautioned that a particular view of “life” often restricts art’s entry into the wider art world.

At a time when interest in contemporary feminist art was offering a challenge to modernist norms, Hesse and Martin stand out as precursors to a different organization of the individual as producer; not as representative of an entire sex, but as artists in the full sense of the word. While it is clear that the full impact of the American Feminist Art Movement of the 1970s was having a resounding effect in the art world, both Hesse and Martin denied that their art practices drew upon the acknowledgement of a feminist sensibility. Nevertheless, where hiring practices—conditioned by historical patriarchal influences—showed unequivocal attitudes in higher education, teaching academies, art schools and universities, Hesse and Martin stand out as significant role models for a new generation of artists.

The dearth of female instructors showed blindness toward the theory of equally opportunity in Canada. This, most notably at the Vancouver School of Art and Design (now the Emily Carr University of Art and Design), where hiring practices, in the 1970s, were called to question in light of Canada’s equal opportunity labor laws. This opened the whole question of equality of opportunity to analyze obvious discrimination, which also awakened students to the necessity for female artists in the studio as role models. As students persistently requested changes, opposing voices charged the dissidents with essentializing education and politicizing the students. Support for the demand for female teachers grew

however, not only from the knowledge that Judy Chicago and Miriam Schapiro had set up a feminist art program at the California Institute of Arts, but also from the fact that artists such as Eva Hesse and Agnes Martin were both accepting teaching and lecturing positions.

More-to-the-point, visiting artists significantly increased the visibility of women artists, not only at Vancouver's premier art school but at institutions elsewhere. Even as Hesse and Martin denied any connection to a feminist art movement they became noted as "pioneer" feminist in the art world. Hesse taught at the School for Visual Arts and was a lecturer at the Boston Museum School.⁴⁹³ Martin lectured at Cornell University, the University of Pennsylvania, and at the Vancouver School of Art and Design.⁴⁹⁴ While both artists resisted feminist comparisons in their work and adamantly denied any interest what-so-ever in the feminist political movement, they addressed the question of inequality and gender stereotyping, but they also rejected any suggestion that their art practices rested upon the acknowledgement of a feminist sensibility.

At the same time (circa 1970s), it is obvious that the opposition between political activism and an art content that agitates the sociopolitical dialogue derived from a growing awareness that to have justice in a country there ought to be equality of opportunity. It is also obvious that one need not be in on the feminist organization in order to have a political impact. Indeed, over the 1970s and beyond, both Hesse and Martin stood as role models for a generation of artists just entering the field of art and critical inquiry.

On the issue of essentialism in art and in the face of gender discrimination, Martin was not reticent in addressing the difficulty of bringing political discontentment into art from the “concept of a female sensibility” and because she deemed that position to be a “burden,” she was adamant that her art “should be seen without ideas or personal emotion.”⁴⁹⁵ In this sense, Martin claimed a “classical” tradition for her artistic production. Explaining that emotional detachment was an artistic ideal worth seeking, Martin wrote:

To a detached person the complication of the internal life/is like chaos/of you don't like the chaos you're a classicist/if you like it you're a romanticist/Someone said all human emotions is an idea/Painting is not about ideas or personal emotion....⁴⁹⁶ (Martin)

Taking her conversation to the level of a Kantian notion of disinterest, Martin talked about the need for the “free play” of the contemplation of the beautiful. In numerous lectures and talks, Martin directed attention not toward dissatisfaction with the social or with the self, not toward advancing a feminist political agenda, but directed toward paying attention to a sort of purity in art in which tension, expression, and personal ideas of desire ought to be expunged.⁴⁹⁷

Clearly, as women artists caught within a patriarchal context of Western art history, the biographical narrative placed Hesse and Martin in the context of the feminist crises/revolution of the mid to late years of the twentieth century. In the struggle to build identity as artists they were, nevertheless, singled out in a “proto-feminist” context of use to build solidarity for feminist interventions in the world of art.

To follow Griselda Pollock's analysis, in the crises of artistic authorship placed within other ideological frameworks, "Feminism-as-a theory represents a diversified field of theorizations of...considerable complexity."⁴⁹⁸ (Pollock 1993) In the sense that a "social critique" placed art in the wider struggle for equality and social justice, Pollock argued that:

Feminist interventions are moreover empowered because they place art and its institutions on a continuum with other economic, social and ideological practices. Founded in the political struggle of the women's movement with its comprehensive social critique, feminist cultural practices index artistic activity to the social world in which culture is becoming an increasingly significant level of social regulation and ideological consumption."⁴⁹⁹ (Pollock 1993)

Obviously in reference to a Marxist admission of social conditions, Pollock also drew inferences to poststructuralist arguments and to the theory of semiotics to bring attention to the relationship between feminist political strategies and a Brechtian theory that also "insisted upon a political baseline."⁵⁰⁰ (Pollock 1993)

Taking cultural differences and knowledge about Marxist arguments into consideration, Pollock extended her analysis past depictions of "women's oppression," to create a place where "...the play of contradictions inspired new ways of making artworks, in performance and time based works, installations, videos...."⁵⁰¹ (Pollock 1993) Insisting that this work ought to be placed within a history that conjoins the struggle for equality with the historical art transcript, Pollock was already, in the 1980s, writing about art that bypassed postmodernism to reinscribe emotional content, in works, that clearly belong to the "social

relation which produced them and for which they bear symbolic meaning.”⁵⁰²
 (Pollock 1993)

In a similar sense, in consideration of cultural coding, Rosalind Krauss considered that while the artistic use of color, according to form, is an artistic strategy it may also be used to convey alternative political messages. Moving her discussion past modernist art to encircle pictorial language in a way that embraced a critical approach to linguistics, Krauss turned to a reading of the fragmented image in cubist works in consideration of signs used in collage elements that become part of a system, which functions in the space of advancing the multiplicity of meaning. In this sense, Krauss claimed a place in cubist collage, following structuralism and linguistic systems that offered, in her words, “...conditions for the operation of the sign [as it] turns on difference.”⁵⁰³ (Krauss 1986)

As I have already noted, the significance of preserving cultural practices that turn on difference is an important part of recording lived experiences that often focus on experimentation in art, rather than on commodification. Moreover, from a refusal to take notions of identity as a fixed given, Krauss early on opened a discourse toward a critical account of difference in the realm of art and history. Standing close with the historian and art critic, Linda Nochlin, Krauss addressed ethics of representation in ways to open the argument from binaries to multiplicity and difference. In suggesting wider possibilities for the “signified” as an

interpretive tool, Krauss also posited that a “metalanguage of the visual” might explain how the function of signs work in collage, Krauss explains:

...as the material signifier for a signified that is opposite: a presence whose referent in an absent meaning, meaningful only by its absence. As a system, a collage inaugurates a play of differences which is both about and sustained by an absent origin: the forces absence of the original plane by the superimposition of another place, effacing the first in order to represent....It enters our experience not as an object of perception, but as an object of discourse....⁵⁰⁴ (Krauss 1986)

By extending the multiplicity of meaning to include the concept of difference, identity, and the possibility of endless interpretation projected through the use of sign systems, Krauss acknowledged the influences of structuralism and literary criticism, “coming from abroad” and she opened a conversation that turned toward an acknowledgement of art as a discourse to justify multiplicity of voices as a viable philosophical position. As evident from developments in postmodern theory that moved between different disciplines, multiplicity holds a prominent place in the exploration of cultural forms of identity and political instances of difference.

Presenting media, together with borrowed categories from poststructuralism, Krauss expanded upon the work of Derrida, Barthes, and Lyotard to champion the “special” role of “voice” that, in the late twentieth century, had entered the realm of philosophical discourse in the form of “eclecticism...to prefigure an image of personal freedom [and] multiple options.”⁵⁰⁵ (Krauss 1986) Writing about differences, Krauss focused on shifts

between discipline-based studies, in the arts, and an analysis approach to visual culture that opened a less “restrictive notion of historical styles.”⁵⁰⁶ (Krauss 1988)

From identifying multiple meaning in art to pluralizing systems of signs, Krauss touched on the realm of the historically specific relationships developing between textual interventions and different texts that are articulated in postmodernist art to draw attention to what would later become better known as “discourse theory.” Generally, the term applies to different but related theoretical developments, such as semiotics and to follow critical theory in opening the concept of “discourse” in conversation about power and knowledge. Griselda Pollock explains:

A particularly useful resource for contemporary cultural studies has been ‘discourse analysis’, [sic] particularly modeled on the writings of French historian Michel Foucault. Foucault provided an anatomy of what he called the human sciences. Those bodies of knowledge and ways of writing which took as their object—and in fact produced as a category for analysis—Man. He introduced the notion of a discursive formation to deal with the systematic interconnections between an array of related statements which define a field of knowledge, its possibilities and its occlusions. Thus on the agenda for analysis is not just the history of art, i.e. the art of the past, but also art history, the discursive formation which invented the entity to study it. Of course there has been art before art history catalogued it. But art history as an organized discipline defined what it is and how it can be spoken of.
⁵⁰⁷(Pollock 1993)

In the sense that “rules of the game” promise “universal” truths, Lyotard identified the field of knowledge, defined as the Enlightenment agenda and directed toward “a good ethico-political end—universal peace,” as no longer credible in light of what he termed the turn to the *postmodern* and incredulity

toward such totalizing “metanarratives.”⁵⁰⁸ (Lyotard 2003) In a research document commissioned by “the request of the Conseil des Universités of the government of Quebec”, Lyotard claimed a place for narrative—local knowledge— and “the pragmatics of language” along with skepticism toward all universalizing theories.⁵⁰⁹ (Lyotard 2003) Through the study of the “condition of knowledge, in the most highly developed societies,” Lyotard argued against metanarratives as being nothing more than rigid systems of cultural and social domination.⁵¹⁰ (Lyotard 1984)

Lyotard opined that since the postmodernism is a distinctly patriarchal domination, it only served to uphold old modes of thoughts and doctrinaire standards promoted by rigid academic approaches to the production of knowledge.⁵¹¹ (Lyotard 1984) In the sense that a dialogic approach could offer a alternative solutions to domination, an egalitarian search for knowledge, for instance, would open any narrative to multiple interpretations; but, Lyotard asked, “would it bring all speakers to consensus?” (Lyotard 1984) In reply to his own question, Lyotard opined that because the prescriptive rules of “language games” take on dissimilar forms in elements that are unrelated in descent, an argument from consensus, in the context of “the practice of justice,” would not meet the “goal of justice” since consensus only describes the conditions of the conversation rather than a realistic socio-political goal.⁵¹² Moreover, as a process, Lyotard deemed consensus an “outmoded” assessment in light of his interest in difference. (Lyotard 1984)

However, to follow an argument from a cyclical mode, or hegemonic character of language, Lyotard's analysis of problems of communication also draws attention to the power of technology that has impacted knowledge. Additionally, by linking historical genres into some sort of unity in communitarian practices, in which the criteria of justice ought to go beyond social conflicts, Lyotard turned his attention to the struggle for democracy and the struggle for justice in postmodern culture. An Associate Professor at the University Notre Dame, Ewa Płonowska Ziarek, explains:

Among many genres—myth, narrative, techno-science—analyzed in *The Differend*, Lyotard focuses in greatest detail on deliberative democracy reclaimed...as a safeguard not only against the reversal of democracy into totalitarianism but also against the unfortunate 'postmodern' dispersion of politics and culture...Lyotard's critique of deliberative democracy questions its fundamental assumptions: first that it is possible to come to agreement on rules valid for all genres, and thus reconstitute 'ethical totality'...second that it is possible to reach consensus apart from hegemonic articulation; and third, that the understanding of the social bond can be derived from the theory of communication, from which agonistics is excluded. At stake in this questioning is an alternative democratic politics 'that would respect both the desire for justice and the desire for the unknown.'⁵¹³ (Ziarek 2001)

The important distinction between communication and information aims to provide a structure to understand the enormous powers at play in the current era. Here, Ziarek sees "deliberation" as an ongoing "hegemonic" process that constantly leads to "new" "differends;" with *differend* previously defined as an irresolvable situation because of the "sides" in the discussion, where argument and discourse start from positions bound by standards so dissimilar that agreement—consensus—may never be reached.

From Lyotard's argument, some new avenue to justice has to come, not from what he described as "outmoded" consensus, but from a localized "practice of justice," where "multiplicity" is favored.⁵¹⁴ (Lyotard 1984) In the preceding chapter, I offered a lengthy discourse on the political situation in Canada that carries the discourse of multiplicity that is both a Socratic version of moral judgment and a liberal defense of communitarian democracy described in terms of upholding multicultural diversity to sustain cultural equality through a federalist approach to practice of justice where multiplicity *is* favored.

Setting the stage for change

At mid-twentieth century, in the quest for social justice and with an exceptional swell in economic growth, Canada's Liberal Prime Minister, Lester B. Pearson had the resources to make things happen, or he recruited people to do the job. It was also, however, an era of social crises. Living conditions were unequal, education and the arts had not developed in line with the extraordinary economic surge, but cultural equality in Canada was in crisis. The solution for Pearson, who had extensive international diplomatic experience, was to recruit, hire, and cajole those in politics to create an alternative approach to theories of justice and to find new ways of thinking and knowledge to raise the level of national awareness and to open a new path to social justice.

What is surprising, in Lyotard's "Report on Knowledge" is that he failed to mention the possibility that Canada may have found, through the practical

application of the theory of equality of opportunity and through the official policies on biculturalism and bilingualism the means for an “alternative” social system. It is interesting, I think, given that Lyotard’s project was commissioned by the Canadian government, that he did not respond to conditions of knowledge emerging from Canada’s, officially legislated Languages Act. .⁵¹⁵ (Best 1991) Even as he identified the term postmodern as being “associated with the pagan, the absence of rules, criteria, and principles, and with the need for experimentation,” Lyotard missed the fact that experimental social change was occurring in Canada. Moreover, in claiming a new form of social existence to emerge, possibility from “many different language games,” Lyotard failed to acknowledge the cultural diversity and multiplicity of Canadian society. All of which appeared to be going in the direction that Lyotard championed: cultural inclusion, the acknowledgement of difference and heterogeneity, and the “status of knowledge” that was implicitly challenged, not only by new technology, but by minority groups and by Canada’s Aboriginal practices.

The situation at that moment, when Lyotard was addressing the possibility of changing values and beliefs, was actually taking place in Canada. That is to say, in the sense that developments in public communitarian spaces were undergoing changes in higher education—driven both by an economic surge and by demand—social change was also guided by an ideological desire to adequately address theories of cultural justice. What was needed, to make Canada a “better” country was an acknowledgement of community and, in part, this was

exemplified by policies developed to bring language and cultural equality across minority groups to a level of balance between the interests of community and the wider society.

Mary Longman, artist and postcolonial scholar, has been charting colonial history and the postcolonial discourse to record historical narratives and cultural memories from the viewpoint of Canada's First Nations peoples. From myriad failed attempts on the part of Canadian policy makers to reconcile the complexity of power divisions between cultural historical experiences and lived histories, Longman's critique of the sociopolitical realm in Canada, articulates Aboriginal identities across an ideological shift to offer Aboriginal stories to the wider public. Longman's exploration looks at the social formation of difference and identity, unquestionably produced by historical colonial policies, but which has only, in part, been brought forward to contemporary Canadian politics.

For instance, in a recent body of work titled *Transposing Perspectives* and exhibited in 2011 at the Mendel Art Gallery in Saskatoon, Longman used the well-known artistic strategy of juxtaposition in combination with the technological advantage of lenticular digital photography to contrast "...visual and textural representations from first contact to the present."⁵¹⁶ (Longman 2011) Thanks to lenticular printing, in which doubled images exist one on top of the other, Longman offered new viewing possibilities about the narrative of domination of which Aboriginal identities have had to contend, but wish to

contest through the presentation of conflicting histories of power.⁵¹⁷ Longman explains:

Two primary sources have had the most influence in perpetuating the false construction of Aboriginal peoples: government documents and popular culture. The documents of colonial governments were (and in some cases still are) very derogatory and/or patronizing towards indigenous people in order to better support the government's subordination of them. Images and texts in popular culture were (and sometimes still are) mostly romantic in nature, appeasing a different but related set of colonial society's desires and fantasies.⁵¹⁸ (Longman 2011)

Encountering the subject of transforming Aboriginal societies into a minority in the ethnic "mosaic" of Canada, Longman acknowledges that identity/reality is a social construct, but she moves away from the notion of the Aboriginal as an excluded person, or only represented as an object for art, to offer an alternative and a "countering," perspective. Projected through the lens of photography she thereby exposes, in lenticular printed images, defining dominant modes of representation that follow erotic tendencies in art in contrast with another reality.

Longman is not assuming a totalizing system; she *is* however deconstructing Eurocentric ideologies in an attempt to rewrite an unbalanced history that appears to ignore other worlds. By presenting images that depict and honor indigenous communities and the important role that Aboriginal peoples have played in the national development of Canada, Longman asks the viewer to reconsider history and the theory of history.

In eight pairs making up the sixteen digitally manipulated images, Longman extends a text in which she describes the source of the images and the historical

context in which they all fit. By offering the prints and text as way to counter stereotypical images and popular beliefs, Longman conjoins word and image in a lengthy body of work meant to “empower” First Nations peoples. In working to “balance the scale of representation,” and to counter biased histories, “...that have led to pervasive misunderstanding about Aboriginal peoples since the first arrival of Europeans in North America,” Longman identifies a negating undergrid of representation while opening an alternative “reconstruction” in order to reclaim a timeless cultural society that may be an illusion, yet nevertheless engages an Aboriginal voice in the long-range historical discourse.

In the series titled *Captivity Narratives*, which Longman has been addressing for some time now, the written text offers a lengthy description of three personal stories that move from the narratives of women who had lived experiences to “romance novels that evolved from the early 1900s.”⁵¹⁹ (Longman 2006) Longman offers these stories to contrast the notion of the Aboriginal as “captors” with other equally well-known accounts from historical fact, that the Portuguese, Spanish, and “British armies often took Aboriginal women as slaves, or held them for ransom.”⁵²⁰ (Longman 2011)

In the romantic/captor image depicted in a doubled lenticular print, Longman carefully calculated the position of the images to reveal a segment of “...society fascinated with the ‘Indian’ way of life in the natural world” and the effect of excitement projected against a written background text that references

“potential sexual interactions.” Juxtaposed with the alternative image, that of John Vanderlyn’s painting, Longman explains:

I used John Vanderlyn’s famous painting, *Death of Jane McCrea* (1804), in my *Captivity Narratives* as it is an excellent example of the way torture and sex were juxtaposed to titillate audiences, with Jane McCrea’s breast exposed for the viewer to see as she is about to be scalped....the third space in the lenticular flip, reveals the contemporary blond woman with her arm wrapped around the neck of the Iroquois in the McCrea image.⁵²¹ (Longman 2011)

In the printed text, Longman comments on the fact that “Europeans have an extensive history of scalping,” thereby the practice could be thought to have been brought to the practice in North American. Overall the picture is meant to counter notions that confirm popular beliefs about a pagan “savage” way of life in which Aboriginal culture is thought to have a history of wanton cruelty and a long “history of scalping”⁵²² (Longman 2011) Additionally, the work draws attention to the stereotypical overt sexual “tale of exotic lover captor” that, to follow Longman’s text, “offered symbolic freedom from conservative, traditional female roles,” by allowing the Victorian reader to step into the so called wild side of life.⁵²³ (Longman 2011)

In another series, Longman depicts historical portraits printed on a background resembling Canadian currency. In this cycle, the highly acclaimed Aboriginal leaders, Chief Poundmaker and Chief Big Bear, appear in a triptych with the image of Canada’s first Prime Minister, John A. Macdonald. It is under the rule of Macdonald’s Conservative government that Canada’s Indian Act 1867 stands, ironically, beside the British North America Act 1867. On one hand the

act released Canada from colonial rule, but on the other, it subjugated Canada's Aboriginal Nations under the harsh terms of the Indian Act.

In the same series, Longman juxtaposes the social activist Cree singer/songwriter/artist, Buffy Sainte-Marie, with the iconic portrait of the British Queen Elizabeth II. Printed on the replication of Canada's one hundred dollar bill—the actual currency carries the image of Elizabeth, Queen Regent of Canada—the doubled portrait honors the accomplishments of both women in the service of a multicultural society.⁵²⁴(Longman 2011)

In a double portrait titled *Pocahontas & Me* Longman appears in a photograph with her son contrasted with a painted portrait of Pocahontas and her son. The connections are obvious, but the relation to Longman's rendering is more elusive, having to do with alienation, hegemony, and the possibility of understanding other worlds. Longman elaborates:

Pocahontas & Me, attempts both to humanize Pocahontas's identity as an Aboriginal woman and mother and also to diminish the lines between past and present. She and I were both born in different periods of the same colonial regime, and have faced vastly different obstacles, but a combined portrait of us with our bi-racial sons creates empathy and a bridge between our differences.⁵²⁵ (Longman 2011)

To bring the personal to the artistic discourse is, for Longman, a way to bring the postmodernist discourse theory to a cultural analysis in work that offers a post-colonial perspective on society. Where power relations and authority tend to ignore or downplay the voice of different groups, the object of language and other technical signifying systems offer alternative ways to describe social values and

cultural activity that ought to be heard. In the struggle for equality, Longman elaborates:

While Pocahontas witnessed many brutalities of war...I am witness to a different, silent war of post-colonial times, when imperialism is maintained by accepted government policies and enforced by armies when Aboriginal people protest or resist. I continue to witness the racism that views Aboriginals as inferior....⁵²⁶ (Longman 2011)

To speak out, or to speak through an artistic perspective, is to continue the struggle for justice through breaking with the past without forgetting it. Thus, for Longman it is crucially important to draw attention to the exceptional accomplishments of Aboriginal peoples without politicizing, and without having to frame individuality in myth or romantic narratives.

In her *Stamp* series, Longman describes the lives of seven Aboriginal women, well-known in the public realm. Here the juxtaposition of past and present text brings together images already created in Canadian postage stamps with Longman's own collection of important personalities. Although Aboriginal women early on played an important role in exploration, trade, and in the fur trade narrative, Longman widens the circle to acknowledge the accomplishment of women such as the poet Emily Pauline Johnson Tekahionwake, the artist Marie Alfreda Johnson Diesing; and, in the interest of advancing the celebration toward more contemporary contributions to history, the social activist Anna Mae Pictou Aqaush.⁵²⁷ (Longman 2011)

By drawing attention to the contemporary struggle for social justice in the realm of a need to recognize ancient treaty rights — in the name of “protecting”

Aboriginal territory, “autonomy,” and basic human rights — Longman provides a brief overview of the rationale of the American Indian Movement in the early 1970s. It is in this context that Longman nominates Anna Mae Aquash, a Canadian Mi’kmaq from Indian Brook, Nova Scotia for a postage stamp representation in honor of her efforts to bring social injustice to the attention of the wider world. ⁵²⁸ (Longman 2011) As an active member of AIM, Aquash lived with the community on the “Pine Ridge Indian Reservation in South Dakota,” and she was working with Aboriginal leaders including Leonard Peltier. (Longman 2011) Longman explains:

...protesting...the extreme poverty that the people lived in, and the corrupt tribal government...Anna Mae Aquash was ‘recognized and respected as an organizer in her own right and was taking an increasing role in the decision-making of AIM policies and programs.’...She died protecting the traditional people and land of the Oglala Lakota Sioux on the Pine Ridge Reservation and is today seen as a martyr of the Indigenous peoples’ movement in North America. ⁵²⁹ (Longman 2011)

While a history of displacement and oppression may seem irrelevant to interventions in the collective critique of economic and ideological power, what Longman describes in the Stamp Collection is a study of cultural production that ought to be brought to the margins of the wider discourse between art history and the boundaries of academic studies. In the course of Longman’s investigations, the lenticular photographs provide a telling account of history; but not negative illustrations of pain, suffering, or oppression. Through the lens of a positive reconstruction, her work counters “colonial narratives with Aboriginal points of

view” in order to reclaim identity.⁵³⁰ (Longman 2011) Longman’s call for the recognition of the Aboriginal political struggle for social justice has resonance in the politics of the 1970s. Vine Deloria Jr., a respected spokesman and Indigent civil rights lawyer explains:

The summer of 1970 saw a full national Indian movement in action, protests happening in the most unexpected places and with irrefutable historic claims made by individual tribes. There was no sense of national coordination and the issues appeared to be a conglomerate of local complaints, which taken together could be resolved only with great difficulty. It was apparent, however, that beneath all of these local protests there was the important issue of restoring the old ways and raising the question of people and their rights to a homeland: for Indians this meant a return to the ceremonial use of lands.⁵³¹

Longman’s call to rewriting and rethinking representations of Aboriginal peoples in colonial and popular culture follows the line of postcolonial discourse theory, for example, in which structural anthropology is challenged. Her exploration is deconstructive as well, because her oeuvre stresses the strategy of providing stories that sever the binary, either/or thinking, to provide a speaking voice that challenges the ignorance of “cultural imperialism.”⁵³² (Longman 2011) Additionally, as she speaks to a movement back and forth between domination and oppression, Longman offers an artistic perspective that imagines something outside binary coding to connect through a world-view directed toward environmental and social justice united with the global-justice movement. In this sense, her work stands as one model in which traditional societies—Canada’s

Aboriginal societies—struggle to construct alternative and viable solutions to myriad issues that are not easy to reconcile.

Language rights linguistic justice and interventionist art

In the period just before the popularizing of postmodern theory, the attempt to reproduce the optimism of the 1950s was already happening in Canada. While the student uprising of 1968 in France, the Civil Rights Movement, and the anti-Vietnam War demonstration in the US occupied the social agenda, Canadians of the late 1960s were in a spirited and optimistic mood. In the political realm, aside from economic issues of production, the focus had turned toward the constitution debate in which Canada stood on the brink of creating paradigm shift and an entirely new perception of democratic freedom with a rights entrenched constitution. With increased funding and encouragement for the arts—documentary film and architecture—the focus in Canada was on experimentation rather than commodification. Albeit the arts, like all creative processes, belong to the category of production, in the waning years of the twentieth century the question of how to live and how to relate in a postcolonial global world, brought artists to seek intervention strategies; and the Canadian government appeared more than willing to provide funding for projects that encouraged big issues, such as experiencing other cultures. The prime example is

found in the documentary work that emerged from the Challenge for Change (CFC/SN) incentive at the National Film Board of Canada.

Already deep in the embrace of positive possibilities for social change, Canada's legislated language and bicultural bills encouraged a conversation on political and cultural equality. The democratic discourse in Canada stressed plurality and the preservation of difference. In the "great" linguistic debates, isolated corrective measures turned the question of equality over to the possibilities of "total reform."⁵³³ (Pelletier 2010) In the name of justice, the theory of equality of opportunity became a political rallying call for renewed liberalism directed toward social and cultural equality. Gérard Pelletier, Minister of Communications in the Trudeau era Liberal government explains:

In 1968, barely a century had passed since the signing of the federalist pact that gave birth to Canada...the founding provinces and the several later adherents had all begun to realize that the federation was benefiting everyone...but not equally. From the beginning, various provinces and sectors of the population had been expressing worries about this.⁵³⁴

Beyond the question of individual social and human rights, cultural equality was high on the political agenda and it took close to an eighth of a century to balance economic opportunity with cultural equality directed toward achieving a liberalist concept of social justice.

Leading up to the global-justice era, patriation of the British North America Act was of vital concern to Canadian political reformers such as Pelletier, Trudeau, and Jean Chartrand. After that was achieved in 1982, political attention

was turned toward bringing Aboriginal human rights in line with the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms. In a series of government conferences on the issue of Aboriginal constitution issues, there were renewed attempts to settle the question of Aboriginal land claims that date back to 1763.

As the Trudeau government directed the liberal discourse toward advancing the concept of democratic freedom, a key part in the political agenda of founding Canada, the government made a commitment to fund innovative projects directed toward opening a world-view about the relationship between the art world and the political discourse. For instance, a United Nations Conference on Human Settlements held in Vancouver in 1976 was supported by Canada's federal government. More so, federal grant monies flowed in support of a non-governmental "free convention" that was open to the public.⁵³⁵ (Clapp 1976) The alternative conference, Habitat Forum, opened its gates so "ordinary people could attend." (Clapp 1976) Its director, Alan Clapp explains:

Habitat Forum was held in Vancouver in 1976. I was an adjunct to the UN Habitat Conference on Human Settlements, which was at the time the largest conference the UN had ever assembled. It was the first time the world community met to discuss the growing challenges of urbanization, the accelerating human migration from rural to urban areas, urban problems including clean water, sanitation, poverty and homelessness, as well as the nascent field of sustainable urban design.⁵³⁶ (Clapp 1976)

While world economists and political personalities typically met behind closed doors, the alternative "peoples" conference, at Vancouver's Jericho Beach that was held in several war-time seaplane hangers, opened its gates to the public so

that ordinary people could participate and interact with world-renowned public figures and political activists.

Although there was some resistance, on the part of the City of Vancouver, the Habitat Forum was generously funded by Canada's federal and provincial governments. Clapp mentioned that the Liberal Party leader and prime minister of Canada, Pierre Elliot Trudeau, and the premier of British Columbia, the New Democratic Party leader David Barrett, both attended and that these political leaders "offered their enthusiastic support for the unique project." (Clapp 1976)

Additionally, federal arts incentive grants were created to support otherwise underemployed artists and crafts people who worked diligently to get the alternative conference up and running. In the spirit of cooperation, Clapp reported that volunteers literally "hailed" cut-logs—washed up on the beach—to build the seating arrangements in the huge seaplane hangers. Artists such as Bill Reid and Evelyn Roth created commemorative mural and exquisite wall hangings in the buildings that were "artfully" reconstructed and described by Clapp as "metaphorical longhouses" to encourage community dialogue. (Clapp 1976)

Over the duration of the forum, in this inclusive atmosphere, thousands attended the "plenary" hall to hear luminary speakers such as Mother Teresa, Buckminster Fuller, and Margaret Mead speak to the need to understand structures of power that undermine community voices. They also spoke of the need for a world-view rooted in ecological awareness. At the same time, Indigenous community leaders, Canada's First Nations elders' and Hopi spiritual

leaders called for ethical responsibility in economic development directed toward a good outcome for planet earth. It was, perhaps, the dawning of the eco-activist movement that today attracts many followers.

At the forum, numerous speakers addressed the need for community to address the fundamental belief, that despite advances in science, the earth supports life and human interaction ought to respect that fact. In addition, Aboriginal leaders and the Hopi representatives spoke of the struggle against strip-mining at the sacred Black Mesa on the Navajo and Hopi reservations in the United States. In many talks, for example, the speakers drew from an Aboriginal way of understanding a spiritual connection to the land and from an acknowledgement that cultural stories pass generationally, they concluded that when time is conceived as a cyclically pattern that closely matches seasonal cycles and when space is thought of a spiritual experience, a new sensibility is awakened that is connected to the land in which the fabric of life conjoins with the natural world in harmony.⁵³⁷

In the after math of the Habitat Forum, Clapp reported that without apparent foresight of thought, and "...acting on orders from an unsympathetic Vancouver mayor, Art Philips, the parks board under Mae Brown," had most of the builds "ripped down" and the "priceless Bill Reid mural was destroyed." (Clapp 1976) Although the buildings no longer exist to attest to the memorable conference, Clapp reported that every speech was recorded and a documentary film exists to "carry the memory of this amazing event."⁵³⁸ (Clapp 1976)

While renowned speakers, at the Habitat Forum, put out a call to raise awareness about cultural traditions and to attend to justice in the name of world society concerned about environmental justice, some movement was already happening in the direction of understanding consequences of drastic and global economic shifts.

As Shiva has pointed out the problem—for the world—is economic imbalance marked by colonizing practices and projected through “the replication of economic development based on the commercialization of resource use for commodity production,” at the expense of the concept and practice of sustainable development.⁵³⁹ (Shiva 1990) The problem also carries the specter of “...the associated creation of poverty and dispossession,” to quote Shiva, in this light the other troubling question comes up: Who benefits from these power imbalances?

In this realm, to follow the work of the environmental historian, Carolyn Merchant, the scientific revolution, along with global explorations and the beginning of colonization of the sixteenth century, marks a turning point whereby the natural resources of the world, including human resources, come under control of an inherently heavy handed patriarchal mind set. According to Merchant, as an “organic” world view was replaced by the reductionist “mechanistic” world view of modernism, the unchecked exploitation of natural resources and industrial expansion conjoined in the harsh subjugation of minority groups, women, children, and indigenous peoples. In this light, Merchant asks: Who justifies limits

to human freedom and who justifies human power to limit human nature and other human's freedoms?"⁵⁴⁰

It is interesting to note that long before there was a wider acknowledgement of global climate change, Vancouver became the unlikely place from which to build an international ecopeace campaign that became known as Greenpeace. The Greenpeace movement quickly to spread world-wide from localized actions to save the rain forests and actions against nuclear testing, to saving the whales.

Rex Weyler elaborates:

...from the first voyage into the Pacific the 'stop the bomb' to the risky mission to 'save the whales'...Greenpeace is a remarkable achievement: a gripping story; a snapshot of the mid-20th-century zeitgeist; a fascinating study of media manipulation; an uncompromising look at the sometimes brutal internal struggles of activists organizations; and above all, an inspiring call-to-arms that deepens our understanding of what it means to be politically engaged.⁵⁴¹ (Weyler 2005)

From earliest documentary photographs that record the "founding voyage," the Greenpeace movement was known for its direct action. From the beginning Greenpeace activists professed a devotion to an ethical commitment toward non-violent peaceful demonstration. In addition from the pledge to "be there on the spot" as witnesses the goal has been to document unfolding events.

For example, when the first Greenpeace vessel, *The Phyllis Cormack*, aptly renamed *Greenpeace Rainbow Warrior* set sail from Vancouver to protest the American testing of nuclear devices off the island of Amchitka Alaska, the founding members of Greenpeace, known as the *Don't Make a Wave Committee*

took an oath that to “bear witness” invests the character of the peaceful protagonist. Moreover in their belief that the human world ought to pay attention to the natural world, the activists’ were convinced that to be there on the scene: is an ethical and responsible act.⁵⁴²

While the initial Greenpeace actions were more or less local to the Pacific Northwest coast and against nuclear testing in particular. The campaign quickly expanded to take on ecological issues such as the inhumane killing of harp seals and commercial whaling deemed a threat to wider ecological systems and a greater threat to the biodiversity of the larger environment. Other urgent issue such as dumping of toxic waste into the world’s oceans also demanded direct action and as this took on a decidedly confrontational approach, the activists’ view held that to interfere is to make a full bodied and individual commitment to the future of the planet.

The women’s peace camp, which set up at Greenham Common in the United Kingdom, also began as a “witness” action to the potential devastation of earth’s ecosystems. The campaign took a stand against military compliancy in risking the world wide environment and the biosphere. Opened in 1981 the peace camp lasted for ten years up until the implementation Intermediate-Range Nuclear Forces Treaty. Throughout the years of protest, the group exemplified a profound commitment to the concept of world peace. Maintaining a devotion to the southeast Asian Indian tradition of Gandhian non-violent resistance, group members carried on the protest against nuclear warfare from the belief that

should it escalate in all likelihood it would bring down the destruction of the earth's ecosystems. Sarah Hipperson, a member of the women's peace camp elaborates:

On the 5th September 1981, the Welsh group 'Women for Life on Earth' arrived on Greenham Common, Berkshire, England. They marched from Cardiff with the intention of challenging, by debate, the decision to site 96 Cruise nuclear missiles there. On arrival they delivered a letter to the Case Commander which among other things stated 'We fear for the future of all our children and for the future of the living world which is the basis of all life'.⁵⁴³ (Hipperson Greenham Common Women's Peace Camp 1981-2000)

From peace marches to direct action designed to get wide media coverage of the peace and ecological manifesto, participants of the Women's Peace Camp dedicated their lives to saving planet earth and spent more than a decade at the camp to raise awareness of the threat to the well being of planet earth.

To this end, members of the group travelled to New York to launch a legal action against the owner of the Cruise Missile; the government of the United States.⁵⁴⁴ They failed in this bid for environmental justice and returned to occupy the Peace Camp until it was closed, in 2000, and awarded a monument plaque that was placed near the Royal Air Force base. The site now stands a reminder of a long and heroic stand against the destruction of earth's ecosystems and a monument to honor people who took a stand for world peace and for environmental justice.

In India, the home of non-violent resistance, the women's Chipko movement stands as the model in the struggle for environmental justice. Even today the movement maintains diligent watch over the natural environment. The contemporary movement draws its inspiration from the first recorded direct action for sustainable environmental practices, which took place in the early eighteenth century:

The first recorded event of the *Chipko*...took place in the village Khejarli, Jodhpur district in 1730 AD when 363 Bishnois, led by Amrita Devi sacrificed their lives while protecting green Khejri trees, considered by the sacred community, by hugging them...braved the axes of the loggers sent by the local ruler....⁵⁴⁵

The action stands as the precursor for the contemporary Chipko movement of Garhwal and to this day the action stands as an inspiration for environment activism that has spread throughout India. While it is apparent that direct non-violent resistance and civil disobedience by the Chipko group has slowed deforestation in India, by the 1980s the focus was not only on saving trees. The Chipko movement moved into the eco-socialist realm to address wider issues such as socioeconomic disadvantages faced by communities through the interconnection between western style development and the inequality and exploitation of women and minority groups.

The Canadian connection to intervention art and environmental activism, as I have explained, has its roots in the 1960s to extend more recently to consider growing concerns about alarming conditions of climate change. In the made for television full length film, *Water on the Table*, the documentarist Liz Marshall

follows the activities of ecological social activist and United Nations advisor on water, Maude Barlow and her international crusade against the privatization of water.⁵⁴⁶

A comparison may be made with the brilliant 2010 full length feature film *Even The Rain*, directed by Iciar Bollain. Set as a chronicle of a film about a film crew making a version of Columbus's visit to the "New World" *Even The Rain* narrative describes the brutal subjugation and exploitation of the indigenous peoples of Bolivia. In the current era, poverty is the main social concern, jobs are scarce and people will queue for hours for a chance to work on the film and they will work for pittance. The fact is immediately revealed that the film investors have purposely chosen a village in Bolivia for its cheap source of labor thereby to echo the theme of the theme of the film in its making: century's old exploitation of indigenous peoples and the natural resources of planet earth.

The filmic story unfolds around the activities of two historical figures, Spanish colonialist priests, Bartolome de las Casas and Antonio de Montesinos. As the action moves along the cameras capture the activities of the Bolivians in their struggle, in real time—provided through documentary film clips—against the current exploitation of natural resources; namely water. In the parallel story, the narrative champions the basic human right for free access to clean water. While the cameras track activities of a multinational company that has obtained the water rights and selling it back to the people at an inflated rate, the two stories conjoin to make a hard hitting critique of exploitation. As water is the "new gold"

in the world, the film reveals the practice of privatization as a ruthless quest to equal the brutal practices of colonial conquerors in their quest for gold.⁵⁴⁷

From the perspective of the “colonized” the global economy in the interest of the multinational corporations has had devastating and long term effects on the environment and on the sustainability of the local natural economy. Throughout India, economic changes have brought both advantages and disadvantages. Through implied “improvements to the well-being of all,” Vandana Shiva points out that such development “equated with Westernization of economic categories of needs, productivity, growth,” does not necessarily improve possibilities of minority and marginalized groups.⁵⁴⁸ (Shiva 1990) The negative impact on ancient and isolated communities grows, in part, from Western assumptions that are obvious. Vandana Shiva, an active member of the Chipko group, a Physicist and spokesperson for a sustainable “forest culture” explains:

Nature is unproductive. Organic agriculture based on nature’s cycles of renewability is unproductive. Women and tribal and peasant societies embedded in nature are also unproductive. Not because it has been demonstrated that in cooperation they produce fewer goods and services for needs, but because it is assumed that production only takes place when it is mediated by technologies for commodity production, even when technologies destroy life. A stable and clean river is not a productive resource in this view. It needs to be ‘developed’ with dams to be productive. Women, sharing the river as a commons to satisfy the water needs of their families and society, are thus not involved in productive labor. When they are replaced by man’s engineering, water management and water use become productive activities. Natural forests are unproductive according to Western patriarchy. They need to be developed into monoculture plantations of commercial species. Such development becomes equivalent to mal-development—development deprived of the feminine, the conserving, [and] the ecological principle.⁵⁴⁹ (Shiva 1990)

It is the assumption from colonialism, from patriarchy, from the problematic of the “essence of Man and human nature philosophy” and from traditional Western political theory that is connected with institutional disregard for the possibilities of other world views that an encounter between different cultures clash in light of different ways of imagining the world.

In a country that is acknowledged as the largest democratic society in the world and with an economy that is bound to out strip all others, India carries the deep blemish of colonialism. Its indigenous “tribal” populations are often the brunt of economic biases and in support from programs of social change many non-government operatives (NGOs) conjoin community actions in the support of art projects designed to raise community and outside awareness about alarming socioeconomic conditions in the villages. In efforts to improve sociopolitical conditions for marginalized cultural groups, for instance, funds are often available for creative intervention projects. Pooja Sood, the director of the Khōj International Artists’ Workshop located in the village known as the Khirkee Extension that is now part of the greater city of New Dehli, explained that the basic function of the workshop is to bring artists and communities together in activities that encourage debates centered on ethico-aesthetics.⁵⁵⁰

Initiated through a community outreach program, the Khōj studios occupy buildings in an ancient thirteen-century village of Kirkee Gaon that is now surrounded by urban sprawl. As the city of New Dehli expands, the village is caught between an unbelievably exclusive massive shopping plaza, under

construction at the very edge of the village, and an equally unbelievable rise in rents, property values, and excessively exploitive land speculation, the village stands as the very image of India's rapid under checked commercial development. At the Khōj symposium, several artists described projects that were designed to intervene on the part of disposed residents and transient workers that, in one way or another, had been forced to live, literally, in the streets of the little village.

In one commentary the artist Sreejata Roy questioned the lack of social responsibility on the part of the government that allowed migrant workers to flood into the village without first providing accommodation for them. The result is that as the adults work long hours on the luxury plaza, several dozen children are left alone in the streets of the village. In project after project various artists' presented concepts meant to blur private/public spatial boundaries. Through bringing themes of domination and political activism, to their work, they revealed the shifting codes of art in order to focus on the sociopolitical issues as the villages struggle to cope with social and economic change.

Motivated by trying to draw attention to a greater understanding of a "world shared," Artist Sreejata Roy described her Park Project as a complex interaction between the Municipal Corporation of Delhi and the local community. Roy explained that the project provided an illustration of public private space because it encouraged community activity in which an individual performed an action, in a public place, that benefitted the public as a whole. The project entailed a massive clean up of a derelict little public park that had fallen into disuse due mostly to

dumping, but also made inhospitable by the presence of groups of thuggish looking gangs. To reclaim the park for the local public, the art group had first to negotiate with the municipality to clean up the human element, as the artist took on the task of garbage removal. In the end the local community had to be encouraged to occupy the space. What appears as a simple task was made complicated by India's new labor laws about which a viewer (outsider) would be lost to understand.

Nevertheless, as Roy described it, cleaning up and reopening the park to the community was a here-to-fore unheard of accomplishment in India. Moreover, meeting the requirements of the funding was also very complex. As Roy explained, the *Park Project* ascribes the role that aesthetic and sensations play in proving pleasure for the community. A third layer of this project revolves around the concept of the philosophy of nature wherein for the whole of the population, the country *is* Mother India. In addition, to bridge the sociopolitical gap between minority peoples and the wider community moral principles came into play because in practice, the engagement brought disparate communities together in a new atmosphere of harmony. It goes without a long description that "cracker" conditions exist in India that can set off utter chaos between cultural and social differences without warning. In this sense, the *Park Project* provided a more or less safe environment for discussion about aesthetic, beauty, moral judgment, and a community response to a private yet public artistic practice.

In another project, the Khōj artist, Sanchayan Ghosh, provided a slide presentation to extend his thesis *Social Responsibility in Art Practice* described a site specific piece titled *Loom House*. In an over-layered interactive piece, Ghosh worked with the citizens of an ancient hill town village in the district of Darjeeling which was locked in a struggle to reinvent itself in the wake of a military intervention. As I have already mentioned, motivated by the hope of drawing attention to how little responsibility the outside world takes in helping to reweave disrupted lives, the artist addressed the question of community as a paradigm for a living unity. In the sense that ordinary lives become insignificant when they get entangled in the military presence, Ghosh attempted to renew the fabric of ordinary village life by setting up a hand loom up in one of the abandoned military tents and invited the community in to participate in an age old activity.

As I have mentioned, the hand loom carries a complex narrative standing as a symbol of agency that turns on the idea of passive resistance exemplified by the Indian resistance leader Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi. In the struggle for Indian sovereignty, Gandhi used the hand loom as a demonstrative image of agency in the face of the British domination over India's textile industry. In another sense the work produced is not necessarily "surplus to be exploited," in a Marxian sense, but in the reweaving of community the products are simply art and invention in their beauty—thread, cloth, color, durable softness, and wearable products—in the philosophy of humanism, with regard to community it is an

individual functioning within the community to make the community functioning as a whole. However, in regard to India's struggle for democracy, the notion of individual functioning—although it fits with the problematic of *Human nature*, to follow Althusser—the symbol of weaving as a human practice directed toward democratic freedom and freedom of expression situates the practice within the ideology of what Althusser describes as being a theoretical *anti-humanism* directed toward recognition but also to acknowledge conditions of existence.⁵⁵¹ (Althusser 2000)

In a similar sense, Leslie H. Tepper, Curator of Plateau Ethnology at the Canadian Museum of Anthropology (Hull), describes weaving as anthropology of clothing providing information about a “symbolic relationship,” both private and public, between community and each member of the community as each element provides a function, for example:

Patterns made in the arrangement of garments contain references to the social hierarchy, or reinstate cosmological beliefs. Getting dressed is an individual's opportunity to make a statement within the community's cultural text.⁵⁵² (Tepper 1994)

In an extended thesis, James Teit described weaving technology of the Nlaka'pamux of the upper Thompson group in British Columbia, as being integral to building the community. From woven rush mats used as flooring and woven cedar bark “shingling” used on the exterior of various types of lodgings, Teit claimed a place for this technology as it made housing and living “tolerable” in an otherwise harsh climate.⁵⁵³ (Teit 1900) Furthermore, sagebrush and willow

bark, woven in combination with hair and fur, was used in various decorative and practical garments and household “utensils” in numerous forms of intricate basketry, were woven from tree roots. (Teit 1900) Baskets of many types and size provided containers for berries, fish and fish oil, dried meat, eatable roots, containers to store water. Baskets woven from roots were used in cooking food, as Teit explains, “Round, open baskets served as kettles, the food being boiled by throwing hot stones into the baskets into which food had been placed.” (Teit 1900)

Aside from practical use, robes, head coverings, ornaments, blankets, floor mats, lodge coverings, the baskets were all woven (or painted) with intricate designs that in one sense drew special attention to identity, such as a mark of the individual maker. In another sense, Teit noted that painted or woven designs on garments or baskets stood as symbols of communal beliefs and were often exchanged as gifts, marking good will or in recognition of communal ceremonies.⁵⁵⁴ (Teit 1900) Subsequently, these cultural objects communicate something about the experience of society, that through the activity of individuals the objects say something specific about the functioning of the community as a unity or as a whole.

Retracing my steps back to the Khōj projects that were designed to bring community voices to the wider discourse without politicizing individuals, the artists were encouraged to use ethical value judgments as they in turn encouraged community participation in voicing their own understanding of different ways to

live in the growing and complexity of the global market economy. In the context of government sponsorship, critical efficiency is often called to question. No doubt there are examples where financial control may direct exposition, yet generally, as I have discussed, the Challenge for Change (CFC/SN) incentive, in Canada, for instance shows that government funds may operate at an arms length position in sponsoring cutting-edge documentaries made in the name of social change.

In the sense that I draw a parallel with funding for certain artistic interventions in India with government sponsorship for the arts in Canada, there is another parallel between Canada and India that extends from the political fact that Victorian colonization enveloped communities in a long struggle against imagining a world from a Western Eurocentric viewpoint. Obviously as the colonizers enveloped the pursuit of knowledge of the world, from the European central technique of control, this also included taking charge of intellectual and economic property. In Canada, according to terms of the Indian Act, even cultural property comes under the control of Western European power structures. Likewise, as Shiva pointed out, from the perspective of the colonized in India, when production, including knowledge, is mediated only through a Western world vision and based only on Western technologies, the exploitation of women, children, and the natural resources conjoin in the struggle for freedom of expression and with the struggle for freedom from colonialism.⁵⁵⁵ (Shiva 1990)

In an extended essay, Longman, for example, points out that while colonialism severed, in part, communication and cultural sharing — specifically induced through prohibitions in the Indian Act that divide societies — the idea of Aboriginal practice is far from the state of “dissolution,” to use Jean-Luc Nancy’s term. Indeed, drawing from the archive of First Nations art, Longman re-contextualizes representation through individual voices that bring knowledge about community that is different from Eurocentric views but no less important.⁵⁵⁶ (Longman 2006) In another sense, the stereotype that proclaims the loss of culture extending to claim the end of the community, the wider public knows little of the history of the “long tenure” of Aboriginal communities in Canada.

Nevertheless, in an examination of the community as “an idea” carried out by the French Philosopher Jean-Luc Nancy, themes such as knowledge and gnosological propositions are brought together to consider “speech” alongside narrative wherein the “recitation of myths is *lived* and *living*” as communication that belongs to community.⁵⁵⁷ (Nancy 1991) In the similar way that First Nations leaders and artists claim culture as a living experience, Nancy argues that in the experience of advanced capitalism the idea of community can no longer be understood as a location “beyond social divisions” or even as a place for the “solidarity of the individual ”; indeed it ought move past values and ideas of modern experience and modern humanism to embrace something wider.⁵⁵⁸ (Nancy 1991) To put the idea of community back into play, Nancy projects the idea that there ought to be a sharing of singularities. Nancy elaborates:

Community means, consequently, that there is no singular being without another singular being....on one hand, it is not obvious that the community of singularities is limited to 'man' and excludes for example, 'the animal' (...and not also the 'inhuman' or the 'superhuman' or for example... 'woman' ...)...⁵⁵⁹(Nancy 1991)

In a long and roundabout way Nancy brings the idea of community, established in plurality, to show that on one hand the human is “not animal,” but rests in the difference of “singularities” where there is a place of communion which opens conditions for an unbound communication that is inclusive and experimental.

As I stress conditions that exist in Canada that normalize the possibility of the idea of a community based on plurality of voices, cooperation, cultural norms, and lived experience, I suggest that in multiculturalism there is an opportunity to open, or to create, a differential structure capable of moving past values and ideals of western humanism, embedded in the Eurocentric framework of modernism. Obviously hierarchy of cultures, exploitation of nature, supremacy of Western technology, and science exist; but basically, the motivational aim of many posthumanist critics is to contest idealist beliefs in a “human essence” and to seek instead, ways to limit controlling power positions of human knowledge. In this sense, posthumanist proposals parallel work in the field of cultural analysis, which enables an examination of the tensions on the political to evoke a type of discourse embodied in knowledge that is inconsistent with traditional humanist thought.

As Canada is often touted as the test case for the notion that dissimilar peoples can share lands, power, and resources and can respect differences, trying

to live together in peace and harmony, is still a struggle. Moreover, to create community still involves liberal ideas and ideals of justice, freedom, and equality in the exercise of freedom of expression. But the argument from equality is not an assimilationist position, as I have been explaining; rather it is based on the practical application of the theory of equal opportunity resting on the notion of a partnership between the private and the public wherein equality of economic opportunity is linked with topics of social justice, economic policies, political ethics; and, conjoined with themes such as language and education rights, ethnic and religious plurality, individual interpretation, historical perspective, lived realities, and the freedom of expression. Obviously economic growth in Canada spurred cultural production and as cultural activity expanded, publically funded projects continue to come on line to illustrate sociopolitical interest in support of experimental works directed toward social change.

Aside from the documentary films of the NFB Challenge for Change artisans there are myriad examples where social funding supports social media. From the long running ten-part made for television series, *Struggle for Democracy*(Watson) and its companion piece, *Struggle for Justice*, to the publically funded Canadian Broadcast Corporation programs such as the CBC symphony, the public benefits far out weight commercial returns. In addition, it was public funding that enabled the CBC to expand Glenn Gould's radio performances to record his highly acclaimed *Goldberg Variations*. In addition Gould's documentary renditions: *The Idea of the North*, a meditation on the land;

The Late Comers, a focus on the people of New Found Land; and, *The Quite Land*, about a Mennonite community in Manitoba offer a cultural configuration of marginalized communities.⁵⁶⁰

In the same era, a variety of conditions existed in Canada to direct attention away from developments such as the American Feminist Art Movement and the American Civil Rights Movement to focus on First Nations groups in solidarity in their contempt for invasion into their basic human rights. For instance, *Incident at Restigouche* (Obomsawin) provides an overview of antagonisms between provincial governments and Canada's federal government. This documentary film also gives a powerful account of the hostility and brutality that Aboriginal peoples endure in the face of claiming their inalienable treaty rights.

While the film *Incident at Restigouche* documents the degree to which subjugation of the colonized is relentlessly imposed, in the early years of the 1990s Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal communities faced off against each other over economic development. In numerous First Nations direct actions, groups blocked public access roads; and, in British Columbia they closed rail lines as they protested resource exploitation and the insidious practice of clear-cut logging of the ancient rainforests. Labrador First Nations protested against military installations, and an all-out armed conflict erupted at Kanesatake. Known as the Oka standoff, this event alerted the country to the big issues of inadequate education, health care, abject poverty, and to the ongoing issue of Aboriginal land claims.

While it is understandable that hard-hitting critical films that address human rights violations are difficult to view, Obomsawin's *Incident at Restigouche* stands alongside the importance of Stanley Nelson's documentary *Freedom Riders*. This 2009 film exposes the terror of racial intolerance as it reveals overt cultural violence and racial discrimination that is often condoned by the authorities. John Vaillant, writer and guest curator at the 2011 Vancouver documentary film festival comments:

The "Freedom Riders" took place exactly 50 years ago...numbering at first, only a couple of dozen, they believed the time had come to challenge racist laws, once and for all. This they would do but at considerable personal cost. Their courage and discipline in the face of almost incomprehensible hate...is both astonishing and humbling. It is a hard to watch this film...What emboldened them, and probably saved them was their powerful sense of united purpose. The Freedom Riders were an interracial group of clergy, lay people and university students, male and female....⁵⁶¹(Vaillant 2011)

In this essay Vaillant says, "Look around," and then ask: "What would you do?" The documentarist shows what. On May 4, 1961 young people set out to change an appalling social situation in the Southern United States. As Nelson followed their journey, a real story of the struggle for basic human rights unfolds across the screen in historical time.⁵⁶² "Take a look around" Vaillant charged, the struggle for democratic freedom is real and it is ongoing.

The documentary *Soundtrack For A Revolution* directed by Bill Guttentag and Dan Sturman features new performances of "freedom songs" intermixed with archival film footage from the 1960s.⁵⁶³ The archival footage includes interviews with civil rights activists intercut with commentary on the legal basis of equality.

Adding stirring music to underscore the message of civil rights, the struggle for democracy is brought in tune with contemporary struggles. In another expressive documentary film, *Festival Express*, directed by Bob Smeaton, juxtaposition is made between artist and intervention that is meant to contrast the heavy hitting message of inequality with the heavy hitting sound of the artist/musicians. As they create their own expressive moments an event unrolls across the screen that can only be described as a historical moment in popular music.

Released to international acclaim in 2003 the film, *Festival Express* documents a unique concert non-stop jam session that began the summer of 1970 in Toronto and toured in a specially chartered train to end in Calgary a couple of weeks later.⁵⁶⁴ Initially billed as the *Transcontinental Pop Festival* the privately promoted, short lived, concert has found extended life as a documentary film, which has garnered world wide theatrical distribution. The documentarist caught an astonishing number of North America's most innovative musicians: legendary performances by the Grateful Dead; the rock icon Janice Joplin; Buddy Guy, Ian and Sylvia, the New Riders of the Purple Sage; and, Canada's Robbie Robertson with The Band.

Overall, the film documents the "driving sound" of popular rock and offers images of a concert tour that stands as a unique alternative to radio listening. Within the notions of making a social "rupture" rock music has the reputation of being a radical intervention, but it also has deeper roots in culture and social change. Although this film does not address the democratic struggle as such, it

does frame freedom of expression within the era of the human rights movement of the 1970s. The film provides not an escape from the threat of nuclear war, nor a relief from appalling images of the war on Vietnam; rather it documents a contrast, albeit hedonistic, to reactionary ways of looking at history.

Promoted at a time of cultural upheaval, the 1970 concert fit right in with the cry for social change, but it is the documentary film, released in 2003, that calls attention to the social phenomenon that sparked a divide between communities. On one hand, the reality of the anti-war movement was escalating and immigration, harking to the Loyalist years, reinscribed the irenic dialogue of the Pearson years. A new kind of civil disobedience, both festive and expressive directed a call for World Peace. For instance, there was that infamous 1969 “Bed-In” performed by John Lennon and Yoko Ono in Montreal. In Vancouver, the Easter “Be-In” was attended by thousands of ordinary people. Holden in Vancouver’s Stanley Park and sanctioned by the city, the peaceful events of the day were topped off by the legendary singer-songwriter Phil Ochs.

On the other hand not all gatherings were festive. In protest of discrimination toward “hippies” hanging out around the Hudson’s Bay Store in Vancouver’s upscale retail district, a “Sip-In” gathered to demonstrate against the inhumane practice of spraying transient drifters with water from high pressured fire hoses. A “Be-Out” that occurred at the maximum security prison near Vancouver, ended in arrests after yards and yards of prison fencing were cut.

Beginning the spring of 1971, a large transient population turned up in Vancouver. They immediately created a squatters park near the entrance to Vancouver's world famous Stanley Park. When it became known that the property was destined for redevelopment by the international Four Seasons Hotel chain, the camp was quickly tagged "All Seasons Park." Although there was some effort on the part of the city to remove the squatters, throughout that summer the anti-development demonstrations were more or less tolerated. When the seasonal fall rains started, the "all season campers" packed up and went home. However, their message hit another home and the property was eventually handed over to the Vancouver parks board where today it extends the entrance of Stanley Park.

For a few years Canada became a haven for dissension and war-resisters. It was a safe place to speak out: to demonstrate against human rights violations; to call a cease to war profiteering, to call a halt to nuclear proliferation and to environmental devastation. In this era, activists set Vancouver out as a destination place for direct political intervention. As Vancouver's downtown lower-east-side became the target for commercial development and "gentrification," social dissidents turned their attention to protest land speculation. In the summer of 1971, for example, what started out as a small banner demonstration in support of affordable housing and the maintenance of a "cheap rent" district, another group joined in to call for the decriminalization of marijuana.

The peaceful "Smoke-In" in Vancouver's old warehouse district soon attracted the police, some came on horseback. According to witnesses the police

seemed “on edge” possibly due to recent summer riots in the United States and in particular, a demonstration in Seattle the week before. In any rate, in very short time a skirmish developed and the police charged into the crowd to make an exceptionally aggressive and unprovoked attack on the demonstrators.

In an ironic gesture, Vancouver based artist, Stan Douglas, lifts conceptual images directly from the historic “riot” to recreate a large backlit ‘photo mural. This mural graces the entrance hall of a high-end luxury apartment building—which displaced those less able—that now borders on the very site of the protest against inner-city gentrification.⁵⁶⁵

Combining the technology of digital still photography with images created through the use of a film crew, casting, and location-as-staged property, Douglas began producing “fiction” documentary work to emphasize social pressures of the 1970s. In a recent article in *Artforum*, Los Angeles based writer, Rachel Kushner, described Douglas’s production a means to create:

...tension between staging and verisimilitude, its deliberate freeze-frame capture of costume-drama conversations—a way of piling up and compressing various layers of history into one photo-ready moment.⁵⁶⁶ (Kushner 2012)

To a large extent, the other world of illusion that appeals to historical experience opens a reading of all the signs of periodization. From assigning cultural events to specific periods, these fictive productions are meant to open the sociopolitical discourse in ways that may be used to evaluate social injustice. In this sense I point to several considerations raised by Jean François Lyotard that are directed

toward an evaluation of the conditions of production in which new technologies bring possibilities for “paralogy” in recognition of difference and multiplicity; including those differences in language that border new considerations in light of creating conditions for alternative ways of knowing.

In all of this, the value of justice and the unique value of the individual voice hovers to be discovered, rediscovered, and re-empowered through the medium of storytelling; and, in this century, through interactive social media. In Lyotard’s terms “justice is a value that is neither outmoded nor suspect”; indeed, it appears more so as a form of communication that might open discourse to different modes of thought such as, multiple interpretations, pluralism, and a technological approach to knowledge. In addition, given the nature of knowledge driven by information-processing, commodification and market competition, Lyotard claimed that technology cannot but help to tend toward domination; yet at the same time, he also claimed a place for the “computerization of society” as a positive force for new and inventive narratives.

Where different uses may shape social transformations, alternative approaches to knowledge and the use of computer technology ought to open sociopolitical and cultural interaction toward a dialogical analysis of power.⁵⁶⁷

(Lyotard 1984) Lyotard explains:

It could become the “dream” instrument for controlling and regulating the market system extended to include knowledge....But it could also aid groups discussing metaprescriptives by supplying them with the information they usually lack for making knowledgeable decisions. The line to follow is, in principle, quite simple: give the public free access to the memory and data banks....the stakes would be

knowledge (or information if you will), and the reserve of knowledge—language’s reserve of possible utterances—is inexhaustible. This sketches the outline of politics that would respect both the desire for justice and the desire for the unknown.⁵⁶⁸

While technology ought to open a dialogical opportunity, the many, perhaps hereto-for excluded voices, may also be brought together in the process that creates plurality, to follow Mikhail Bakhtin, that offer myriad rather than fixed ways to interpret meaning.

In another sense, Lyotard’s position on the “heteromorphous” nature of language, in consideration of the function of words, equalizes opportunity through computer technology in lines that join in many different historical and cultural interstices. Rather than placing the activity of periodization into a negative position, all sorts of possibilities are opened in the assigning of historical and cultural events to the possibilities of evaluation and critical discourse. As an extension, new technological prediction has appeared — the internet for example — which has enlarged the horizon of knowledge; this not just toward a technological deterministic relationship, but toward a continuum where text and machine — simple tools — compliment the complex cycle of communication.

In Lyotard’s call for “vigilance” against systems in which power can present itself promotes the stand that postmodern knowledge may be thought to refine our sensitivity to difference, which appears attractive to Native scholars and artists alike. On myriad fronts, while the role of dialogue may be directed toward assuming consensus, it is only a through particular state of discussion that a sort

of consensus carries the idea that cultural equality ought to be considered on the level of the whole. In the sense where taking “speech” as open ended empowerment—rather than containment—creates a function of the differential or imaginative or “paralogical activity,” aids in bringing Lyotard’s idea forward, in ought to be acknowledged that different voices enrich the cultural world to widen the philosophical horizon.

Moreover, from the idea that the primary purpose of storytelling is educational knowledge passed through generations, the process is a cyclical rather than a lineal time concept. Bruce M. White, writer and ethno-historian elaborates:

...the philosopher Jean-François Lyotard wrote that such accounts are a succinct record of the beliefs of the societies in which they are told....Ojibwa elders told stories like this to teach young people about the world....As such, these narratives are also a useful way for outsiders to learn about the people’s worldview and understand their view of history.⁵⁶⁹ (White 2006)

In another sense, White addressed the logic of reciprocity in Aboriginal stories that honor the concept of “gifts” and “respect” for knowledge that is a necessity in order to keep the whole system cyclical and functioning. Taking that into account, White described a parallel with the logic of technology to reiterate the fact that:

In their earliest interactions with the French and British, the Ojibwa made use of the same gifts, ceremonies, and words that they used in dealing with animals, plants, and other beings. The logic of approaching Europeans in this way was solid; interaction with Europeans was important because of the valuable technology that Europeans brought with them. Reciprocity was necessary to keep the system operating.⁵⁷⁰ (White 2006)

These ideas and stories are not to be interpreted within the realm of “origin” narratives, but rather as belonging to the world of changing ideas and technologies. In consideration of how functioning social systems operate through the concept of consensus and reciprocity, Derrida wrote of the gift that is linked to writing as being “inseparable” from obliging the receiver to respond in kind.⁵⁷¹ (Derrida 1991)

Bringing this to Aboriginal practices where gift giving is an integral part of the cultural domain, barring the legacy of the wampum, indigenous cultures are thought by Western standards as not to have writing; yet they were capable of keeping track of obligation. In this sense, as the gift stands as a social act connected to community reciprocity, one example may be drawn from the historical fact that gifts exchanged between Aboriginal groups and some early French settlers stood in the promise of land “use” but not in light of an agreements for outright land ownership, as in the terms of the Royal Proclamation 1763.

Another example links the relationship between time, writing, and the act of gifting within the social circle of gifting where the difference between an outright gift and one that demands reciprocity stands on protocol of inference, to follow Derrida’s explanation. Drawing conclusion about re-gifting from the well-known research on the logic of gift giving at the Aboriginal practice of the potlatch, Derrida explains the position of time and reciprocity by quoting Franz Boas:

In all his undertaking the Indian trusts to the aid of his friends. He promises to pay them for this assistance at a later date. If the aid

provided consists in valuable things, which are measured by the Indians in blankets, just as we measure them in money, he promises to pay back the value of the loan with interest. The Indian has so system of writing and consequently, to guarantee the transaction, the promise is made in public. To contract debts on one hand, and to pay those debts on the other, constitutes the potlatch.⁵⁷² (Derrida 1991)

Such gifting supposes that after a given a length of time, “the performative” action would be repaid, but that is never indicated outright.⁵⁷³ (Derrida 1991)

Nevertheless, the implication is there, as Derrida suggests, to conclude that the act of giving is like writing, in that it leaves a “marking of a trace” that takes for granted the process of reciprocity.(Derrida 1991)

During the active period of the potlatch — before it was banned by the Indian Act and criminalized by Eurocentric law — the Native people carefully controlled the exchange of community wealth. In writing this history from an Aboriginal viewpoint, scholar and anthropologist Gloria Cranmer Webster, a member of the Kwakiutl First Nation of Alert Bay, describes modern potlatch as a celebratory “joyful” gift giving ceremony:

The first public potlatch after the dark days was held in Alert Bay in 1963, to celebrate the completion of a big house that had been built there. For many young people this was their first potlatch...it was a joyful occasion on which we celebrate the strength of our old people who, against the combined efforts of the government and the church, had held on to their belief...Those old people who had survived the dark years shared their knowledge with all who were eager to learn...⁵⁷⁴ (Cranmer 1992)

As for knowledge gleaned through these lived experiences, the question of social justice comes to fore because, in the long preamble leading up to the patriation of

the British North America Act 1867 and to the ratification of the Canadian Constitution 1982 with the entrenchment of a charter of rights and freedoms — including the notion that the 1992 ought to be a celebratory year — the historical experience proves the falsification of humanist values.

Indeed, from the banning of the potlatch, the winter dances, the sun ceremony the repatriation of the potlatch suggests that despite prohibitions, the brutal reprises, the confiscation of several hundred ceremonial objects—just from Alert Bay alone—the resolve of the people to continue their traditions in private attests to the fact that there is proof from the lived experience that prohibitions can be contested and over turned.

It is not so much that Canada’s federal government overturned the law, to “give” voice back to the people; but in interventionist art and in critical commentary, the fact is that the people kept their voices. Indeed, continuing the ceremonies in private and by refusing to give in to an unjust law, they brought the government to acknowledge and to uphold the resolve of justice and the values of a Just Society.

The modern public performance of the potlatch stands out as interventionist cultural practice that describes a timeless cultural activity; in the art of the dance, the symbols of the clan and kinship come alive. In the stories and in the ritual of gift giving the fact is reinforced that there is a living culture that survives in a unity provided by the plurality of voices brought to life in the ceremony. As such, that might prove the truth value in the art as an object that carries knowledge from

the past to the future and beyond — seven generations. Thus, the elders who have survived, share their knowledge to “ensure that each group enjoyed a healthy sense of identity,” to quote Cranmer.⁵⁷⁵ (Cranmer 1992)

To take that information to the direction of Lyotard’s standpoint on knowledge — taken as a series of non-homogeneous experiences — and within a cultural context, it has to be acknowledged — it is obvious that knowledge may move between different societies at different times to conjoin experiential knowledge with thinking about time, space, and scientific truth. Indeed, Lyotard pointed out that Plato used story telling as a way to explain theory and to legitimate science.⁵⁷⁶ (Lyotard 1984) In the sense that Lyotard exemplified Plato’s fondness for discourse, through his recourse to story telling, it appears that Lyotard called upon a different kind of “grand narrative” to explain the point that “Scientific knowledge cannot know and make known that it is true knowledge without resorting to the other, narrative, kind of knowledge.”⁵⁷⁷ (Lyotard 1984) In this sense, as Lyotard justifies a “narrative kind of knowledge” used not as a tool of authority, but as a method to refine “our sensitivity to differences,” so too the stories from First Nations peoples enrich culture and society and ought to be heard.⁵⁷⁸ (Lyotard 1984)

While the storytellers, film-makers, and artists that I have been quoting and the objects that I have described may not claim a place for scientific truth, they do call for recognition of certain truths projected through the parameters of cultural production. As they perceive the possibility of describing different worlds and

different world views in art, Aboriginal scholars and artists such as Mary Longman, Bruce White, and lawyer social activist Vine Deloria Jr., extrapolate from Western European history thoughts about spatial thinking that requires ethico-aesthetic systems related to a physical world; yet, to quote Deloria:

The very essence of Western European identity involves the assumption that time proceeds in a linear fashion; further it assumes that at a particular point in the unraveling of this sequence, the peoples of Western Europe became guardians of the world [ultimately to] the affirmation that time is peculiarly related to the destiny of the people of Western Europe.⁵⁷⁹ (Deloria 1994)

Moreover, as Lyotard claims a place for “voice” in the realm of academic systems, he champions “many different language games” because they open learning to a “heterogeneity of elements” that may offer a place for art intervention to challenge the Western European penchant for domination.

In the realm of education, for example, “local determination” may enter to bear witness to “obsolescence of the metanarrative apparatus of legitimation,” while in the fragmentation of language games, Lyotard seized an opportunity to argue for alternative *small* narratives associated with localized creativity.

⁵⁸⁰(Lyotard 2003)while not corresponding to the accepted cannon of knowledge, the “small narrative” has the capacity to carry knowledge forward and from the past of a different level, but nonetheless valid. In addition, rather than upholding a foundational narrative based on Western philosophical tradition, Lyotard holds hope for localized activity that ought to be recognized as a viable source of

knowledge. In short, a postmodern view maintains the cause of the local, the plural, and the inherent function of the diversity of human practices.

Cultural representation and the ongoing struggle for identity

In this section I turn to consider the relationship between ethico-aesthetics and an approach to cultural studies in consideration of the sociopolitical production of art and political activism. Here, I address the effects of critical theories in the realm of creative production, but I also bring the question: How should one live? A deciding principle, I think, is the lesser theorized aspect of the practical application of the idea of equality of opportunity.

While Canada's policies of bilingualism and multiculturalism open way to a more inclusive heterogeneous discourse, in light of postcolonial studies and deconstructive claims, the ideals of political activism involve cultural practices, following Derrida, which "are caught in a network of differences that give a textual structure to what we can know of the world."⁵⁸¹ (Derrida 2003) Derrida posits the view that expression is always contingent upon differences, and in these differences there is a kind of truth, that despite the fact that our references are always changing, it appears from a close reading of the text, that it is impossible to separate the signified from the signifier.⁵⁸²(Lather 2007)

While the notion that a "close" reading of the "text" offers numerous ways to interpret or project meaning, Roland Barthes claimed a double place for the narrative that is active for both writer and reader. In addition from the idea that

every work carries a “sub-text,” Barthes claimed a place for language that is also a double activity in the sense that, as a system of communication taken to the realm of *myth*, the text contains information that is both oral in its discourse and historical in its context. In the sense that Barthes proclaims that “Every object in the world can pass from a closed, silent existence to an oral state, open to appropriation by society, for there is no law, whether natural or not, which forbids talking about things.”⁵⁸³ (Barthes 2003) I take his research into my inquiry as I claim a place for “voice” in story telling that ought to have the same “rights” as other knowledge: that is to say, the right to speak and to be heard.

From Spivak’s considered opinion, the speculative force of references that are constantly changing, suggests the possibility of establishing new relational structures that cannot but help to “swerve away from mere philosophical correctness,” just as the question of *différance* cannot but help to open the academic discourse to a greater emphasis on “ethics and its relationship to the political.”⁵⁸⁴ (Lather 2007) In other words, Spivak finds in Derrida’s work places where he examined philosophical texts to find a “maneuver” of sorts that always sets one thing “off from what it is not.”⁵⁸⁵ (Spivak 1999) As such, these maneuvers become demonstrations of the instability of language. Since this shows that there is only an arbitrary relation between the signifier and the signified, Derrida claims that meaning is always breaking apart. Moreover, as meaning is always moving along a chain that links one sign to another, meaning is always entangled within various chains whose links are moveable.

In making a claim for “voices of understanding” I draw attention to legal arguments in practice, rather than philosophical positions in theory, but to state the case for knowledge, I draw attention to storytelling that passes information along generationally. We know this from “fairy tales,” from epic novels, from Greek Mythology and, from gnostology: it is well-known that knowledge embedded in ancient cultural practices and in cultural objects carries “truthful” information about the world. In such momentous acknowledgement of orality in the practice of story telling, the “Truth and Reconciliation” commissions, in Canada and elsewhere, claim a place for cultural knowledge — heard in court cases — that is considered as a valid and objective mode of presenting critical fact. In addition, in the pursuit of knowledge of the world, storytelling cannot but enrich the fabric of the community; whether this be a political, or economic practice or whether it comes from the artistic community, I believe that it is past the matter of the philosophy of “giving voice to the voiceless,” but more a matter of a readiness to listen and to be heard.

Myriad examples concerned with linking the aesthetic experience with the historical experience are bound to direct attention to the benefits of cultural experience. Thompson Highway, Joane Cardinal-Schubert, Jane-Ash Poitras, and Carl Beam just to mention a few Aboriginal artists, all speak to the need for an academic Aboriginal art history directed toward creating a new climate of awareness about historical perspectives that intertwine an intellectual notion of the pleasure of viewing cultural objects with representational attribution that

ought to belong to the history of art. For several decades now, the artist and scholar Mary Longman, has been addressing indigenous art as a practice belonging to the world history of art. In this sense she has been instrumental in established courses of Aboriginal art studies, for instance for the Nicola Valley Institute of Technology, a post secondary college located in NLaka'pamux territory of the Nicola Valley in south central British Columbia and, she has gone on to organize a similar program at the University of Saskatchewan at Saskatoon Saskatchewan.

In claiming a “place” for indigenous representation, the late artist Joan Cardinal-Schubert, worked in a variety of media to unite the pluralism of “Indian spiritualism and political issues” to make contemporary statements about “life and experience.”⁵⁸⁶ In the sense that Aboriginal artists contest the European writing of history, their artistic expression often addresses concerns of human rights including the topic of ecological devastation in light of colonization and new developments in globalization. Cardinal-Schubert and Jane-Ash Poitras, for example, both draw attention to historical injustices from a personalized viewpoint. In the series titled *Preservation of a Species*, Cardinal-Schubert juxtaposes text with visual images set against a school room style “black board” that has become part of a well-known installation/participation performance work.

To begin, the performance, audience participants are invited to sit on black painted wooden chairs that have been previously set up row upon row. The chairs are tied together at the leg with lengths of white cloth. On each chair rests a book

covered with white paper to represent stories that are yet to be told and on each book, a red apple. The position of powerlessness is symbolized by the white ties that hold the chairs together, the apple is placed in reference to the derogatory slur that an educated Indian is only red on the outside; and, the books covered in white paper, provide a hopeful sign directed toward telling those stories that have been suppressed by the cultural genocide perpetrated by the residential schools system.

The blackboard of the installation carries a written text that addresses a localized situation gleaned beforehand from the community. Cardinal-Schubert invites members of the audience to take a seat in the installation and from the belief that a different view of history ought to be told, she enacts a teacher/student performance by pointing to information on the blackboard and then asks the student/participant to explain its significance from their own experience and memory. Taken together, the visual installation and the performance recall details of history in the Canadian experience which are significant, but which are obviously left out of schoolroom texts.⁵⁸⁷

Jane-Ash Poitras, artist and educator, also refers to the legacy of colonialism and role that the residential school has played in the struggle for an Aboriginal identity. Combining text with visual language/words, Poitras incorporates historical and contemporary symbolism to draw attention to the negative impact of acculturation through Westernized ideas on education. In work that juxtaposes traces of indigenous spirituality with text, Poitras incorporates the strategy of the collage to conjoin news paper clippings with pictograph images to urge the

viewer, and the Canadian public, to think long and hard about the history that tried to assimilate distinct peoples and their cultural into a European view of the world.

Working from the belief that story telling brings historical values to light, Poitras attests to the importance of the timelessness of cultural stories. Moreover, by directing her cultural critique toward a reflection of values and ethics in keeping with a desire to explore story telling within political and cultural constructs of her own Aboriginal community, Poitras offers a perspective on the basic human right to retell these stories from lived experiences in ways that the academic community ought to honor.

In the previous chapter, I discussed the importance of recognizing the truths of contesting histories. I described certain recommendations directed toward bringing Aboriginal concerns in line with Canada's 1982 charter of rights and freedoms. In addition, I explained that in order to gather information from the wider community in advance of acknowledging 1992, as a significant historical milestone, a Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (RCAP) was struck. The intent of the commission was "to restore justice to the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people in Canada. To this end, four Aboriginal and three non-Aboriginal commissioners were appointed to investigate social conditions and to advise the government on their findings."⁵⁸⁸ (Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples *People to People, Nation to Nation* 1996) Co-chaired by René Dussault, J.C.A. and Georges

Erasmus, National Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, Commissioners Paul L. A. H. Chartrand, J. Peter Meekison, Viola Robinson, Mary Skillet, and Bertha Wilson, visited “96 communities” and over a period of “178 days...consulted with dozens of experts and reviewed past inquiries and reports.”⁵⁸⁹ The preamble to the final report reinscribes the ideology that as Canada’s claim to be a “fair” and “enlightened society,” Canada must be a Just Society. The report opens with this statement:

After 500 years of a relationship that has swung from partnership to domination, from mutual respect and co-operation to paternalism and attempted assimilation, Canada must now work out a fair and lasting terms of coexistence with Aboriginal people.⁵⁹⁰ (RCAP 1996)

Justifying reasons to work out fair terms of coexistence, the commissioners restated the need to bring basic human rights for Canada’s Aboriginal peoples into accord with Canada’s 1982 constitution and charter of rights and freedoms. Moreover, citing the need to raise the level of awareness of ordinary Canadians about the history of Aboriginal subjugation and of Aboriginal contributions to the history of Canada, the commission set out “a number of recommendations directed toward involving Canadians in a “broad and creative campaign of public education.”⁵⁹¹ In this light the commission proposed:

...a 20-year agenda for change... We do not propose tinkering with the Indian Act of launching shiny new programs. What we propose is fundamental, sweeping and perhaps disturbing—but also exciting, liberating, ripe with possibilities... We offer a vision of what is possible and lots of ideas about how to get started. The agenda for change can begin today... Indeed, it is already getting started... All of us have a part in securing the new relationship—peoples and governments, Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal, organizations big and

small. We have 20 years of building and experimentation to look forward to—using for the first time in many decades, all the energies of Aboriginal peoples as they create and live the dream that they can share with others and yet be fully at home...as full partners is a renewed federation.⁵⁹² (RCAP 1996)

This ought to have set Canada on a path of rediscovery, but the twenty year time line has passed and Canadians, in general, appear no closer to enlightenment about Aboriginal peoples, communities and practices than in 1991. Addressing lack of knowledge about colonial practices in Canada, the Associate Curator at the Mendel Art Gallery at Saskatoon writes about the issue of education in Mary Longman's recent exhibition, *Transposing Perspectives*.⁵⁹³ Jen Budney elaborates:

As an artist, mother, and professor, Mary Longman is deeply invested in the act, or art, of pedagogy. In all her endeavours [sic], she shares her understanding of colonial history and Aboriginal culture—ideas and information that were largely unavailable to her and other public school students when she was growing up in Saskatchewan in the 1960s and 1970s.⁵⁹⁴ (Budney 2011)

Sadly to report, despite governmental efforts to implement First Nations studies in educational institutions, the situation has only changed slightly, at many levels, Canadians in general are uninformed when it comes to understanding the colonial history of Canada and the subjugation of Aboriginal peoples under the harsh terms of the Indian Act.

However, it may be said that from the directive to improve public education, museums and art exhibitions have proved more open to Aboriginal cultural practices. For example, in 2009 Canada's well-known contemporary

Artist-Run Centre in Vancouver, Western Front, presented a month long symposium titled *Speaking in Landscape Tongues*. An exhibition, co-curated by Faye Heavyshield, featured “some of North America’s leading Aboriginal artists including new works by Faye Heavyshield, Cheryl L’Hirondelle, Marianne Nicholson, Jason Lujan, James Nicholas, and Sandra Semchuk. An adjunct performance of a soundscape by L’Hirondelle and Scott Thompson, meant to “take the audience beyond the spiritual, cultural, and political obstacles on the journey of learning native tongues,” opened the exhibition.

In conjunction with the Western Front program, the public/teaching Museum of Anthropology at the University of British Columbia presented works titled *Speaking To The Old Ones*, which featured video installations meant to draw attention to how knowledge is passed along generationally:

Installed amongst old works housed in the museum of Anthropology’s Great Hall, the placement of contemporary artworks in direct conversation with the Museum’s objects relates the experiences of telling stories between elders and youth, between communities, between urban experiences and history, and between our indigenous community objects and their making.⁵⁹⁵ (Western Front 2009)

Standing as agents of intercultural exchange, venues that open the public to new directions in Aboriginal arts appear to be responding to the RCAP report. I have been quoting from an exhibition held in 1992 titled INDIGENA Contemporary Native Perspectives that was mounted in direct response to the idea of a celebration of 1492. In addition, as recent as March 2012 a “spring” season of

Aboriginal visual-art opened to public viewing at the Vancouver Art gallery that promised to shine a “spotlight” on a survey of contemporary First Nations artists.

The exhibition titled *BeatNation: Art, Hip Hop and Aboriginal Culture*, brought together mixed-media productions, music video and installations. It also included street art, traditional wood carvings, fashion photography, and documentary film. All in all the exhibition offered “...a provocative range of pop culture forms juxtaposed with traditions (such as storytelling) and long-standing concerns (such as land rights and the preservation of languages)” to quote a newspaper review.⁵⁹⁶(Lawrence 2012) With *BeatNation*, the artistic narrative stands as a discourse and as education about ancient traditions brought to the twenty-first century in a language of performance that conjoins the elements of various visual forms representing the art of nationhood and of an Aboriginal desire to exert sovereignty.

In an earlier example, poet and teacher Garry Gottfriedson teamed up the artist George Littlechild and in a multicultural art exhibition at the Richmond Art Gallery in the late 1990s, they presented their work along side that of Linda Spanner Dayan Frimer and Reisa Smiley Schneider. As Littlechild and Frimer claim painting as visual medium to express “cultural identities and to reconnect with their people,” the poets Gottfriedson and Schneider brought their voices to a “reawaking of Aboriginal and Jewish cultural practices and teachings. Thus in a dialogical exhibition, the artist speak to each other and to the listener viewing audience to convey how cultural specificity may be inclusive while at the same

time validate sharing knowledge between different nations, in art that comes from a position of “truth, consciously and unconsciously, expressing...inner life of the artist and the reality of his/her environment.”⁵⁹⁷

In a book version of the same works, titled *Imprints Of Cultural Survival In Honour Of Our Grandmothers*, the conjoined text and images reassert the artistic conversation apparent in the exhibition.⁵⁹⁸ Each from a different Diasporas, each from disparate cultures, they bring their artistic sensibility to a conversation wherein narratives and story telling create dialogues between them—as artists—and bring to us, as viewer participants, a greater understanding of different lived experiences.

As stages of the artists’ lives are revealed in the work, two sorts of interpretation may arise. On one hand, there is a connection between an art instinct and a need to mediate experience through an art object. On the other, there is a unity in the objects of perception that belong to what is described as the concept of art. Taken together, the language of visual and audio visual—reading the poetry, for example—there is also a plurality in the concept of expression that belongs to the category of signification and to new theories of language and discourse.

In another example, the playwright Tomson Highway brought a pluralistic sensibility to the stage with the play, *The Rez Sisters*. (Highway 1988) Additionally Tomson’s work offers insight into the oddity and complications of a multicultural relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal society.⁵⁹⁹

(Highway 1989) With the production of *Dry Lips Oughta Move to Kapuskasing* Tomson continued that strategy and by combining Aboriginal cultural symbols with popular music in combination with an Aboriginal dialogue offering “peculiarities” of “reserve” he life conjoined numerous references to the ancient Greek tradition of staging tragedy, comedy, and hope to bring his own creative/scholastic voice to living theatre.

It is from experience that we learn to couch our voices, not so much that we do not know our scholarship, the problem is that to follow strict Western patriarchal education systems it is more so that we may not speak our scholarship nor may we present it through our own objects of production/representation or art objects. In an essay titled “Who Claims Alterity,” Spivak affirmed that the specific role of language as used as an authoritative tool is to claim the right to speak for self and to universality; but she also spoke in favor of recognizing alternative approaches that do not claim universality. In a decidedly forthright manner, Spivak revealed her own frustration with academic systems that prohibit the use of voice.

As Spivak introduced the personal as an appropriate means to contest academic systems that set limits on particulars of personal research, she advocates the use of localized expression. In other words, she upholds the authority of “voice” to contrast objectivity in the realm of “scientific” research.⁶⁰⁰ (Spivak 2003) Writing from the standpoint of a “postcolonial” scholar, Spivak challenged

the mastery of Eurocentric history writing for its power to induce the “other” toward complicity, for example:

The masterworks implicated in Indian decolonization offered four great legitimizing codes consolidated by the national bourgeoisie by the way of cultural imperialism, nationalism, internationalism, secularism, culturalism. If the privileged subject operated by these codes masquerades as the subject of an alternative history, we must meditate upon how they (we) are written, rather than simply read their masque as historical exposition.⁶⁰¹ (Spivak 2003)

Obliviously contesting systems that seem to claim an alternative history, yet in reality can only pose as an inefficient substitute, Spivak perceived a bind that not only holds the subject within the dominate paradigm of scientific objectivity, but obfuscates efforts of escape. It is not that she suggested that the subaltern does not speak; it has more to do with whether they might be heard.

In searching for a possible avenue of escape, Spivak spoke of how, “...in the making of young colonial subjects, an ‘experience’ of reading the subject is produced in that context, “of an unwillingness to hear the “other”⁶⁰² (Landry 1996) In the wider realm however, Spivak called for clear speech, capable of making a “transition between the speaker and the listener” within a class-analysis and, by drawing attention to “how historical narratives are negotiated,” she drew attention to the power of social and economic politics.⁶⁰³ (Spivak 2003)

With the introduction of Foucault’s social analysis, the politics of *biopolitics* comes into play to conjoin with the notion of sovereignty and with modes of power. Yet, for the disposed, the subjugated and those marginalized by oppression the struggle for sovereignty is bound up with the struggle for

democratic freedom in which welfare and good government policies ought to support the theory of equality of opportunity.

As I follow Spivak's analysis and take my examples from localized activities and collective practices, I constantly find, that in the "masculinist discourse" of art and history writing, for example, the construction of sexuality and gender exclusivity undervalue individual expression; and, in the realm of knowledge it tends to keep systems of learning in place that work to keep people down.

Here it is important to mention Paulo Freire's influences on teaching practices for example, where he insists that educational practices must "respect the educands, and therefore never manipulate them."⁶⁰⁴ (Freire 2009) In discovering ways to negotiate modes of production that are inherently complex, both Spivak and Freire draw upon ethical movements in education that promote respect for the other in terms of practices that are democratic and inclusive. For example, in the argument for the need of "progressive educators" capable of sidestepping power structures held by the dominant group, Freire elaborates:

...we progressive educators have never to underestimate or reject knowledge from living experience, with which educands come to school or to informal centers of education...to underestimate the wisdom that necessarily results from sociocultural experience, is at one and the same time a scientific error, and the unequivocal expression of the presence of an elitist ideology. It may be hidden, concealed, ideological foundation that on the one hand blinds a person to objective reality, and on the other, encourages the nearsightedness of those who reject popular knowledge as having led them into scientific error. In the last analysis, it is this 'myopia' that, once it becomes an ideological obstacle, occasions epistemological error.⁶⁰⁵ (Freire 2009)

In other words, Freire supports knowledge from living experience. However, he is also fully aware of the paradox between “popular culture criticism” that tends to “disable respect for the knowledge of common sense” and the position of the universal, in which the question of value is often employed to explain the “collision” between the social ideologies and the struggle to be heard.

In upholding Freire’s thesis for respect, I draw attention to the work of Rita L. Irwin, a professor and department head of Curriculum Studies at the University of British Columbia, Vancouver, Canada. “Teaching,” she says, “is performative knowing in meaningful relationships with learners.”⁶⁰⁶ (Irwin 2004) Moreover in addressing theory, Irwin stresses its necessity in “opening up the spaces between artist-researcher-teacher” in the interest of advancing the multiplicity of lived experiences through the articulation of “aesthetic experiences... guided by narrative text.”⁶⁰⁷ (Irwin 2004) In an obvious adherence to Freire’s pedagogical ethics, Irwin stresses the point that teaching ought to be more than dogma; it ought to encourage attention to memory, especially from a psychobiological view, which holds that experiences do reinforce attitudes relevant to the development of artistic and political agency. (Irwin 2004) To encourage research from such a standpoint is to support knowledge from experience without politicizing the student while at the same time offering respectful attention to their lived experiences.

As I mentioned in my introduction, D. W. Winnicott holds the distinction of extending ideas from the realm of human psychology into the realm of creativity

where he claimed a place for developing esteem that requires a means. “The subject” he says, “must have developed the capacity to use an object” and the means to this end lies in a healthy environment.⁶⁰⁸ (Winnicott 1982) The application of this theory may be understood in light of Irwin’s discussion about the classroom atmosphere that must provide a safe environment where the learner may have an opportunity to relax defense mechanisms. Of course, it is a given that not all students come into a classroom filled with fears and anxieties, but there is a great stress on students to do well, Irwin elaborates:

They yearn for enhanced meaning, they wish to create, and they long for their own-self-expressions of certainty and ambiguity. Often in their questioning comes a softening spirit towards the self. There’s a desire to live in a space of similarity *and* difference, of resolution *and* continuous growth, of nurturing *and* withholding.⁶⁰⁹ (Irwin 2004)

Obviously in order to explore wide range of thoughts and experiences, the field of teaching is about opening opportunities, but it also about knowing where that fine line *is* between teaching and treating students clinically or politicizing them. In an attempt to open learners to the possibilities of discourse directed toward artistic and political efficiency, in the area of acquiring knowledge, it is important to shift possibilities into the realm of freedom of expression.

In claiming the “local world” as a logical place of knowledge, Freire insisted upon an ethical and a progressive approach to education in its capacity to encourage recall, memory, and lived experiences. These concepts are prominent in Freire’s discourse about pedagogy. This position is also held up in the work of a number of artist teachers such as Rita L. Irwin, Emma LaRocque, Laura Peers,

and Mary Longman. These champions of the practical application of localized knowledge act from the belief that experiential knowledge provides a mediatory balance between “pragmatic” discourses and the viewpoint from dominant discourses that uphold the “object norm” in ways that undermine the legitimacy of a different perspective.

In the advancement of knowledge, directed toward an understanding of how codes of production aid in concealing ideology, the reader needs the opportunity to open a text toward a deeper analysis. Spivak underlines this as a skill necessary in order to understand theory in light of cultural coding and its consequences.

“Problems arise,” she says, when the idea of a speaking subject, capable of relating lived experiences, is reduced “literally as “talk.”⁶¹⁰ (Spivak 1996) In other words, in consideration of historical interpretation, Spivak draws attention to a problematic where constructs of “psychobiography” seek to open discourse, yet end up driving the individual to conform. In Spivak’s view, the ideal situation is really to create “reading subjects” who are less inclined to act through “learning habits of mind” that demonstrate a rote “...by merely knowing something.”⁶¹¹

(Spivak 1996) Pointing to her own “intellectual crises” as a colonized subject, , Spivak speaks from experience when she critiques teaching that is directed toward “the making of young colonial subjects.”⁶¹² (Spivak 1996)

For Spivak, the meanings of legitimizing codes “that uphold the social relations of production—forming a particular society” create nothing short of “systems of authority where “society” is shorthand for the dominance of (a)

particular mode(s) of production of value.”⁶¹³ (Spivak 2003) In other words, when learning is all about capitalism, then its role in subjugation is one that rides beside economic developments. Insisting that value should not be considered only in terms of pure economics, Spivak contests the notion of “value” from the view that it “...is not pure form, cannot appear by itself, and is immediately coded.”⁶¹⁴ (Spivak 2003)

In the circuitry of value and cultural production, Spivak contends that before any system may be challenged, an understanding must be developed first about how value belongs in the social, in the political, and how the dominant paradigm holds its place in the production of knowledge.

In other words, before accepting value as the integral part of controlling “coding operations” that are “promoted” and understood in the fields of “gendering” and “colonialism,” Spivak contends that coding operation must be understood in “modes of production” where economics are not the only way to read culture and society.⁶¹⁵ (Spivak 2003) According to Spivak, even in light of decolonization, the “narratives of history” always “transform the socius [sic] upon which our production is *written* into more or less continuous and controllable bits that are *readable*. How these readings “emerge and which ones get sanctioned,” she says, “...have political implications on every possible level.”⁶¹⁶ (Spivak 2003)

Although economics is a driving force in the world, the correlation between different levels of socioeconomic status has to be examined in light of sociopolitical change in the realm of cultural developments. One way to do this is

through an educational concept that puts stress on certain levels of activity in the world exerted from a localized position. In this sense, following Freire, experiential knowledges are “not static realities,” but realities that are in process and in transformation.”⁶¹⁷(Freire 1992) Indeed, Freire states that with encouragement, as individuals begin to “reflect” on their own objects of perception, elements begin to “stand out” and it is the power of the individual to understand those elements of perception as knowledge.

However, following Spivak’s contention, the task of liberating self-consciousness from debilitating affects of socioeconomics of colonialism and getting around those structures of political power, requires developing the capacity to act as an independent agent of change as this is a daunting challenge, yet a necessity. In this sense, Spivak presses for the indispensable recognition of “voice” as a required step toward making social change a reality.⁶¹⁸ (Spivak 1996) Yet, even here, it is never just a simple matter of “speaking.” Spivak explains:

...that even when one uttered, one was constructed by a certain kind of psychobiography, so that the utterance itself...would have to be interpreted in the way in which we historically interpret anything....⁶¹⁹ (Spivak 1996)

As Spivak drew attention to political implications that complicate any interpretation of the text, she also called for the need for a reciprocal engagement in relation to speaking that honors knowledge from experience. In the realm of ethical pedagogy, Spivak abhorred those “belittling befriending” tendencies that linger in the realm of colonization. In the name of teaching, Spivak maintained

that the task is always to encourage “the subaltern to enter into organic intellectuality” where the individual might speak for the community: and be heard.⁶²⁰ (Spivak 1996)

Far from essentializing experience as an impossible locality of the all, Spivak sees the need to denounce the disciplinary function of narratives that “implicitly honor the historical withholding of the “permission to narrate” from the view that categories of existence exist which do represent a continuity that ought to be heard.⁶²¹ (Spivak 1996) While “permission to be heard” appears to open conversation, Spivak nevertheless reveals the fact that “permission to narrate” is a double-edged power play. On one hand it purports to provide an opening for the personal voice, but on the other hand it is always used by the dominant group as a controlling strategy to set limits on personal research.⁶²² (Spivak 2003)

In institutionalized education systems, for example, “permission to narrate” often serves to reinforce controlling “narratives of history,” which Spivak sees in systems that support “old lines laid down by colonialism.”⁶²³ (Spivak 2003) Indeed, from testimonials of Canada’s Aboriginal artists’ and scholars alike, these guidelines appear to be a norm. Always writing from the standpoint of a “postcolonial,” Spivak addresses cultural politics from an obvious need to employ “...strategies that speak ‘from within’ the emancipatory master narratives,” developed along ethical lines suggested by Freire, for example. As Spivak stresses the need for a “literary pedagogy” she insists that choice ought to:

...at least prepare another space that makes visible the fault lines in slogans of the European Enlightenment — nationalism, internationalism, secularism, culturalism — the bulwark of nativism, without participating in their destruction.⁶²⁴ (Spivak 2003)

In light of this, Spivak calls to advance possibilities for social change through education using intervention strategies that do not engage in tokenism, exoneration, blame, or “The new culturalist alibi...that legitimizes the very thing it claims to combat.”⁶²⁵ (Spivak 2003) In the examples mentioned before, Spivak asserts that the main task of teaching is to constantly question explanations of culture, to “speak predictively” and to “make people ready to listen.”⁶²⁶ (Spivak 2003)

From articulating possibilities of plurality and heterogeneity as a place to begin a program of social change, Spivak also chooses “de (con) structive” pedagogy to advance cultural politics directed toward possibilities that identify with the postmodern to champion Jacques Derrida’s deconstruction discourse. Spivak does this not only to reveal different or concealed ideologies in educational practices, but also for its capability to reveal systems that may only appear to be neutral. In introducing Derrida’s work to “English-speaking audiences, through her 1969 publication *Of Grammatology*,” Spivak not only announced her role as an advocate of deconstructive views, but she also engaged a dialogue with deconstructive reading. Using such a reading as a strategy to distance education from operations of power involved in “coding subject-position

[and] cultural politics,” Spivak demonstrated its power as a technique capable of addressing complex questions.⁶²⁷ (Landry 1996)

In the sense that scholars have been receptive to the contributions of poststructuralism and from Spivak’s leading engagement with deconstructive techniques, a new realm opened for Aboriginal scholars and artists such as, Emma LaRocque and Mary Longman both of whom draw from the influence of the deconstructive view as they examine “...the requirement in western academia” to critique certain methods of research that must be employed in order to be heard.⁶²⁸ (Longman 2006) In ascribing to the logic of deconstructive discourse in the realm of teaching, for example, LaRocque sees possibilities that position a postcolonial pedagogy so that coding may be exposed to reveal limitations but where deconstructive discourse may support directions toward inclusion. LaRocque explains:

There are many and varied layers of ‘colonial’ practices in current Canadian scholarship...that raise troubling questions of exclusion, especially to those of us (both male and female) who are at once scholars, critics, and/or creative writers. We do present complexities in that we are crossing cultures, disciplines, and genres, and we obviously do not fit into conventional categories or ideological formulas. But we have been writing and footnoting at least as early as the 1970s, and our combined backgrounds of scholarship and marginalization, as well as critical and /or creative works do model what is at the very heart of postcolonial discourse. It remains that as scholars we are all challenged to cross borders and to seek greater understanding. Western-based assumptions (including feminist, deconstructionist, and or/postcolonial’ discourse) can no longer claim exclusive rights to the ways and means of academic methodology and insight.⁶²⁹ (LaRocque)

In consideration of a politics of pluralism and multicultural activism, Spivak defended the deconstructive view in light of postcolonial studies and cultural studies. In this sense, turning to a deconstructive reading as a tool for social change, Spivak used it as a philosophical strategy to explain that even in “a dehistoricized academy” students who claim that their opinions “center as their own self-possession” are often urged to reconsider their stand in view of capitalist ideology that has an enormous power to contest the “uniqueness of the individual.”⁶³⁰ (Spivak 1996) In contra distinction to the argument for essence, there are elements in the world of advanced globalization and capitalism that simply exert unimagined power over “...the individual’s putative political and economic control over her own life.”⁶³¹ (Spivak 1996) In other words, acknowledging that advanced capitalism mediates in all decision making, Spivak avers:

The “deconstructive” lesson...can teach student and teacher alike a method of analysis that would fix its glance upon the itinerary of the ethico-political in authoritarian fictions; call into question the complacent apathy of self-centralization; undermine the bigoted elitism (theoretical or practical) conversely possible in collective practice; while disclosing in such gestures the condition of possibility of the positive.⁶³² (Spivak 1996)

Although Spivak understands that developments in the humanities encourage students to address the self as “reader,” she nevertheless calls to question systems that relax critical reading in the name of liberation. In other words, in order to claim “self-possession” as a possible avenue to follow for making meaning in new

narrativization in the realm of local determination, such research still ought to hold up to critical examination.

This formulation might be difficult to achieve, nevertheless there are myriad examples to show that it might be accomplished in certain dialogic works. I now draw attention to the relationship of art criticism of the modern period and by way of justification, specifically to the influential literary critical interpretations of Walter Benjamin; an acclaimed politically committed writer of the 1940s. In areas of higher education in America, for example, Benjamin emerged in the 1970s as a “cultural theoretician” who brought attention to literature, art history, and film studies.⁶³³ (Ferris 2008) Together with “continental philosophy” Benjamin addressed the “author” who recognizes the relationship between social structures and the extent to which all cultural developments are located and affected by social structures. Posing the question of how economic forces are mediated through levels of social and political forces, Benjamin spoke to “writing that is commonly called *tendentious*.”⁶³⁴ (Benjamin 1983)

From the view that deliberate bias has a place in critical theory, Benjamin held that although there are always difficult choices to be made, it is not necessary for the “author” to choose between the allegiance to a political agenda and the relaxation of political correctness.⁶³⁵ (Benjamin 1983) From the view that active scholarship is inherently political, Benjamin stressed writing as an engaged activity that should be both “politically correct” and “also literarily correct.”⁶³⁶ (Benjamin 1983) Benjamin cautions, however that in the sense that the “author”

who recognizes the relationship between the social and the political also recognizes the choice to side with the political struggle, the literary artist/author ought to recognize the relationship between form and content.

In Benjamin's opinion, the correct responsibility of "political literary criticism" should also be directed toward assuring that a literary "quality" of the text is upheld.⁶³⁷ (Benjamin 1983). Instead of typically placing literary quality within the modernist view of artistic autonomy, Benjamin argued that the writer may also act from a political position. It is all too well-known, he said, that "Social conditions are determined by conditions of productions," but by claiming a location wherein it might be possible to achieve answers to difficult questions, Benjamin offered an example, approached from an alternative view:

Instead of asking: what is the attitude of a work to the relations of production of its time?...Instead of this question, or at any rate before this question, I should like to propose another. Rather than asking: what is the *attitude* of a work to the relation of production of its time? I should like to ask: what is its *position* in them? This question directly concerns the function the work has within the literary relations of production of its time. It is concerned, in other words, directly with the literary *technique* of works....In the concept of technique I have named that concept which makes literary products directly accessible to a social and therefore a materialist analysis.⁶³⁸ (Benjamin 1983)

In the contemporary era where such an explanation may be found, as indicated by Benjamin, recourse to Marxist theory may be used to analyze the interstices of social sciences and cultural studies. But with the postmodern "turn", to follow Jameson, a reorganizational change occurred from depth analysis to the recognition of "depthlessness" where cultural representation links with the realm

of critical theory to incorporate the layering of language, of historical materialism, and history. In Jameson's observations it is a conjoining of culture and history that ruptures modernist notions of purity of form. It is not so much that Benjamin championed purity; it is more to the fact that in the study of novels, for example, style has a functional role to play in the creation of content.

In my long exposition I pursued what I believe are interesting artistic strategies, and from the view of the colonized, to follow Spivak's analysis, the difficulty is to find an "acceptable" mode of representation — writing, visual art, and critical documentary practices — to carry a living voice without compromising critical scholarship. I call upon numerous Aboriginal practices, artists and scholars, to help me explain that oral narratives of story telling or dialogues among artists are forms of deconstructing reading. Yet, the dominant groups often fail to recognize orality as a legitimate form of history and discourse.

Film documentarist and First Nations scholar, Loretta Todd elaborates:

...we are told that after five hundred years of colonialism we are now in an age of postcolonialism....Everything about us — from our language to our philosophies, from our stories to our dances — has become material....But their excursions into our cultural territories have not brought acknowledgement of our authority and jurisdiction over our lives....Our cultural autonomy is too often ignored and our cultural uniqueness — our difference — is reduced to....a decidedly Eurocentric framework....modernism...postmodernism....These terms — philosophies even — are forever linked, first to colonialism and now to decolonization....we are encouraged to embrace these philosophies....How can we create our own scholarship and practice of art and aesthetic in face of what appears to be positions that are opposed to our world view....When Western — even progressive — ideologies talk about decolonization, it remains problematic for me, both in practice and theory. I am expected to discuss my culture and

explore my imagination through ‘their’ language, in terms of the traditional verses the contemporary, where Native is still inscribed with the outsider’s ‘fixed values and practices.’ In order to participate in contemporary cultural production, my language/imagination is expected to be expressed through the language of modernism, or through postmodernism where I am required to eschew what is ‘sentimental’ of ‘naïve.’ Should I suggest a Native aesthetic, or pursue issues of appropriation, charges of essentialism are made....As a result....For indigenous peoples those systems function to silence us....⁶³⁹ (Todd 1992)

From the argument that the colonialist existence aimed to “silence Native voices,” research scholarship such as that of Said, Spivak, and Todd, identify European culture as the creator of a “discourse” that is insidious in its disavowal of subjective “lived” ways of experiencing the world; and, highly dismissive about alternative ways of knowing knowledge.

In bias created by the dominant critical discourse on indigenous style of cultural production, for example, Native theories of representation about “our art,” and of “diverse aesthetic values” continues to be “...reinterpreted according to dominant values whether mainstream or not,” to quote Todd.⁶⁴⁰

Another place to locate a deliberate bias in critical theory is where philosophy and literature intersect as in Martha Nussbaum’s statement that “style” and “substance” are so intricately bound together that to ignore one is to break the link with the other in a way that destroys both. Nussbaum argues that if philosophy is to “allow” the entry of “expressive” literature into its realm of knowledge, the narrative style of story telling has to be taken into “serious

consideration.”⁶⁴¹ (Nussbaum 1992) Speaking of both author and reader,

Nussbaum explains that she views literary texts as:

...works whose representational and expressive content issues from human intentions and conceptions. This feature is, in fact, prominently dramatized in novels...in all of which the voice of an authorial consciousness is to be heard, and in all of which the making of the text is an explicit theme of the narrative itself.⁶⁴² (Nussbaum 1992)

In the sense that Nussbaum calls for attention to the equal rights between author and reader, she indicates the possibility that the text embodies something that the reader might feel. In other words as Nussbaum links the quality of the art work with its expression, she connects human life with self-understanding and society in ways that makes a critical the relationship between ethical points of view that also make sense in a philosophical context.⁶⁴³ (Nussbaum 1992)

From Michel Foucault’s work on the relationship between the subject and the power of knowledge, new insights into thinking about ethical values and the use of the language of “biopower” emerged to describe political power in its “juridical form [that] takes charge of life.”⁶⁴⁴ (Foucault 1990) What Foucault showed is how power ends in “...the privilege to seize hold of life in order to suppress it.”⁶⁴⁵ (Foucault 1990) To follow this, Foucault exemplified how “bio-power...reflected in political existence,” deals with “living beings” and he developed the term “bio-history” to describe how the rights of sovereignty exercises power over “legal subjects over whom the ultimate dominion is death.”⁶⁴⁶ (Foucault 1990)

Without having to retrace my steps to redescribe historical conditions in Canada in which federal colonialism created the Indian Act, suffice to say that Foucault's discursive formation offers a social analysis that draws out the political implications of the act that provided a powerful structure to deal with human lives. From the subjugation of Canada's Aboriginal peoples, under the oppressive dictates of the Indian Act, to patriarchal terms of the act, which assumed power over women and children, Canada's federal government has exercised "biopolitical" power over the minutest aspect of the lives of Aboriginal lives. This could be described in terms of the oppressive interconnections that Foucault explained as the conjoining of the use of "bio-power" that rests in the "bio-history" of sovereignty that holds power over life and death.

In contrast, despite having experienced life under the harsh terms of the Indian Act, First Nations scholars, artists, film-makers often address the problem, from the meeting of two worlds whose views clash; but, in finding a solution in the hope that these worlds must come together in a spirit of harmony, where community voices may be heard in defence of fundamental human rights, a good outcome may be possible.

To follow this through the work of Jean-Luc Nancy, the influence of the notion of community may be traced through the concept of experience to join in discourse with the individual. Yet as Nancy argues, as modern thought has dominated political and philosophical discourse, redefining the community as a collection of individuals, brings up the testy problematic of philosophical

humanism. For Nancy, community is an embodied experience; it is neither coming together in unity nor is it, in the Marxist sense, production, “One does not produce” community through work, he said, “one experiences or one is constituted by it as experience.”⁶⁴⁷ (Nancy 1991)

An alternative place to find a similar connection, between embodied feelings for community and an “emancipatory” political movement, may arise when confronting an artistic text. In Boris Groys’s proposition, “human beings can only be truly dignified if they can be conceived of as works of art—or better, as works of art that they themselves produce as artists.”⁶⁴⁸ The problem arises, however, in terms of European supremacy, wherein the struggle is for inclusion and for the recognition between “so-called primitive artworks, abstract forms, and simple objects from everyday life,” that ought to have equal aesthetic value. (Groys 2008) However, as Groys points out, these objects “have all acquired the kind of recognition that once used to be granted only to the historically privileged artistic masterpieces”.⁶⁴⁹ (Groys 2008) Taking this to the “logical” end of art and history, because there are no boundaries to contest or places to “provoke shock,” Groys opines that it is from “nostalgia” that we yearn for works that may be once more considered “precious” or as “singular masterpieces.”⁹(Groys 2008) In this sense, the problematic appears to be at the end of history, art enters a realm of repetition, according to Groys, that “each artist is suspected of producing just one further arbitrary image among many”(Groys 2008).⁶⁵⁰ While that may appear as such, even as Groys goes on to say that not all art has been received with equal

rights, a problem still comes up in that as art may express a “factual inequality” thereby to still “affirm” conditions of its difference, might it not .enter the realm of the critical discourse?⁶⁵¹ (Groys 2008)

Leaving that conundrum aside, I turn to consider possibilities in postmodernism and postcolonial studies that address plurality and heterogeneity in the realm of lived experiences. Spivak acknowledged that as cultural explanations are still constructed within the social net of culture, caught up in myriad fictions belonging not only to the public-private hierarchy but also to academic hierarchies, there is a tendency to disavow a doctrine of aesthetic equality. Yet, Spivak also acknowledged that “There is no way out of academic hierarchies, but to develop a provision theory of the practical politics of cultural explanations.”⁶⁵² (Spivak 1990)

How this might be accomplished however is rather tricky because even here, Spivak acknowledged that rules of objectivity problematize “the grounds of our own actions” so that even provisional explanations are “endowed with coherence in terms of our explanation of a self.”⁶⁵³ (Spivak 1996) In order to quell the “desire to have a self that can control knowledge” yet escape the bonds of the “usual disinterested academic style,” Spivak turned to evoke the strategy of “deconstruction of the opposition between the private and the public” used with the intention of opening personal discourse to the rigors of academic discourse.⁶⁵⁴ (Spivak 1996)

Although the personal voice or the *small narrative*, in terms of Lyotard's critique, should be accepted Spivak admitted that within the realm of academic discourse, the task is complex. Analyzing a "typical academic event in the United States," for example, Spivak offered a lesson in practical deconstruction following Derrida, in which she specifically attempted to "reveal, reverse, and displace social, cultural, and academic hierarchies."⁶⁵⁵ (Spivak 1990)

In Spivak's view, power and authority, in relation to cultural explanations, for example, rests in the ideology of dominating academic discourse that follows "unity in diversity," philosophical "interpretation," and the "hermeneutics of suspicion": all of which ought to be challenged.⁶⁵⁶ (Spivak 1990) "The problem of human discourse," Spivak avers, "...is in the play of...three shifting 'concepts': language, world, and consciousness."⁶⁵⁷(Spivak 1996)

The metanarratives, following Lyotard, survive in communication through language games; they appear again and again in Marxist theory and they are encompassed within the art of world history and in writing. Additionally, in Freudian psychoanalysis, the metanarrative controls the realm of identification in human consciousness and the implications riding alongside—in terms of the unconscious. Taken together, alienating principles build upon the power of the metanarrative to separate the private from the public, while at the same time they create power structures, to quote Spivak, that:

...one attributes to a complex strategical situation — the social relations of production — forming a particular society, where

“society” is shorthand for the dominance of (a) particular mode(s) of production and value.⁶⁵⁸(Spivak 2003)

Drawing upon the efficiency of Marxist theory, Spivak claims a place for Marxist theory that is capable of removing “class-analysis” from an essentialist position. In this argument, Spivak draws upon a feminist reading of the Marxist account of culture, which rests on a relationship between economic production and various stages of social development, to renounce the “picture of the human relation to consciousness rising” in light of “production, labor, and property” which in fact encircles the particular and basic.⁶⁵⁹ (Spivak 1997)

The problem arises, as Spivak claims, in the fact that “...tangible place of production, the womb situates women as agents in any theory of production;” yet, Marxist theory on the family ignores that fact. (Spivak 1997) Jennifer Blythe and Peggy Martin McGuire offer a critique of Marxist theory of the family from the standpoint of the “public /domestic” distinction that is “meaningful to that EuroCanadian culture but less so in Cree society because, from case studies they found that the Aboriginal family was not divided by means of production but rather held together through agency community and by cooperation.⁶⁶⁰ In the sense that Nancy proclaims that community is an embodied experience, it is not created in the Marxist sense, of production, but indeed it is a lived experience. In a study of a family dynamics of a northern Cree group of Moosonee and Moose Factory, Blythe and McGuire found:

Both the family and the community are recognized as sets of affiliations that people make with one another. The family need not be

a ‘domestic’ unite; indeed, family...might extend throughout the community as network of bonds that have real economic and political consequences. Among the Cree in Moosonee and Moose Factory, it is the women who are responsible for creating meaningful ties; they are meaningful because they represent an investment in community through family and support family through community. And women must now do this within the constraints of their jobs, so it is the women and their families who must decide where the boundary between family and community will be.⁶⁶¹

In Spivak’s description, the application of “deconstructive lessons learned from the past” requires a close analysis of the “base, structure, superstructure,” argued in Marxism that might be challenged by a “provisional theory” should this be promoted in an effort to illuminate missing facts that are needed to redefine “the premise of any critical theory.”⁶⁶² (Spivak 1997) Although Spivak does not provide an explanation of “provisional theory” one surmises it to be a mode of inquiry used to escape from principles under which the Eurocentric theorizing and practice complicate the horizon of knowledge.

While thinking it impossible to contest controlling modes of production that claim certain “truths about the world and self,” Spivak is highly contentious of critical writing that ignores or leave out facts that attribute any sort of agency to women.⁶⁶³ (Spivak 1997) For example, in her analysis of Marxist works, Spivak claims that Marx based his findings on “inadequate evidence” and used this to create “incomplete theories” as evidence in support of controlling aspects of the metanarrative that would otherwise fail, should facts of woman’s agency be included.⁶⁶⁴ (Spivak 1997)

With that, the problem obviously has to be examined in light of arguments that press for participation and a better understanding of the important role women have in social movements. Along with that there is the need to address prejudicial attitudes from the past, especially those which hold the notion that the “man retains legal property rights over the production of the woman’s body” and her children.⁶⁶⁵ (Spivak 1997) Citing typical “wage” systems, for example, that mark “value-producing work” that complicate possibilities for a woman’s “...entry into the capitalist system,” Spivak reiterates that the real problem lies in assumptions “about women’s freedom to work outside the house” and beliefs that avoid the fact that “they [women]are the true army of surplus labor.”⁶⁶⁶(Spivak 1997) In this sense, any idea of achieving equality of outcome is not viable as long as the theory of equality of opportunity is overlooked a or held securely locked within the “abstraction of use-value” and “exchange-value” firmly located within a masculinist world view that supports the laws of patriarchy.⁶⁶⁷(Spivak 1997)

Therefore, arguing that Marxist “dialectics of externalization-alienation” cannot be complete because it remains caught in the notion that women and children are the “property rights of the man,” Spivak finds fault with Marx’s texts in light of reexamining “the nature of history of alienation, labor, and the production of property...in terms of women’s work and childbirth.”⁶⁶⁸(Spivak 1997) In Spivak’s view, a provisional theory that takes facts of inequality into

consideration offers a deeper more complete analysis of human alienation.(Spivak 1997)

In order to investigate developments in post-colonialism and in decolonization theories, a critique of universal humanism is encouraged. I have exemplified ways in which the involvement of the arts may help to redefine the sociopolitical environment and by bringing Aboriginal voices to my discourse, I have implied a more inclusive discourse that ought to move us from the problematic of essentialist notions about human nature to embrace the practical application of situating differences in cultural practices. (Althusser 2000) In directions in post-humanism, where the conversation turns to focus on the need to protect both human and environmental rights, inspirations from ecological and ecofeminist theory enters to urge an examination of power and social constructs in the name of respect for and the protection of the biodiversity of the living ecological and non-living systems. In all of this, I contend that there is something about the making of art in Canada that rings a tone different from market driven activities while at the same time, addresses these important issues.

Conclusion

My approach throughout has been in praise of federal-provincial funding of the arts, but I also champion practical ability and wisdom found in community that is often overlooked or by-passed by the funding agencies and established institutions. While it has to be said that there has been an overwhelming response,

on the side of the government, to increase arts funding in support of “enhancing Canada’s artistic and cultural life, toward sustaining Canada’s quality of life,” the struggle to be heard is an ongoing struggle.(Vance 2009) At the same time, exclusivity rising from modernist theory—supportive of cultural hierarchy, unsustainable exploitation of natural resources, and unchecked development practices of late capitalism—has been identified as problematic in relation to the dialogue around culture, art, and the freedom of expression. In this sense, the voices of Aboriginal artists and scholars enter to place additional emphasis on the need for an environment of inclusion, I champion the practical application of the theory of equality of opportunity.

As I emphasize the very connections between political content in the context of cultural and social programming that governments are willing to support, I draw information from lived experiences that point to the relationship between community and its expressive practices. As cultural activities are defined in art objects, it has to be said that one of the great contributions to Canadian society has been government support for education and the critical arts, which strive to divert attention away from the market economy and the world of change, toward creative living.

In this sense, taking Winnicott’s association into cultural and political relations in the world of the individual, the move toward individuality and the freedom of expression necessarily requires a “facilitating environment,” where

expressions of life ought to be respected as reacting with or against conditions of the environment. In the words of D. W. Winnicott:

...individuals live creatively and feel that life is worth living or else they cannot live creatively and are doubtful about the value of living. This variable in human beings is directly related to the quality and quantity of environmental provision.⁶⁶⁹

In an extended sense, story telling as a conventional tradition stands with poetic dialogue offering access to reality as the work of artists which are placed on the level of presentation/representation, that is not separated from social reality nor do they champion seeing over speech or figure over discourse, to follow Lyotard's example. In the sense that text and image are placed together in a unity that is multidimensional in its concept and pluralistic in its presentation, the multicultural presentation offers a "sense of hope," to quote Gottfriedson:

We live in a crystal globe/glittering, revolving, adapting/even though it is not meant to lack truth/Someone, in the beginning/instructed us not to forget/in our lifetime. But, somewhere, sometime/parts of it were forgotten/then passed on to those willing to listen/fractions/ remained unmoved by the notion of time; unbounded power/which tested those willing to speak/in this universe which never lies.

The fragmented parts passing/like an eclipse/where there is no turning back/where there is no reversing/and in that minute moment/the power of the sun is shielded, blinded,/by a creeping transparent moon:/it only takes a second to block light /from entering the crystal/and it is inevitable to stop.

We live in a crystal globe/and go on forever/multiplying with repetition;/somehow, there is mystical beauty hidden behind this/somehow, none of it makes sense/until we remember/the truth in its simplest form; this is carried in the accuracy of memory/and it is then...⁶⁷⁰

—Gary Gottfriedson, Okanagan Shuswap Cree poet

Where the survival of the “object” in the sense of it being the cultural object crafted, and shaped, by myriad aspects of human experience, diverse communities enter the conversation along with interventionist art, and multicultural direct political activism to instigate a free exchange of information, ideas, and knowledge. The discourse, I contend, ought to include the respectful acknowledgement of oral and written narrative and storytelling that not only widens historical experience, but also how knowledge is transformed into political policies that sustain injustice in a government that claims itself just. In light of imperiled social and ecological systems, the discussion of art in this dissertation attends to the complexity of lived historical experiences that urge us to think about the way we record, validate, and define knowledge that pays attention to minority women and men, as well as ecological groups working across time and cultures, affirming the need for a world rooted on issues of ethical and ethical awareness directed toward a good outcome for planet earth.

Armstrong

NOTES

CHAPTER ONE

¹ See for example, “From Relational Aesthetics-Nicholas Bourriaud (1988)” in www.creativityandcognition.com/blogs/ (accessed September 2009); And in support of the argument that feminist art undergrids relational aesthetics see, *The Power of Feminist Art The American Movement of the 1970s, History and Impact*, edited by Norma Broude, and Mary D. Garrard (New York: Abrams, 1994); Maura Reilly, and Linda Nochlin, *global feminism NEW DIRECTIONS IN CONTEMPORARY ART*(New York: Merrell, 2007); and, *Art And Feminism*,

edited by Helena Reckitt, with a survey by Peggy Phelan (London: Phaidon, 2006).

² In Canada Aboriginal “First Nations” is a designation that signifies sovereignty with the land. Hereafter in this text, the term First Nation is considered synonymous with Aboriginal. In turn, Aboriginal peoples in Canada include the Indian, Inuit, and Metis People of Canada as ascribed in section 35 of the Constitution Act 1982.

³ Dara Culhane, *The Pleasure of the Crown Anthropology, Law and First Nations* (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1998), 119.

⁴ Ibid.15.

⁵ I think it should be noted that pluralism not only describes sharing ethnic and cultural ideas, but also social networks and languages. Although from a sociological position pluralism has also a structural aspect, rather than supporting separational or assimilationist theories, it should be noted that I use pluralism to take notice of difference and multiplicity which enrich community to form multicultural mosaic patterns for democracy. For more on pluralism in Canada see, Lorne Tepperman, and R. Jack Richardson, *An Introduction to Sociology The Social World* (Toronto: McGraw-Hill, 1991), 267.

⁶ Chantal Mouffe, *The Return Of The Political* (London: Verso, 2005),7.

⁷ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*. rev. ed.(New York: Continuum, 1993), 106.

⁸ To paraphrase Friere,145.

⁹ Until changes took effect, Canadian women were prohibited from sitting in the Senate and existing sexist policies compromised possibilities for women in education and professional development. Dr. “James” Barry, for example, had to masquerade in life as a man in order to practice medicine, Dr. Maude Abbott was prohibited from practicing clinical medicine, and Dr. Jennie Kidd Trout’s practice was strictly controlled by policies that limited her professional development.

¹⁰ Granting women full citizenship and the right to vote, also extends voting rights to non-landed men and to those members of the Semitic group. Extending citizenship and voting rights for First Nations’ individuals could come only upon the renouncement of their status as “Indians.” These issues are still central topics in contemporary legal and academic discourses.

¹¹ see “The Struggle for Democracy”
www.tvarchives.ca/database/...struggle_for_democracy.../details/ (accessed April 19, 2010).

¹² Controversial issues such as domestic violence, universal day care, and child poverty, the poverty of single parents and sections of *Indian Act* are still to be thoroughly debated and alarming complications arising from Bill C-31 continue to compromise the rights of First Nations’ women. Moreover, issues concerning Aboriginal land rights and government control over First Nations’ lands are constantly coming to light through court challenges. And, in a nasty struggle for power, some provincial premiers have threatened to compromise women’s full equality rights in the work place as a strategy to take jurisdiction over First Nations’ lands from the controlling hands of the Federal Government.

¹³ Freire, 84-85.

¹⁴ Ibid 83.

¹⁵ Ibid. 83.

¹⁶ Alain Badiou, *Infinite Thought Truth and the Return to Philosophy* translated and edited by Oliver Feltham, and Justin Clemens (London: Continuum, 2008), 19.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ Ibid., 42.

¹⁹ To paraphrase Badiou.

²⁰ Val Plumwood, *Environmental Culture The ecological crises of reason* (London: Routledge, 2002).

²¹ James Lovelock, *The Vanishing Face Of Gaia A Final Warning* (New York: Basic Books, 2009).

²² D. W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1971).

²³ See Betty Bastien, “Voices through Time” in *Women of the First Nations: Power, Wisdom, and Strength*, edited by Christine Miller and Patricia Chuchryk with Marie Smallface Marule, Brenda Manyfingers, and Cheryl Deering (Winnipeg: The University of Manitoba Press, 1996), 128.

²⁴ Aboriginal People: History Of Discriminatory Laws, prepared by Wendy Moss, Elaine Gardner-O’Toole, Law and Government Division November 1987 revised November 1991, in Depository Services program <http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/EB/prb9923-e.htm>. BP-175E (accessed February 18, 2010).

²⁵ The Indian Act, Prepared by Mary C. Hurley law and Government Division 4 October 1999 in the Depository Services program <http://dsp-psd.pwgsc.gc.ca/Collection-R/LoPBdP/EB/prb9923-e.htm>. PRB 99-23E (accessed February 18, 2010).

²⁶ In Canada the term “reserve” denotes those lands set aside for the exclusive use of members of the First Nations’ groups and title to the land is held in the name of the Crown (a synecdoche that refers to the whole of government). Although terms of the *Indian Act* designate where and who might live on reserve land, this has been successfully challenged.

²⁷ See, for example, the documentary film “Duncan Campbell Scott the Poet and the Indians” in <http://www.Knowledge.ca//program/duncan-campbell-scott-the-poet-and-the-indians> (accessed October 2010).

²⁸ Jean Goodwill, and Norma Sulman *John Tootoosis* Winnipeg: Pemmican Publications, 1982), 85.

²⁹ Allowing that the term Western takes in cultures and traditions that predate the colonial invasion and the legacy of the Enlightenment thinking, I will use the term Eurowestern or Eurocentric in order to lessen confusion.

³⁰ For accounts of Residential School issues see www.tamarackproductions.com/DCS.php (accessed October 2010) ; and, www.danielpaul.com/IndianResidential_Schools.html (accessed October 2010).

³¹ For an account of reserve life see Beverly Hungry Wolf, “Life in Harmony with Nature” in Miller and Chuchryk. .

³² Alan D. McMillan, and Eldon Yellowhorn *First Peoples In Canada*, rev. 3rd ed. (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 2004), 4.

³³ Peter Knudtson & David Suzuki, *Wisdom of the Elders* (Toronto: Stoddart, 1993), xxxi; see also, Wade Davis, *The Wayfinders Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World* (Toronto: Anansi Press, 2009).

³⁴ For examples of anthropological problems and cultural divisions see McMillan and Yellowhorn, 3.

³⁵ See for example, Mary Aski-piyewiwiskwew Longman, “Challenging The Ideology Of Representation: Contemporary First Nations Art in Canada” (PhD dissertation, University of Victoria, 2006). 13.

³⁶ James Alexander Teit, “The Thompson Indians Of British Columbia,” in *The Jesup North Pacific Expedition*, edited by Franz Boas. Reprint, with permission, from a volume originally owned and annotated by James A. Teit (Merritt: Nicola Valley Museum Archives Association, 1990).

³⁷ For accounts of Teit’s activities see, Annie York, Richard Daly, and Chris Arnett *They Write Their Dream on the Rock Forever Writings of the Stein River Valley of British Columbia* (Vancouver: Talon books, 1993), 262.

³⁸ Some wax recordings have been transferred to contemporary playable disks. Along with some of Teit’s collections these may be accessed at the Nicola Valley Museum Archives in Merritt, B.C.

³⁹ Dara Culhane, *The Pleasure Of The Crown Anthropology, Law and First Nations* (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1998), 119.

⁴⁰ *Ibid*, 117.

⁴¹ *Ibid.*,15

⁴² *Ibid.*,17.

⁴³ *Ibid.*, 120.

⁴⁴ *Ibid.*, 117.

⁴⁵ Emma LaRocque, “The Colonization of a Native Woman Scholar” in Miller et al., 13.

⁴⁶ Jo-Anne Fiske, “Gender and the Paradox of Residential Education in Carrier Society” in Miller, et al., 178-180.

⁴⁷ McMillan, and Yellowhorn, 324.

⁴⁸ Laura Peters, “Subsistence, Secondary Literature, and Gender Bias: The Sauteaux” in, Miller, et al., 44.

⁴⁹ See the Sharon McIvor case in <http://www.courts.gov.bc.ca/Jdb-txt/SC/07/08/2007BCSC0827.htm> (accessed February 19, 2010).

⁵⁰ LaRocque, 13.

⁵¹ Wade Davis, *The Wayfinders Why Ancient Wisdom Matters in the Modern World* (Toronto: Anansi, 2009), 205.

⁵² Mary Aski-piyewiwiskwew Longman, “Challenging The Ideology Of Representation: Contemporary First Nations Art in Canada” (PhD dissertation, University of Victoria, 2006), 63.

⁵³ Ibid.

⁵⁴ Ibid.

⁵⁵ Liane Davison, curator, exhibitions & collections *Journey* (Surrey: Surrey Art Gallery publication, 2002), 60.

⁵⁶ Betty Bastien, “Voices Through Time” in Miller, et al., 128

⁵⁷ Mc Millan, and Yellowhorn, 209.

⁵⁸ Calling for the return of cultural materials, communities across Canada have entered into legal negotiations with numerous museums and private collectors.

⁵⁹ Knudtson, and Suzuki, xxvii.

⁶⁰ Longman, 122.

⁶¹ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason Toward A History Of The Vanishing Present* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999), 353.

⁶² I borrowed this term from Homi K. Bhabha, “The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism” in *Out There: Marginalization and Contemporary Cultures* edited by Russell Ferguson, Martha Gever, Trinh T. Minh-ha, and Cornel West with a forward by Marcia Tucker , vol 4, (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1990),77

⁶³ For an alarming account of human and civil rights violations in Canada, see the full length feature film “Heaven on Earth” written and directed by Deepa Mehta in www.imbd.com/title/tt1146285/ (accessed October 2010).

⁶⁴ Sunera Thobani, *Exalted Subjects Studies In The Making Of Race And Nation In Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2009), 168.

⁶⁵ Ibid.,169.

⁶⁶ Ibid.,155.

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- ⁶⁷ Spivak, 356.
- ⁶⁸ Ibid. 353.
- ⁶⁹ Chantal Mouffe, *The Return Of The Political* (London: Verso, 2005), 12.
- ⁷⁰ Ibid.
- ⁷¹ Ibid.
- ⁷² Homi K. Bhabha *The Location of Culture* (London: Routledge, 2008), 9.
- ⁷³ Ibid., 4.
- ⁷⁴ Ibid., 10.
- ⁷⁵ Ibid., 32.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid., 56.
- ⁷⁷ Griselda Pollock, editor, with an introduction by Mieke Bal. *Conceptual Odysseys Passages to Cultural Analysis* (London: I.B. Tauris, 2007), xv.
- ⁷⁸ Ibid.
- ⁷⁹ Diane Fuss, *Essentially Speaking Feminism Nature & Difference* (New York: Routledge, 1989), 117. .
- ⁸⁰ Ibid.
- ⁸¹ Donna Landry, and Gerald MacLean, eds., *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 7.
- ⁸² Mouffe, 88.
- ⁸³ Ibid.
- ⁸⁴ Ibid.
- ⁸⁵ Ibid.
- ⁸⁶ Ibid.

⁸⁷ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Teaching for the Times” in *Dangerous Liaisons: Gender, Nation, and Postcolonial Perspectives* edited by Anne McClintock, Aamir Mufti, and Ella Shohat (Minneapolis: UP Minnesota, 1997) 471.

⁸⁸ Ibid.

⁸⁹ Ibid. 469.

⁹⁰ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak. *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason Toward A History Of The Vanishing Present* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999), 85

⁹¹ Ibid., 353.

⁹² Ibid., 354.

⁹³ LaRocque, 15.

⁹⁴ Ibid., 13

⁹⁵ Longman, 122.

⁹⁶ Ibid, 50.

⁹⁷ Rita L. Irwin and Alex de Cosson, editors, with a forward by William F. Pinar, *a/r/tography Rendering Self Through Arts-Based Living Inquiry* (Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press, 2004), 32.

⁹⁸ Ibid. 34

⁹⁹ Freire, 70.

CHAPTER TWO

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¹⁰¹ Alan D. McMillan, and Eldon Yellowhorn, *First Peoples In Canada*, 3rd edition (Vancouver, Douglas & McIntyre, 2011), 53.

¹⁰² R. Douglas Francis et al, 24.

¹⁰³ R. Douglas Francis, et al 27.

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- ¹⁰⁵ Fernand Ouellet, “The Quiet Revolution: A Turning Point” in *Towards A Just Society The Trudeau Years* edited by Thomas S. Axworthy, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau translated by Patricia Claxton (Markham: Viking Penguin Canada, 2010), 321.
- ¹⁰⁶ Ouellet, 328
- ¹⁰⁷ Louis Althusser, “Ideology and Ideological State Apparatuses,” in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas* edited by Charles Harrison, and Paul Wood (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 955-956.
- ¹⁰⁸ Ouellet, 328.
- ¹⁰⁹ Ouellet, 335.
- ¹¹⁰ Sunera Thobani, *Exalted Subjects: Studies In The Making Of Race And Nation In Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2007), 252.
- ¹¹¹ Neil Badmington editor, *Readers In Cultural Criticism Posthumanism* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 32.
- ¹¹² Louis Althusser, “Marxism and Humanism” in *Readers In Cultural Criticism Posthumanism* edited by Neil Badmington (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 32.
- ¹¹³ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, “The Values of a Just Society” in *Towards A Just Society The Trudeau Years* edited by Thomas S. Axworthy, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau translated by Patricia Claxton (Markham: Viking Penguin Canada, 2010), 358-359.
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- ¹¹⁵ Paula Rabinowitz, “Soft Fictions and Intimate Documents” in *Readers in Cultural Criticism Posthumanism* edited by Neil Badmington (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 44.
- ¹¹⁶ Paula Rabinowitz, 43.
- ¹¹⁷ Freire, 76.

¹¹⁸ John Ralston Saul, *A Fair Country: Telling Truths About Canada* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2009), 61.

¹¹⁹ Saul, 117.

¹²⁰ Saul, 137.

¹²¹ Trudeau, 358.

¹²² McMillan, 92

¹²³ McMillan, 92

¹²⁴ Opening scene, to view on line go to www.cbc.ca/.../8thfire//...indigenous-in-the-city... (accessed, January 20, 2012).

¹²⁵ www.cbc.ca/ottawa/.../mt/...cbc-documentary-series-8th-fire.html (accessed, January 20, 2012).

¹²⁶ I paraphrase a statement by Palma Palmater, chair, Centre for Indigenous Governance, Ryerson University, “Canadian Aboriginals: In or Out? A Tenuous Relationship” recorded on the set of *The Agenda With Steve Paikin*, aired January 16, 2012, at TVO./To view this program go to tvo.org/past-episodes (accessed January 19, 2012)

¹²⁷ From the “Verbatim Transcript” in *Federal-Provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters* (Ottawa: Intergovernmental Document Centre, 1983).

¹²⁸ Zebedee Nungak from the “Verbatim Transcript” in *Federal-Provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters Doc 800/23/018* (Ottawa: Intergovernmental Document Centre, 1987), 8.

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¹³⁰ Will Kymlicka, “Citizenship, Communities, and Identity in Canada” in *Canadian Politics* edited by James Bickerton, and Alain-G. Gagnon, 4th edition (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 35.

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- ¹³⁴ Millan, et al, 63.
- ¹³⁵ Innis, xvi
- ¹³⁶ Pierre Burton, “The martyrdom of Isaac Jogues” in *The Wild Frontier More tales from The Remarkable Past* (Toronto: McClelland and Stewart, 1978), 121.
- ¹³⁷ Burton, 122.
- ¹³⁸ Longman (2006).
- ¹³⁹ Burton, 123.
- ¹⁴⁰ McMillan, et al, 85.
- ¹⁴¹ *Black Robe*, directed by Bruce Beresford, Samuel Goldwyn Company, 1991, opening scene. To view the film, see www.youtube.com/watch?v=sBcpTZFALG4; also see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Robe_\(film\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Black_Robe_(film)) (last accessed December 1, 2011).
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- ¹⁴³ McMillan, 89-90.
- ¹⁴⁴ Mary-Ellen Kelm, and Lorna Townsend “In The Days Of Our Grandmothers: Introduction” *In The Days of Our Grandmothers A Reader In Aboriginal Women’s History in Canada* edited by Mary-Ellen Kelm, and Lorna Townsend (Toronto: UP Toronto, 2008), 3.
- ¹⁴⁵ Alooook Ipellie, 44, 45.

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- ¹⁴⁶ James Alexander Teit, “The Thompson Indians of British Columbia” Vol. I Part IV The Jesup North Pacific Expedition edited by Franz Boas reprint (Merritt: Nicola Valley Archives Association), 289.
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- ¹⁴⁸ Alan C. Cairns, “First Nations and the Canadian Nation: Colonization and Constitutional Alienation” in *Canadian Politics* fourth edition edited by James Bickerton, and Alain-G. Gagnon (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 365.
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- ¹⁶⁰ (http://canadachannel.ca/HCO/index.php/The_Great_Peace_of_Montreal).
- ¹⁶¹ Ibid.
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¹⁶³ McMillan, 90

¹⁶⁴ Francis, 112.

¹⁶⁵ Ibid. 114.

¹⁶⁶ See <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-2300-e.html> (last accessed October 13, 2011).

¹⁶⁷ See, <http://www.aadnc-aandc.gc.ca/eng/1100100026103> (accessed October 19, 2011).

¹⁶⁸ See <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-2300-e.html> (last accessed October 14 2011).

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¹⁷² John Ralston Saul, *A Fair Country Telling Truths About Canada* (Toronto: Penguin Canada, 2009), 118.

¹⁷³ Ibid. 126

¹⁷⁴ Ibid. 119.

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¹⁷⁸ David V. Erdman ed., *The Poetry And Prose Of William Blake* with a commentary by Harold Bloom 4th revised edition (New York: Doubleday and Company, 1970), 815.

¹⁷⁹ Erdman, 72, line 44.

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¹⁸¹ Erdman, 225, plate 72, line 44.

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¹⁸⁴ Loretta Todd, “What More Do They Want? “ in *INDIGENA Cotemporary Native Perspectives* edited by Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992), 34.

¹⁸⁵McMillan, 227.

¹⁸⁶ McMillan, 228.

¹⁸⁷ McMillan, 230.

¹⁸⁸ Dara Culhane, *The Pleasure Of The Crown, Law and First Nations* (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1998), 119.

¹⁸⁹ Neil Badmington, editor, *Readers in Cultural Criticism Posthumanism* (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 9-10

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 9.

¹⁹¹ John Ralston Saul, *A Fair Country Telling Truths About Canada*, 122

¹⁹² Jo-Anne Fiske, “Political Status of Native Indian Women: Contradictory Implications of Canadian State Policy” *In The Days Of Our Grandmothers A Reader In Aboriginal Women’s History In Canada* edited by Mary-Ellen Kelm, and Lorna Townsend (Toronto: UP Toronto, 2008), 340

¹⁹³ Saul, 117.

¹⁹⁴ Saul, 69.

¹⁹⁵ Kymlicka, 39.

¹⁹⁶ McMillan 318-319

¹⁹⁷ Richard Simeon and Ian Robinson, “The Dynamics of Canadian Federalism” in *Canadian Politics* 4th edition edited by James Bickerton, and Alain G. Gagnon (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 102.

¹⁹⁸ *John A: Birth Of A Country*, directed by Jerry Ciccoritti, Indian Grove Productions, 2011, opening scene; see also <http://smr.newswire.ca/en/cbc/john-a-birth-of-a-country> (accessed October, 23, 2011).

¹⁹⁹ For more details see <http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-2500-e.html> (accessed October 13, 2011).

²⁰⁰ Francis, 408.

²⁰¹ Roger Gibbins, “Constitutional Politics” in *Canadian Politics* 4th edition, edited by James Bickerton, and Alain-G. Gagnon (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 128.

²⁰² Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* translated by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 140-143.

²⁰³ Jo-Anne Fiske, “Political Status of Native Indian Women: Contrary Implications of Canadian State policy” in *In The Days Of Our Grandmothers: A Reader In Aboriginal Women’s History In Canada* edited by Mary-Ellen Kelm, and Lorna Townsend (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 344.

²⁰⁴ Boris Groys, *Art Power* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2008), 54.

²⁰⁵ See <http://www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/batir-building/hist/1826-1858-eng.html> (accessed October 30, 2011).

²⁰⁶ Jonathan F. Vance, *A History of Canadian Culture* (Don Mills: Oxford UP, 2009), 155-156.

²⁰⁷ Vance, 155 156.

²⁰⁸ Vance, 155-6.

²⁰⁹ Vance, 155.

²¹⁰ The Quebec sculptor, Louis-Philippe Hébert created the Cartier monument. See <http://www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/batir-building/hist/1826-1858-eng.html> (accessed October 30, 2011).

²¹¹ Francis, 284.

²¹² Saul, 255.

²¹³ William Hill made the monument to George Brown and Walter Seymour Allward created the double portrait of LaFontaine and Baldwin. See <http://www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/batir-building/hist/1826-1858-eng.html> (accessed October 30, 2011).

²¹⁴ Francis et al, 307.

²¹⁵ Walter Seymour Allward created the double portrait of LaFontaine and Baldwin. See <http://www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/batir-building/hist/1826-1858-eng.html> (accessed October 30, 2011).

²¹⁶ Saul, 122-123.

²¹⁷ The monument to Sir John A. Mcdonald was created by Louis-Philippe Hébert. See <http://www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/batir-building/hist/1826-1858-eng.html> (accessed October 30, 2011).

²¹⁸ Brian Busby, editor, *Great Canadian Speeches Words That Shaped A Nation* (London: Arcturus, 2008), 14.

²¹⁹ . Samuel V. Laselva, “Understanding Canada: Federalism, Multiculturalism, and the Will to Live Together” in *Canadian Politics* edited by James Bickerton, and Alain-g. Gagnon 4th edition (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004) 19

²²⁰ Laselva, 19.

²²¹ Groys, *Art Power* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 2008), 13.

²²² Quebec sculptor, Louis-Philippe Hébert created the monument to Queen Victoria, which was displayed at the “Universal Exposition in Paris in 1900.” See <http://www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/histoire-history/terrains-grounds/statues-engl.html> (accessed July 11, 2011).

²²³ The Vancouver sculptor Jack Harman created the monument to Queen Elizabeth II, for more information see <http://www.app.vancouver.ca/PublicArt.../ArtistDetails.aspx?ArtistID> (accessed December 31, 2011).

²²⁴ Groys, 16.

²²⁵ The “larger than life” monument to equality was created by the sculptor Barbara Paterson and donated to the government by the Famous Five Foundation; see <http://www.parliamenthill.gc.ca/histoire-history/terrains-grounds/statues-eng.html> (accessed July 11, 2011).

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- ²²⁶ Francis, 279.
- ²²⁷ Nellie McClung, *The Stream Runs Fast My Own Story* (Toronto: Thomas Allen Publishers, copyright edition 2007), 169.
- ²²⁸ McClung, 181.
- ²²⁹ McClung, 182.
- ²³⁰ McClung, 183
- ²³¹ Donna Landry, and Gerald MacLean eds., *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 290.
- ²³² Geeta Kapur, “Secular Artist, Citizen Artist” in *Art And Social Change A Critical Reader* edited by Will Bradley and Charles Esche (London: Tate Publishing, 2007), 423.
- ²³³ Kapur, 423
- ²³⁴ Vandana Shiva, “Development As A New Project Of Western Patriarchy” in *Reweaving The World The Emergence of Ecofeminism*, Irene Diamond, and Gloria Feman Ornstein editors (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990), 190-191.
- ²³⁵ Laselva, 29.
- ²³⁶ Laselva, 29.
- ²³⁷ Jean Chrétien, “Bringing the Constitution Home” in *Towards A Just Society The Trudeau Years* edited by Thomas S. Axworthy, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau (Markham: Viking Penguin Canada, 2010), 283.
- ²³⁸ Lorraine Eisenstat Weinrib, “Trudeau and the Charter of Rights and Freedoms: A question of Constitutional Maturation” in *Trudeau’s Shadow The Life And Legacy Of Pierre Elliott Trudeau* edited by Andrew Cohen, and J. L. Granatstein (Toronto: Vintage Canada a division of Random House of Canada, 1998), 259.
- ²³⁹ Weinrib, 260.
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- ²⁴¹ Lorna Marsden, “The Party and Parliament: Participatory Democracy in the Trudeau Years” in s

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- ²⁴² David Forgacs, editor, *The Gramsci Reader Selected Writings 1916-1935* (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 205-206
- ²⁴³ For an explanation of contending and complex issues in the debates of 1865 preceding the 1867 Confederation and contemporary discussions on these issues, see Samuel Laselva “Understanding Canada: Federalism, Multiculturalism, and the Will to Live Together” in *Canadian Politics*, edited by James Bickerton and Alain-G Gagnon, 4th edition (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 17.
- ²⁴⁴ Frantz Fanon, “The Wretched of the Earth” in *Readers in Cultural Criticism posthumanism* edited by Neil Badmington (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 24.
- ²⁴⁵ Sunera Thobani, *Exalted Subjects Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada* (Toronto: UP Toronto, 2007).
- ²⁴⁶ Thobani, *Ibid*, 5.
- ²⁴⁷ For more detailed information and images go to Flag Debate at www.thecanadianencyclopedia.com/article/flag-debate (accessed June 20, 2011); and A Flag For Canada at www.flagforCanada (accessed May 6, 2012)
- ²⁴⁸ Robert Bothwell, Ian Drummond, and John English, *Canada Since 1945: Power, Politics, and Provincialism* revised edition (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1989), 316
- ²⁴⁹ James Bickerton, and Alain G. Gagnon, “Political Parties and Electoral Politics” in *Canadian Politics*, edited by James Bickerton, and Alain G. Gagnon 4th edition (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 240.
- ²⁵⁰ David Burnett & Marilyn Schiff, *Contemporary Canadian Art* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1983), 98.
- ²⁵¹ To paraphrase David Burnett & Marilyn Schiff, *Contemporary Canadian Art* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1983), 99.
- ²⁵² Stephen Marche, “That Time We Beat the Americans A misunderstood moment, now 200 years old, defines us as Canadians. A Citizens’ guide to the War of 1812” in *The Walrus*.
- ²⁵³ Iris Nowell, *Joyce Wieland A Life In Art* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2001), 317-318.
- ²⁵⁴ Iris Nowell, *Joyce Wieland A Life In Art* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2001), 271-272.

²⁵⁵ David Burnett & Marilyn Schiff. *Contemporary Canadian Art* (Edmonton: Hurtig Publishers, 1983) Wieland's political theme, "Reason over Passion", came from a quote by Prime Minister Trudeau and was meant to draw attention to socio-political issues in context with feminist issues.

²⁵⁶ Burnett, 99.

²⁵⁷ Iris Nowell, *Joyce Wieland a Life in Art* (Toronto: ECW Press, 2001), 284.

²⁵⁸ Nowell, 284.

²⁵⁹ Robert Baldick, Betty Radice, and C. A. Jones eds., *Plato The Republic* 2nd edition (Markham: Penguin Books, 1976).

²⁶⁰ Saul, 135.

²⁶¹ Susanna Moodie, *Roughing It In The Bush; Or; Life In Canada* afterword by Susan Glickman (Toronto: McClelland & Stewart, 1989).544, 545.

²⁶² Veronica Strong-Boag, "E. Pauline Johnson Constructs the New Nation" in *In The Days Of Our Grandmothers A Reader In Aboriginal Women's History In Canada* edited by Mary-Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006), 378.

²⁶³ Vance, 246.

²⁶⁴ Plato The Republic, 377, 129-130.

²⁶⁵ Vance, 359.

²⁶⁶ Vance, 360-362.

²⁶⁷ Vance, 378-389.

²⁶⁸ Ron Wesman, "A Charter Lifelong Friendship Is there a degree for that? in *aq* The magazine of Simon Fraser University April, 2012, 12

²⁶⁹ Krauss, 2

²⁷⁰ Despite current attacks on the freedom of expression in the arts, that appears to be coming from the current political administration in Canada under the leadership of Stephen Harper's majority Conservative government, some liberal policies remain intact.

²⁷¹ Vance,396-397.

²⁷² Vance 401.

²⁷³ Vance, 396.

²⁷⁴ Richard Gwyn, *Nation Maker Sir John A. Macdonald: His Life, Our Times* Volume Two: 1867-1891 (Toronto: Random House Canada, 2011), 525.

²⁷⁵ See the updated report, prepared by The Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, October 1979.

²⁷⁶ Alan C. Cairns, “First Nations and the Canadian Nation: Colonization and Constitutional Alienation” in *Canadian Politics* edited by James Bickerton and Alain-G. Gagnon 4th edition (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 365.

²⁷⁷ Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton, *Challenge for Change Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezera Winton with a foreword by Naomi Klein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2010), 4

²⁷⁸ Barnouw, 258.

²⁷⁹ Ezra Winton and Naomi Klein, “Putting Ideas into the World: A Conversation with Naomi Klein about Starting Conversations with Film” in *Challenge for Change Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezera Winton (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2010), xix.

²⁸⁰ Peter K. Wiesner, “Media for the People: The Canadian Experiments with Film and Video in Community Development (1992)” in *Challenge for Change Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton with a foreword by Naomi Klein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2010), 4

²⁸¹ John Grierson, “Memo to Michelle about Decentralizing the Means of Production” in *Challenge for Change Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton with a foreword by Naomi Klein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2010)

²⁸² Barnouw, 286-287

²⁸³ Michele Landsberg, *Writing The Revolution* (Toronto: Second Story Press, 2011), 42.

²⁸⁴ *Mémoires Pierre Elliott Trudeau Memoirs*, directed by Brian McKenna, opening scene. Trudeau's famous statement is repeated in the 1989 television documentary series *Struggle for Democracy*, hosted by Patrick Watson, available at http://www.tvarchives.ca/database/...struggle_for_democracy.../details/ (accessed April 19, 2010).

²⁸⁵ Zoë Druick, "Meeting at the Poverty Line: Government Policy, Social Work, and Media Activism in the Challenge for Change Program" in *Challenge for Change Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton with a foreword by Naomi Klein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 2010), 337.

²⁸⁶ Druick, 337-338.

²⁸⁷ Druick, 337.

²⁸⁸ Janine Marchessault, "Amateur Video and the Challenge for Change (1991)" in *Challenge for Change Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* edited by Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker and Ezra Winton with a foreword by Naomi Klein (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 2010), 355-356.

²⁸⁹ Druick, 337.

²⁹⁰ Druick, 340.

²⁹¹ Druick, 247.

²⁹² Druick, 348

²⁹³ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of Hope*, 3.

²⁹⁴ See "Translator's Note in Julia Kristiva, *Powers of Horror An Essay on Abjection* translated by Leon S. Roudiez (New York Columbia University Press, 1982), viii.

²⁹⁵ Kristiva, 4.

²⁹⁶ Kristiva, 64.

²⁹⁷ Noel Starblanket, "A Voice for Canadian Indians; An Indian Film Crew (1968)" in *Challenge for Change Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton editors (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's UP, 2010), 40.

²⁹⁸ In the 1960s the term First Nation had not yet entered the common vocabulary. Throughout the *Challenge of Change* text, the term Native Indian or Indian is used interchangeably with aboriginal, the term Indian is not in any sense considered derogatory or insensitive.

²⁹⁹ Starblanket, 40.

³⁰⁰ From Wikipedia the free encyclopedia
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incident_at_Restigouche (accessed May 4, 2011).

³⁰¹ Lewis Randolph, *Alanis Obomsawin: The Vision of a Native Filmmaker* in http://books.google.com/books/about/Alanis_Obomsawin.html?id (accessed May 4, 2011)

³⁰² http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Incident_at_Restigouche (accessed May 4, 2011).

³⁰³ Michelle Stewart, “Cree Hunters of Mistassini: Challenge for Change and Aboriginal Rights” in *Challenge for Change Activist Documentary* at the National Film Board of Canada, Thomas Waugh, Michael Brendan Baker, and Ezra Winton editors (Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen’s UP, 2010), 180.

³⁰⁴ Stewart, 180.

³⁰⁵ Stewart, 186.

³⁰⁶ Stewart, 181.

³⁰⁷ Stewart, 184.

³⁰⁸ Stewart, 181.

³⁰⁹ Grierson, 65.

³¹⁰ Geeta Kapur, “Secular Artist, Citizen Artist” in *Art And Social Change A Critical Reader* edited by Will Bradley, and Charles Esche (London: Tate Publishing, 2007), 422.

³¹¹ Kapur, 438.

³¹² Kapur, 438.

³¹³ Kapur, 429.

³¹⁴ This era corresponds— concurs—with socio-political movements in Canada and the establishment of the “official” multicultural platform of the Liberal Government.

³¹⁵ Kapur, 424.

³¹⁶ From conversations with the artist at an international art seminar held at the Khōj International Artists’ Workshop located at the Khirkee Extension, Dehli, India, on October, 11, 2009.

³¹⁷ From conversations with the artist, October, 11, 2009.

³¹⁸ Kapur, 439.

³¹⁹ Kapur, 426.

³²⁰ Lucy Lippard, “Time Capsule” in *Art and Social Change A Critical Reader* edited by Will Bradley, and Charles Esche (London: Tate Publishing, 2007), 408.

³²¹ Lippard, 408.

³²² Rex Weyler, *Greenpeace: The Inside Story: How a Group of Ecologists, Journalists and Visionaries Changed the World* (Vancouver: Raincoast Books, 2005). NEEDS A PAGE NUMBER/???

³²³ Sarah Milroy, “OH, CANADA An American curator looks north” an Interview in *Canadian Art*, Spring 2012, pp 82-85.

³²⁴ Lippard, 409.

³²⁵ Lippard, 409.

³²⁶ Lippard, 411.

³²⁷ Bothwell, 270.

³²⁸ Trudeau, 358

³²⁹ Landsberg, 65.

³³⁰ Ewa Płonowska Ziarek, *An Ethics of Dissensus Postmodernity, Feminism, And The Politics Of Radical Democracy* (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2001), 221.

³³¹ Weinrib, 268.

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- ³³² Saul, 131.
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- ³³⁴ Jacques Hebert, “Legislating for Freedom” in *Towards A Just Society The Trudeau Years* edited by Thomas S. Axworthy, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau translated by Patricia Claxton (Markham: Viking Penguin Canada, 2010), 132.
- ³³⁵ “Lester Bowles Pearson-Biography” in http://biographi.ca/009004-119-e.php?id_nbr=7988 (accessed October 13, 2011), 12.
- ³³⁶ “Lester Bowles Pearson-Biography” in http://biographi.ca/009004-119-e.php?id_nbr=7988 (accessed October 13, 2011).
- ³³⁷ “Lester Bowles Pearson-Biography” in http://biographi.ca/009004-119-e.php?id_nbr=7988 (accessed October 13, 2011), 12.
- ³³⁸ Weinrib, “Trudeau and the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms: A Question of Constitutional Maturation” in *Trudeau’s Shadow The Life And Legacy Of Pierre Elliott Trudeau*, edited by Andrew Cohen and J. L. Granatstein (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 1998), 261.
- ³³⁹ Weinrib, 262.
- ³⁴⁰ *Mémoires Pierre Elliott Trudeau Memoirs*, directed by Brian McKenna, opening scene. See also where Trudeau’s famous statement is repeated in the 1989 television documentary series *Struggle for Democracy*, hosted by Patrick Watson, available at http://www.tvarchives.ca/database/...struggle_for_democracy.../details/ (accessed April 19, 2010).
- ³⁴¹ Trudeau, 358-359
- ³⁴² <http://www.historyofrights.com/events/rcsw.html> (accessed January 18, 2012).
- ³⁴³ <http://www.awc-cfc.gc.ca/dates/roycom/index-eng.html> (accessed January 18, 2012).
- ³⁴⁴ Bothwell et al, 311.
- ³⁴⁵ Landsberg, 35.
- ³⁴⁶ Lisa Young, “Women (Not) in Politics: Women’s Electoral Participation” in *Canadian Politics* edited by James Bickerton, and Alain-G. Gagnon 4th edition (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 290-291.

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- ³⁴⁷ Young, 292.
- ³⁴⁸ Young, 287-288.
- ³⁴⁹ Patrick Watson, and Benjamin Barber, *The Struggle for Democracy* (Toronto: Key Porter books, 2000), 131.
- ³⁵⁰ Landsberg, 258.
- ³⁵¹ Ziarek, 9.
- ³⁵² Edward Said, “from *Orientalism*” in *Art and Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas* edited by Charles Harrison, and Paul Wood (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 1006.
- ³⁵³ Chantal Mouffe editor, *Dimensions of Radical Democracy Pluralism, Citizenship, Community* (London: Verso, 1992).
- ³⁵⁴ Ziarek, 5.
- ³⁵⁵ Chrétien, 285.
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- ³⁵⁹ Weinrib, 260.
- ³⁶⁰ Jim Coutts, “Trudeau in Power: A View from Inside the Prime Minister’s Office,” in *Trudeau’s Shadow The Life And Legacy of Pierre Elliott Trudeau* edited by Andrew Cohen, and J. L. Granatstein (Toronto: Vintage Canada, 1998), 150.
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- ³⁶² Weinrib, 261.
- ³⁶³ Samuel Laselva, 29.
- ³⁶⁴ Trudeau, 360.

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³⁶⁶ Andrew Cohen, “Trudeau’s Canada” in *Trudeau’s Shadow The Life And Legacy Of Pierre Elliott Trudeau* edited by Andrew Cohen and J. L. Granatstein (Toronto: Random House, 1998), 317.

³⁶⁷ Cohen, 317.

³⁶⁸ Cohen, 318.

³⁶⁹ Trudeau, 378.

³⁷⁰ Chrétien, 290.

³⁷¹ Chrétien, 291.

³⁷² Chrétien, 294.

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³⁷⁴ Chrétien, 298.

³⁷⁵ Bothwell, 391.

³⁷⁶ Landsberg, 265.

³⁷⁷ Landsberg, 263.

³⁷⁸ Landsberg, 268

³⁷⁹ David Forgacs, editor, *The Antonio Gramsci Reader Selected Writings 1916-1935* with a new introduction by Eric Hobsbawm (New York: New York University Press, 2000), 251.

³⁸⁰ Forgacs, 251.

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³⁸² Bothwell, 394.

³⁸³ Paul Guyer, *Kant’s Groundwork for the Metaphysics of Morals* (London: Continuum International Publishing, 2007), 128.

³⁸⁴ Martha C. Nussbaum, “Compassion: The Philosophical Debate” in *Upheavals Of Thought The Intelligence Of Emotions* (Cambridge UK: Cambridge University Press, 2001), 359.

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³⁹⁰ Watson 133.

³⁹¹ Roger Gibbins, 127.

³⁹² Trudeau, 372.

³⁹³ Guyer, 20.

³⁹⁴ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, 1983, excerpts from his speech in the “Verbatim Transcript” in *Federal-provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters* (Ottawa: Intergovernmental Document Centre, 1984), 1-3.

³⁹⁵ Pierre Elliott Trudeau, speech from the “Verbatim Transcript” in *Federal-provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters* (Ottawa: Intergovernmental Document Centre, 1984), 11

³⁹⁶ Georges Erasmus, speech “Verbatim Transcript” in *Federal-provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters* document 800-20/007, April 2, 1985 (Ottawa: Intergovernmental Document Centre, 1985), 11

³⁹⁷ From the “Verbatim Transcript” in *Federal-Provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters* (Ottawa: Intergovernmental Document Centre, 1983) 15.

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- ⁴⁰⁰ Raymond Bazowski, “The Judicialization of Canadian Politics” in *Canadian Politics* edited by James Bickerton, and Alain-G. Gagnon 4th edition (Peterborough: Broadview Press, 2004), 207.
- ⁴⁰¹ Dara Culhane, *The Pleasure Of the Crown Anthropology Law and First Nations* (Vancouver: Talon Books, 1993), 117.
- ⁴⁰² McMillan, 330.
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- ⁴⁰⁶ Suffice to say that in Canada’s recent federal election, 2011, economic issues carried the day; and, the Conservative Party of Canada emerged with their first majority mandate in over 23 years.
- ⁴⁰⁷ Will Kymlicka, “Citizenship, Communities, and Identity in Canada” in *Canadian Politics*, 42
- ⁴⁰⁸ Jo-Anne Fiske, “Political Status of Native Indian Women: Contradictory Implications of Canadian State Policy” in *In The Days Of Our Grandmothers A Reader In Aboriginal Women In Canada*, 340.
- ⁴⁰⁹ *Dancing Around the Table*, directed by Maurice Bulbulian, NFB, 1987, opening scene.
- ⁴¹⁰ Thomas Waugh, “The Films of Maurice Bulbulian: Science and Conscience” in *Challenge doe Change Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada* edited by...202.
- ⁴¹¹ Erik Barnouw, *Documentary A History Of The Non-Fiction Film* second revised edition (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1993), 89-99.

⁴¹² John Grierson, “Memo to Michelle About Decentralizing means of Production (1972)” in *Challenge for Change Activist Documentary at the National Film Board of Canada*, 63.

⁴¹³ *Dancing Around The Table* DVD directed by Maurice Bulbulian (Ottawa: NFB, 1987), opening scene.

⁴¹⁴ Ibid

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⁴¹⁷ Jo-Anne Fiske, 354.

⁴¹⁸ Sandra Lovelace, presentation in the “Verbatim Transcript” in *Federal-Provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Constitutional Matters* March 9, 1984 (Ottawa: Intergovernmental Document Centre, 1984), 323.

⁴¹⁹ Fiske, 339.

⁴²⁰ McMillan 324.

⁴²¹ George Braden, “Verbatim Transcript” in presentation to the second *Federal-Provincial Conference of First Ministers on Aboriginal Matters* (), 98.

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CHAPTER THREE

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⁴²⁹ Louis Althusser, "Marxism and Humanism" in *Readers in Cultural Criticism Posthumanism* edited by Neil Badmington (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 32.

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⁴³¹ Gerald McMaster, *INDIGENA Contemporary Native Perspectives* edited by Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992), 8, 14.

⁴³² Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples People to People. Nation to Nation (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services, 1996), 3.

⁴³³ Ibid 3.

⁴³⁴ Nussbaum, 3-4

⁴³⁵ Nussbaum, 3-4.

⁴³⁶ Louise Ropes Loomis, editor, *Aristotle On Man In The Universe Metaphysics, Parts Of Animals, Ethics, Politics, Poetics* (Roslyn: Walter J. Black, 1971).

⁴³⁷ Darwin Hanna, and Mamie Henry, editors, *Our Tellings Interior Salish Stories of the Nlhaḡ kápmx People* (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1995). The spelling of the "softly aspirated" Native word for "the People of the River" often appear in other texts, as 'Nlaka'pamux or NLaka'pamux and James Teit, interpreted it as NLak'a'pamux. (Teit 1900)

⁴³⁸ Boris Groys, *Art Power* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2008), 2.

⁴³⁹ Groys, 2.

⁴⁴⁰ Groys, 2.

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- ⁴⁴¹ Groys, 1.
- ⁴⁴² Groys, 4.
- ⁴⁴³ Groys, 6.
- ⁴⁴⁴ Groys, 8-9.
- ⁴⁴⁵ Groys, 4.
- ⁴⁴⁶ Groys, 4.
- ⁴⁴⁷ Nussbaum, 242-243.
- ⁴⁴⁸ Nussbaum, 243.
- ⁴⁴⁹ To paraphrase from Maura Reilly, and Linda Nochlin, editors, *global feminisms New Directions In Contemporary Art* (London: Merrell Publishers, 2007), 11.
- ⁴⁵⁰ Groys, 38
- ⁴⁵¹ Groys, 38.
- ⁴⁵² Loretta Todd, "What More Do They Want?" in *NDGENA Contemporary Native Perspectives* edited by Herald McMaster (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992), 75
- ⁴⁵³ Jean-François Lyotard, *Lessons On The Analytic Of The Sublime (Kant's Critique of Judgment, ' §§ 23-29)* translated by Elizabeth Rottenberg (Stanford: Stanford University Press, 1994), 7.
- ⁴⁵⁴ Todd, 75
- ⁴⁵⁵ Mary Longman "Challenging The Ideology Of Representation: Contemporary First Nations Art In Canada" dissertation, unpublished (Victoria: University of Victoria, 2006).
- ⁴⁵⁶ Longman 2006.
- ⁴⁵⁷ Nussbaum, 25.
- ⁴⁵⁸ Nussbaum, 238.
- ⁴⁵⁹ Nussbaum, 244.

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- ⁴⁶⁰ Groys,13.
- ⁴⁶¹Trudeau, 369.
- ⁴⁶² Jonathan F. Vance, *A History of Canadian Culture*, 105.
- ⁴⁶³ Marshall McLuhan, *Understanding Media The Extensions of Man Critical Edition* edited by W. Terrence Gordon (Corte Madera: Gingko Press, 2003), 14.
- ⁴⁶⁴ Fredric Jameson, “The Deconstruction of Expression” in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology Of Changing Ideas* eds., Charles Harrison, and Paul Wood (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 1048..
- ⁴⁶⁵ Jameson, “The Deconstruction of Expression” in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology Of Changing Ideas* eds., Charles Harrison, and Paul Wood (Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2003), 1050.
- ⁴⁶⁶ Jameson, 1051.
- ⁴⁶⁷ Jameson, 1051.
- ⁴⁶⁸ Jameson,1050.
- ⁴⁶⁹ Jameson,1050-1051.
- ⁴⁷⁰Jameson, 1050.
- ⁴⁷¹ Jameson, 1047.
- ⁴⁷² See David Farrell Krell, editor, *Martin Heidegger Basic Writings from Being and Time (1927) to the Task of Thinking (1964)* revised and expanded edition (SanFrancisco: Harper, 1993), 158-165.
- ⁴⁷³ Jameson,1048.
- ⁴⁷⁴ Jameson,1048.
- ⁴⁷⁵ Jameson,1048.
- ⁴⁷⁶ Donna J. Haraway, *Simians, Cyborgs, and Women The Reinvention of Nature* (New York: Routledge, Chapman and Hall, Inc., 1991), 152.
- ⁴⁷⁷ Haraway, 155.
- ⁴⁷⁸ Haraway, 155.

⁴⁷⁹ Griselda Pollock, *Vision And Difference Femininity, feminism and histories of art* (London: Routledge, 1993), 5.

⁴⁸⁰ Jameson, 1050.

⁴⁸¹ Jameson, 1050.

⁴⁸² Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, in her Chapter on “Culture” in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1999), 315, Spivak refers to a passage in F. Jameson, *Postmodernism, or, The Cultural logic of Late Capitalism* (London: Verso, 1991), of which “The Deconstruction of Expression,” is an excerpt.

⁴⁸³ Spivak, 316.

⁴⁸⁴ Jameson, 1051.

⁴⁸⁵ Homi K. Bhabha, *The Location of Culture* (New York: Routledge Classics, 2008), 307.

⁴⁸⁶ Bhabha, 313

⁴⁸⁷ Bhabha, 317.

⁴⁸⁸ Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986), 291.

⁴⁸⁹ Krauss, 29.

⁴⁹⁰ Rosalind E. Krauss, “The Originality of the Avant-Garde,” in *Art in Theory 1900-2000: An Anthology of Changing Ideas* edited by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1033.

⁴⁹¹ Krauss, 1034.

⁴⁹² Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 1988), 158.

⁴⁹³ On Hesse’s career see Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia at http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Eva_Hesse (accessed May 20, 2011).

⁴⁹⁴ Agnes Martin, interview, Vancouver April, 1977.

⁴⁹⁵ Interview with Agnes Martin, Vancouver, April, 1977.

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- ⁴⁹⁶ Agnes Martin, *The Untroubled Mind* edited by Lawrence Alloway with a foreword by Suzanne Delehanty (Philadelphia: Institute of Contemporary Art), 19.
- ⁴⁹⁷ From an interview in conversation with Agnes Martin, Vancouver, April, 1977.
- ⁴⁹⁸ Griselda Pollock, *Vision and Difference Femininity, feminism and histories of art* (London: Routledge, 1993), 16.
- ⁴⁹⁹ Pollock, 161.
- ⁵⁰⁰ Pollock, 163.
- ⁵⁰¹ Pollock, 165.
- ⁵⁰² Pollock, 169.
- ⁵⁰³ Rosalind E. Krauss, *The Originality of the Avant-Garde and Other Modernist Myths* (Cambridge: MIT Press, 1986), 38.
- ⁵⁰⁴ Krauss, 38.
- ⁵⁰⁵ Krauss, 197.
- ⁵⁰⁶ Krauss, 197.
- ⁵⁰⁷ Pollock, 10-11.
- ⁵⁰⁸ Jean-François Lyotard "Introduction to the Postmodern Condition" in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison, and Paul Wood, new edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1122.
- ⁵⁰⁹ Lyotard, 1122.
- ⁵¹⁰ Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* translated from the French by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi with a foreword by Fredric Jameson (Minneapolis: Minnesota Up, 1984), 4.
- ⁵¹¹ To paraphrase Lyotard, the Enlightenment project suggests subject positions that are inscribed within language and the idea that philosophy can restore unity to learning and knowledge and that tradition has its roots in patriarchal knowledges.

⁵¹² Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* translated from the French by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi with a foreword by Fredric Jameson (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1984), 65.

⁵¹³ Lyotard, 66 and 90

⁵¹⁴ Lyotard, 66.

⁵¹⁵ Steven Best, and Douglas Kellner eds., *Postmodern Theory Critical Interrogations* (New York: Guildford Press, 1991), 164.

⁵¹⁶ Mary Longman, *Transposing Perspectives* (Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery, 2011), 8..

⁵¹⁷ Longman, 8.

⁵¹⁸ Longman, 10

⁵¹⁹ Longman see also Longman's essay "The Ideology Of Stereotypes" in *Challenging The Ideology of Representation: Contemporary First Nations Art In Canada* (Victoria: University of Victoria, 2006), 72-92.

⁵²⁰ Longman, 23.

⁵²¹ Longman, 27-28.

⁵²² Longman, 28.

⁵²³ Longman, 27.

⁵²⁴ Longman, 29.

⁵²⁵ Longman, 18.

⁵²⁶ Longman, 18.

⁵²⁷ Longman, 42-44

⁵²⁸ Longman,38

⁵²⁹ Longman, 45.

⁵³⁰ Longman, 8.

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- ⁵³¹ Vine Deloria Jr., *God Is Red A Native View of Religion* updated edition (Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 1994), 10,
- ⁵³² Longman, 10
- ⁵³³ Gérard Pelletier, “1968: The Language Policy and the Mood in Quebec” in *Towards A Just Society The Trudeau Years* edited by Thomas S. Axworthy, and Pierre Elliott Trudeau translated by Patricia Claxton (Markham: Viking Penguin Canada, 2010), 215
- ⁵³⁴ Pelletier, 209.
- ⁵³⁵ For exhibition venues and dates see <http://www.memorybc.artropolic-finds:rad> (accessed May 16, 2011) see http://www.commonground.ca/iss/0606179/cg179_AlanClapp.shtml (accessed May 30, 2011).
- ⁵³⁶ See http://www.commonground.ca/iss/0606179/cg179_AlanClapp.shtml (accessed May 30, 2011).
- ⁵³⁷ As an attendee of the Habitat Forum, as a witness I attest to the accuracy of the speakers’ call for collective decision making directed toward a good outcome for planet earth.
- ⁵³⁸ Unfortunately, at the time of this writing, I have not yet located these documents.
- ⁵³⁹ Vandana Shiva, “Development As A New Project Of Western Patriarchy” in *Reweaving The World Emergence of Ecofeminism* edited by Irene Diamond, and Gloria Feman Ornstein (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990), 189.
- ⁵⁴⁰ Carolyn Merchant, *Reinventing Eden The Fate of Nature in Western Culture* (New York, 2004), 220.
- ⁵⁴¹ Rex Weyler, *Greenpeace: The Inside Story: How a Group of Ecologists, Journalists and Visionaries Changed the World* (Vancouver: Raincoast, 2005)
- ⁵⁴² Naomi Pauls, and Charles Campbell, *The Georgia Straight WHAT THE HELL HAPPENED?* (Vancouver: Vancouver Free Press Publishing, 2001), 75. See also Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia at [Http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greenpeace](http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Greenpeace) (accessed May 3, 2011).
- ⁵⁴³ Sarah Hipperson, “Greenham Common Women’s Peace Camp 1891-2000” at <http://www.greenhamwpc.org.uk> (accessed March 21, 2010).

⁵⁴⁴ As an aside, I attended the preliminary hearings holden in New York and stood as a witness among many others to hear the words of the women as they spoke of their heartfelt commitment towards saving planet earth from nuclear devastation; and, I stood up in support of their dedication to the perseveration of the planet's ecological systems.

⁵⁴⁵ For more information see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Chipko_movement (Accessed March 21, 2010).

⁵⁴⁶ *Water on the Table* directed by Liz Marshall, opening scene; and see also http://www.wateronthetable.com/category/liz_marshall_posts/ (Accessed March 21, 2010).

⁵⁴⁷ *Even The Rain* directed by Iciar Bollain, opening scene.

⁵⁴⁸ Vandana Shiva, "Development As A New Project Of Western patriarchy" in *Reweaving The World The Emergence of Ecofeminism*, edited and with essays by Irene Diamond, and Gloria Feman Ornstein (San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1990), 190.

⁵⁴⁹ Shiva, 191.

⁵⁵⁰ Over several months in the fall of 2009 I participated in a travel study tour with a Simon Fraser University exchange group. Among other activities such as film studies, art and culture lectures, I attended an international symposium on the ethics of aesthetics holden at the Khōj Workshop. Over a long weekend, I met and spoke with many of the participating artists and I had an opportunity to interview the workshop director, Pooja Sood.

⁵⁵¹ Louis Althusser, "Marxism and Humanism" in *Readers in Cultural Criticism Posthumanism* edited by Neil Badmington, (New York: Palgrave, 2000), 33.

⁵⁵² Leslie H. Tepper, *Earth Line and Morning Star NLaka'pamux Clothing Traditions* (Hull: Canadian Museum of Civilization, 1994), Xi.

⁵⁵³ James Teit, "The Thompson Indians of British Columbia" vol.1 part IV in *The Jesup North Pacific Expedition Memoir of the American Museum of Natural History New York*, edited by Franz Boas reprint (Merritt: Nicola Valley Museum Archives Association), 199.

⁵⁵⁴ Teit, 299.

⁵⁵⁵ Shiva, 190.

⁵⁵⁶ Longman, (2006), 63.

⁵⁵⁷ Jean-Luc Nancy, *The Inoperative Community* edited by Peter Connor and translated by Peter Connor, Lisa Garbus, Michael Holland, and Simona Sawhney with a foreword by Christopher Fynsk (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2008), 50.

⁵⁵⁸ Nancy, 7.

⁵⁵⁹ Nancy, 28.

⁵⁶⁰ see http://www.en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Glenn_Gould (accessed May 3, 2011).

⁵⁶¹ John Vaillant, “Don’t just stand there—get on the bus” in *Doxa Documentary Film Festival Guide* (Vancouver: Documentary Media Society, 2011), 68.

⁵⁶² *Freedom Riders*, directed by Stanley Nelson, opening scene.

⁵⁶³ *Soundtrack For A Revolution*, directed by Bill Guttentag, and Dan Sturman, opening scene.

⁵⁶⁴ Rather than transporting performers by air o various cities the prompters, Eaton-Walker and the Industrial Trades Shows of Canada, chartered 14 cars, a diner five Pullman sleepers, two lounge cars, flat cars, a baggage car one staff car and two locomotive engines of the Canadian National Railway to haul the musicians and their equipment across the country. For proposed venues see http://en.wikipedis.org/wiki/Festival_Express (accessed May 30, 2011).

⁵⁶⁵ To view of the large scale work titled *Abbott and Cordova August 7, 1971* go to <http://pricetags.wordpress.com/-abbott-and-cordova/> and for a Stan Douglas “profile” see an article Leigh Kamping-Carder at <http://walrusmagazine.com/.../2009.07-profile-at-the-gastown-riot-stan-douglas-walrus-vancouver-art/>

⁵⁶⁶ Rachel Kushner, “Rebel Movement’ in *Artforum* vol.50 no.8 April 2012.

⁵⁶⁷ Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* translated from the French by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi with a foreword by Fredric Jameson (Minneapolis: Minnesota Up, 1984), 66.

⁵⁶⁸ Lyotard, 67.

⁵⁶⁹ Bruce M. White “The Woman Who Married a Beaver: Trade Patterns and Gender Roles in the Ojibwa Fur Trade” in *In the Days Of Our Grandmothers*, 57.

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- ⁵⁷⁰ White, 58.
- ⁵⁷¹ Jacques Derrida, *Given Time: I. Counterfeit Money* translated by Peggy Kamuf (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1994), 43.
- ⁵⁷² Derrida, 43.
- ⁵⁷³ Derrida, 44.
- ⁵⁷⁴ Gloria Cranmer Webster. "From Colonization to Repatriation" in *INDIGENA Contemporary Native Perspectives* edited by Gerald McMaster and Lee-Ann Martin (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992), PAGE
- ⁵⁷⁵ Cranmer, 36.,
- ⁵⁷⁶ Jean-François Lyotard, *The Postmodern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* translated from the French by Geoff Bennington and Brian Massumi with a foreword by Fredric Jameson (Minneapolis: Minnesota UP, 1984), 29.
- ⁵⁷⁷ Lyotard, 29
- ⁵⁷⁸ Lyotard, xxv.
- ⁵⁷⁹ Vine Deloria, Jr., *God Is Red A Native View of Religion* (Golden: Fulcrum Publishing, 1994), 63.
- ⁵⁸⁰ Jean-François Lyotard "Introduction to the Postmodern Condition" in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison, and Paul Wood, new edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1122.
- ⁵⁸¹ Jacques Derrida, "The Exorbitant: Question of Method" and "The Engraving and the Ambiguities of Formalism" from *Of Grammatology* in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison, and Paul Wood, new edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 944-945.
- ⁵⁸² Patti Lather, *Getting Lost Feminist Efforts toward a Double(d) Science* (Albany: State University of New York, 2007), 102.
- ⁵⁸³ Roland Barthes, "Myth Today" in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison, and Paul Wood, new edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 691-698.
- ⁵⁸⁴ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason Towards A History Of The Vanishing Present* (Cambridge: Harvard UP, 1999), 426.

⁵⁸⁵ Spivak, 423

⁵⁸⁶ These quotes are from several personal talks with the artist. Over the waning decades of the 1990s, as department head and director of an extensive visiting artists program at NVIT, I had ample opportunity to invite Aboriginal artists to present their work and to speak both to students and to the wider community in open symposium holden in public. Through this program I met with influential artists such as Joane Cardinal-Shubert, Edward Poitras, Gerald McMaster, George Littlechild, and Jane-Ash Poitras, not to forget to mention Agnes Martin and, I worked closely with Mary Longman in developing an Aboriginal Art studio. Sadly to say in an overt action that can only be described as a patriarchal act of ignorance, the non-Aboriginal administration deemed the arts program—at this Native institution—irrelevant to their notion of the goal of higher education.

⁵⁸⁷ This description is from an installation performance with NVIT students at the Merritt Library, Merritt, B.C., and reenacted at the EN’Owkin Center at Penticton, B.C.

⁵⁸⁸ Highlights from the Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples People to People, Nation to Nation (Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada, 1996). When the commission visited Merritt, B.C. I attended.

⁵⁸⁹ Ibid

⁵⁹⁰ Ibid

⁵⁹¹ Ibid 80.

⁵⁹² Ibid 82.

⁵⁹³ Jen Budney, ”Revisioning: The Lenticular Prints of Mary Longman” an introductory essay to Longman’s exhibition *Transposing Perspectives* September 2009-January 2010 (Saskatoon: Mendel Art Gallery Publication,2011), 6-7

⁵⁹⁴ Budney, 6.

⁵⁹⁵ Western Front Exhibitions (Vancouver: Western Front, 2009), for an extended list of contemporary exhibitions holden at the MOA Vancouver go to www.moa.ubc.ca/exhibits/ site also gives a list of shows at the MOA Satellite Gallery 560 Seymour Street, Vancouver.

⁵⁹⁶ Robin Lawrence, “First Nations take spring’s visual-art spotlight” in *The Georgia Straight*, March, 2012.

⁵⁹⁷ from the preface *Imprints of Cultural Survival In Honor of Our Grandmothers* (Penticton: Theytus Books, 1994),2.

⁵⁹⁸ Linda Spaner Dayan Frimer and Garry Gottfriedson, George Littlechild and Reisa Smiley Schneider, *Imprints of Cultural Survival In Honour Of Our Grandmothers* (Penticton: Theytus Books, 1994).

⁵⁹⁹ Tomson Highway, *The Rez Sisters* (1988) and *Dry Lips Oughta Move To Kapuskasing* (1989) (Saskatoon and Calgary: Fifth House Publishers, 1988 and 1989).

⁶⁰⁰ Gayatri Chakravorti Spivak, “Who Claims Alterity” in *Art in Theory1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, new edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1092.

⁶⁰¹ Spivak,1093.

⁶⁰² Donna Landry, and Gerald Mclean *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak* (New York: Routledge, 1996), 288.

⁶⁰³ Gayatri Chakravorti Spivak, “Who Claims Alterity” in *Art in Theory1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, new edition. (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1093

⁶⁰⁴ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy Of Hope Reliving Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, with notes by Ana Maria Araújo Freire, and translated by Robert R. Barr (London: Continuum, 2009), 67.

⁶⁰⁵ Freire, 71.

⁶⁰⁶ Rita L. Irwin, “Introduction A/r/tography: A Metonymic Métissage in *a/r/tography Rendering Self Through Arts-Based Living Inquiry*, edited by Rita L. Irwin and Alex de Cosson with a foreword by William F. Pinar (Vancouver: Pacific Educational Press, 2004), 31.

⁶⁰⁷ Irwin,32.

⁶⁰⁸ D. W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1982), 89.

⁶⁰⁹ Irwin,,30.

⁶¹⁰ Spivak, “Subaltern Talk Interview with the Editors” in *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York: Routledge, 1996), 291.

⁶¹¹ Spivak, 288.

⁶¹² Spivak, 288.

⁶¹³ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Who Claims Alterity” in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, new edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1094.

⁶¹⁴ Spivak, 1094.

⁶¹⁵ Spivak, 1094.

⁶¹⁶ Spivak, 1093.

⁶¹⁷ Paulo Freire, *Pedagogy of the Oppressed*, new revised 20th anniversary edition, translated by Myra Bergman Ramos (New York: Continuum, 1992), 64.

⁶¹⁸ To paraphrase Spivak. “Subaltern Talk Interview with the Editors” in *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York: Routledge, 1996), 291.

⁶¹⁹ Spivak, “Subaltern Talk Interview with the Editors” in *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York: Routledge, 1996), 291.

⁶²⁰ Spivak, 292.

⁶²¹ Spivak 290.

⁶²² To paraphrase Spivak, “Who Claims Alterity” in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, new edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1094.

⁶²³ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Who Claims Alterity” in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, new edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1094.

⁶²⁴ Spivak, 1095.

⁶²⁵ Spivak, 1096.

⁶²⁶ Spivak, 1095.

⁶²⁷ Spivak introduced Jacques Derrida to “English-speaking audiences through her 1969 publication

Of Grammatology, see “Introduction Reading Spivak” in *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, edited by Donna Landry, and Gerald MacLean (New York: Routledge, 1969), 1. Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Who Claims Alterity” in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, new edition (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1094, 95.

⁶²⁸ Longman, (2006), 36.

⁶²⁹ Emma LaRocque, “The Colonization of a Native Woman Scholar” in *In The Days Of Our Grandmothers: A Reader In Aboriginal Women’s History In Canada* edited by Mary-Ellen Kelm, and Lorna Townsend (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2008), 400.

⁶³⁰ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Revolutions That As Yet Have No Model Derrida’s “Limited Inc.” in *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of*, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York: Routledge, 1996), 101.

⁶³¹ Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean eds., *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*

(New York: Routledge, 1996), 101.

⁶³² Spivak, “Revolutions That As Yet Have No Model Derrida’s “Limited Inc.” in *The Spivak Reader*

Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York:

Routledge, 1996), 101.

⁶³³ David Ferris, *The Cambridge Introduction to Walter Benjamin* (Cambridge: Cambridge UP, 2008), 141.

⁶³⁴ Walter Benjamin, “The Author as Producer” in *Modern Art and Modernism: A Critical Anthology*, edited

by Francis Francina, and Charles Harrison, with the assistance of Deirdre Paul (New York: Harper & Row,

1983), 213.

⁶³⁵ Benjamin, 213.

⁶³⁶ Benjamin, 214.

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- ⁶³⁷ Benjamin, 214.
- ⁶³⁸ Benjamin, 214.
- ⁶³⁹ Loretta Todd, “What More Do They Want?” in *INDIGENA Contemporary Native Perspectives* edited by Gerald McMaster, and Lee-Ann Martin (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, 1992),
- ⁶⁴⁰ Todd, 77.
- ⁶⁴¹ Martha C. Nussbaum, *Love’s Knowledge Essays on Philosophy and Literature* (New York: Oxford UP, 1992), 8.
- ⁶⁴² Nussbaum, 8.
- ⁶⁴³ Nussbaum, 8.
- ⁶⁴⁴ Michel Foucault, *The History of Sexuality Volume 1: An Introduction* translated by Robert Hurley (New York: Vintage Books, 1990), 140-143.
- ⁶⁴⁵ Foucault, 136.
- ⁶⁴⁶ Foucault, 140-143.
- ⁶⁴⁷ Jean-Luc Nancy, 31.
- ⁶⁴⁸ Boris Groys, *Art Power* (Cambridge: The MIT Press, 2008), 176-177.
- ⁶⁴⁹ Groys 14.
- ⁶⁵⁰ Groys, 15.
- ⁶⁵¹ Groys, 16.
- ⁶⁵² Spivak, “Explanation and Culture Marginalia” in *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York: Routledge, 1996), 31
- ⁶⁵³ Spivak, 31.
- ⁶⁵⁴ Spivak, 30.
- ⁶⁵⁵ See the introduction to Spivak’s essay “Explanation and Culture Marginalia” in *The Spivak Reader*

Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York:

Routledge, 1996), 29.

⁶⁵⁶ To paraphrase Spivak, “Explanation and Culture Marginalia” in *The Spivak Reader*

Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York:

Routledge, 1996), 31.

⁶⁵⁷ Spivak, 55.

⁶⁵⁸ Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak, “Who Claims Alterity” in *Art in Theory 1900-2000 An Anthology of Changing Ideas*, edited by Charles Harrison and Paul Wood, new edition. (Malden: Blackwell, 2003), 1094.

⁶⁵⁹ Spivak, “Feminism and Critical Theory” in *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York: Routledge, 1996), 57

⁶⁶⁰ Jennifer Blythe, and Peggy Martin McGuire, “The Changing Employment of Cree Women’ in *Women of the First Nations Power, Wisdom, and Strength* edited by Christine Miller and Patricia Chuchryk with Marie Smallface Marule, Brenda Manyfingers, and Cheryl Deering (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1996), 146.

⁶⁶¹ *Ibid.*, 146.

⁶⁶² Spivak, “Feminism and Critical Theory” in *The Spivak Reader Selected Works of Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak*, Donna Landry, and Gerald Maclean editors (New York: Routledge, 1996), 54.

⁶⁶³ Spivak, 57.

⁶⁶⁴ Spivak, 56.

⁶⁶⁵ Spivak, 57.

⁶⁶⁶ Spivak, 56.

⁶⁶⁷ Spivak, 56.

⁶⁶⁸ Spivak, 57.

⁶⁶⁹ D. W. Winnicott, *Playing and Reality* (London: Routledge, 1982), 71.

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Atanarjuat (The Fast Runner). Zacharias Zunuz, Canada, 2001, 172:00

Black Robe. Bruce Beresford, Australian-Canada, 101:00

Cree Hunters of Mistassini. Tony Ianzelo, Canada, 1974, 57:00

Dancing Around the Table. Maurice Bulbulian Canada, 1987, Part I 57:00 Part II 50:00

Earth. Deepa Mehta, Canada 2005, 102:00

Even The Rain (También la lluvia), Icíar Bollaín, Spain-Mexico-France 2010, 103:00

Festival Express. Bob Smeaton, Canada, 2003, 90:00

Fire Deepa Mehta, Canada-India, 1996, UK 108:00, USA: 104:00

Freedom Riders. Stanley Nelson, U.S., 2010, 120:00

Girlfriend Experience. Ileana Petrobruno, USA-Canada, 2008,

Heaven on Earth. Deepa Mehta, Canada, 2006, 102:00

Incident at Restigouche. Alanis Obomsawin, Canada, 1984, 45:57

John A: Birth Of A Country. Jerry Ciccoritti, Canada, 2011, 91:00

Not a Love Story. Bonnie Sherr Klein, Canada 1981, 69:00

Soundtrack For A Revolution Bill Guttentag and Sam Sturman, U.S., 2009, 82:00

Struggle for Democracy. Patrick Watson, Canada, 1989

The Journals of Knud Rasmussen. Zacharias Zunuk, Canada-Denmark, 2006, 112:00.

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Up Against The System. Terence Macartney-Filgate, Canada, 1969,19:00

Water Deepa Mehta, Canada, 2005, 112:00

Water on the Table. Liz Marshall, Canada, 2010, 79:00

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APPENDIX I

Notably, in 1858 by joining the colony of Vancouver Island with the greater part land mass of New Caledonia, the new colony of British Columbia was created; Douglas was appointed governor and he continued to administer land agreements as he saw fit. When the new colony of British Columbia joined confederation in 1871, the duties of Aboriginal administration were turned over to agents of the Indian Act 1867 and changes began almost immediately.

While Aboriginal Peoples received very little for surrendering nearly half of Canada's land surface to the federal government, they became highly subjugated under the terms of the Indian Act and by the consolidate act entrenched nine years later, they became "wards" of the federal government: even "trivial aspects of daily life" came under legislation.

Indeed in terms of the Indian Act, traditional cultural activities such as the "winter dance" and the "potlatch" became illegal under the Indian Act. A pass, issued by the Indian agent, was required in order to leave the reserve and "...a

prohibition on alcohol or a restriction on entering pool halls was not considered too intrusive on the daily lives of Indians.”⁶⁶⁹ Even in death the Indian agent could decide on the distribution of personal belongings:

| | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Indians may make wills. | 45. (1) Nothing in this Act shall be construed to prevent or prohibit an Indian from devising or bequeathing his property by will. |
| Form of will. | (2) The Minister may accept as a will any written instrument signed by an Indian in which he indicates his wishes or intention with respect to the disposition of his property upon his death. |
| Probate. | (3) No Will executed by an Indian is of any legal force or effect as a disposition of property until the Minister has approved the will or a court has granted probate thereof pursuant to the Act.1951, c.29, s45. |
| Minister may declare will void | 46. (1) The Minister may declare the will of an Indian to be void in full or in part if he is satisfied that... (2) Where the will of an Indian is declared by the Minister or by a court to be wholly void, the person executing the will shall be deemed to have died intestate... Indian Act R.C.S. 1952, C.149... ⁶⁶⁹ |

For hundreds of years colonizers have underappreciated beliefs and systems of knowledge of indigenous peoples. The section of Canada’s Indian Act that describes even the appropriation of personal bequeaths upon death of an individual underscores the superiority of Eurocentric reasoning, which devalues Aboriginal wished, beliefs and ideas. In this sense Aboriginal communities have lost a sense of time in which their cultural and social values may be held up for inclusion into the collective bank of world knowledge. The theory goes that when ideas and beliefs are unappreciated by the greater whole, they cannot enter the

body of knowledge as valid or valued concepts. For Aboriginal peoples their beliefs and values have to be constantly reinstated through the argument for equality of opportunity. Politically this has been a struggle for justice and a prolonged fight to counter the damaging effects of enforced institutionalized Eurocentric education and the strict administration of the harsh terms of Canada's Indian Act. Aesthetically, art and cultural objects which ought to enter the realm of history of art, or art as history, have until recently been relegated to socio-anthropological studies, or as objects of commodification in the order of the economic economy. In the realm of the social sciences, the values of communitarian living have been disavowed both by capitalist values or reduced to the level of contempt for European style communism of which Aboriginal societies are in fact far removed.

Significantly, combined with and complicated by the rush for gold along the Fraser River and into the Cariboo mountain range, colonial administration of the new province of British Columbia, proved highly controversial. Contrary to laws embedded in the Royal Proclamation 1763, as immigration increased, colonialists simply pushed onto Aboriginal lands without first settling title. This contentious issue rose up between Aboriginal Peoples and Canada's federal government. Combined with a lack of adequate federal funding, to pay for land acquisition, Governor Douglas was simply prevented from conducting extensive land agreements; thereby to set conditions that ground the fact that "...most of British Columbia remained non-treaty."⁶⁹ Until 1899, that is, with the signing of Treaty

8; and again, in 1921 with Treaty 11. While these two treaties bring a large portion of the land mass of western Canada and British Columbia under the authority of the federal government, the terms of the treaties are highly contentious and to this day continue to foment legal arguments about land ownership and natural resource exploitation and management.

APPENDIX II

An Excerpt: PART I CANADIAN CHARTER OF RIGHTS AND FREEDOMS ⁶⁶⁹

Enacted as Schedule B to the Canada Act 1982 (UK) 1982, c11

EQUALITY RIGHTS

| | |
|-----------------|---|
| Equality before | 15. (1) Every individual is equal before and under the law and and under has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law law land equal without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination protection and based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age, benefit of law or mental or physical disability. |
|-----------------|---|

GENERAL

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Aboriginal rights | 25. The guarantee in this Charter of certain rights and freedoms and freedoms shall not be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from any not affectedaboriginal, treaty or other rights or freedoms that pertain to the Charter aboriginal peoples of Canada including |
|-------------------|--|

- a) any rights or freedoms that have been recognized by the Royal Proclamation of October 7, 1763; and
- b) any rights or freedoms that now exist by way of land claims agreements or so may be acquired.

| | |
|--------------|---|
| Other rights | 26. The guarantee in this Charter of certain rights and freedoms and freedoms not shall not be construed as denying the existence of any other affected by Charter rights and freedoms that exist in Canada. |
|--------------|---|

| | |
|-------------------|--|
| Multicultural | 27. This Charter shall be interpreted in a manner consistent with heritage the preservation and enhancement of the multicultural heritage of Canadians. |
| Rights respecting | 28. Notwithstanding anything in this Charter, the rights and equality to both freedoms referred to in it are guaranteed equally to male and sexes female persons. |
| Recognition of | 35. (1) The existing aboriginal and treaty rights of the aboriginal existing aboriginal people of Canada are hereby recognized and affirmed. and treaty rights |

From the “verbatim” transcripts I mentioned the speeches and presentations that reminded the elected officials of Canada’s fiduciary responsibility to Aboriginal peoples. In the context of the conferences and in the arguments that followed, the provincial premiers continued to seek larger economic advantages. Moreover, they reversed to their original position, the price they wanted for agreeing to the charter in the first place was greater autonomy from the federal bureaucracy. In order to gain greater access to the natural resources that are undeniably, “Aboriginal resources,” they would refuse to consider the concept of Aboriginal self-government.

At the end of the day, so to speak, an accord was reached to set an amending formula in place so that revisions to Canada’s Constitution Act of 1982 could be accommodated, the procedure for amending so reads:

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| General procedure | <p>38. (1) An amendment to the Constitution of Canada may be for amending made by proclamation issued by the Governor General under the Great Constitution Seal of Canada where so authorized by of Canada</p> <p><i>a)</i> resolutions of the Senate and House of Commons; and</p> <p><i>b)</i> resolutions of the legislative assemblies of at least two-thirds of the provinces that have, in the aggregate, according to the then latest</p> |
|-------------------|---|

general census, at east fifty per cent of the population of all provinces.

The accord on Aboriginal constitution rights that was reached in 1983, it amends the Constitution Act of 1982—that part 25—which was inserted as the result of mass demonstrations and lobbying by feminist women, human rights advocates and Aboriginal protesters back in 1981. The 1983 amendment was meant to clarify Section 35 (3 (1) and paragraph (B) Section 25 so as to read:

Aboriginal rights

25. The guarantee in this Charter of certain rights and freedoms and freedoms shall not be construed so as to abrogate or derogate from any not affected by aboriginal, treaty or other rights or freedoms that pertain to the Charter aboriginal peoples of Canada including

- a)* any right of freedoms that have been recognized by the Royal Proclamation of October, 7, 1763: and
- b)* any rights and freedoms that now exist by way of land claims agreements or so may be acquired.

It is paragraph 25 (b) of the Canadian Constitution Act 1982 that was repelled and replaced by the above words. Section 35 was amended by inserting a sub section that reads similar to section 25 (b) In Part II the amendment reads, “35. (3) For greater certainty, in subsection (1) ‘treaty rights’ includes rights that now exist by way of land claims agreements or may be so acquired.”

APPENDIX III

In a move to resolve the question of inequality, and human rights violations that are carried in terms of the Indian Act, the federal government introduced a

highly controversial bill known famously known as The White Paper 1969. The terms of this proposal more or less comply with Duncan Campbell Scott's interpretation of the Indian Act and to his direction toward assimilation of Canada's Aboriginal peoples into the general society (see my Chapter One) From a First Nations perspective the terms of the White Paper, were highly contested and the paper was scrapped.. Alan C. Cairns elaborates:

The 1969 White Paper, which proposed the ending of the Indian Act and the assimilation of Aboriginal peoples into Canadian society, was a response to new international climate that was hostile to separate treatment that could be seen as exclusion for the benefits of participation in a wealthy society. Trudeau of course, believed that the enforced separation of Aboriginal peoples from the larger society by the Indian Act was itself the prime cause of malaise and social ills that were endemic in native communities .The White Paper was repudiated by organized Indian opposition led by the Indian Association of Alberta

A culture of suspicion and distrust pervades in Indian communities; Parliament is in low repute; the provinces are distrusted; electoral politics based on 'one person one vote' is viewed as an instrument of majoritarian oppression; the Charter has been widely criticized as an act of cultural aggression; and the AFN constitutes a rival system of representation to that of Parliament. These realities are the building blocks of Indigenous nationalism. (Alan C. Cairns "First Nations and the Canadian Nation" in *Canadian Politics*...351-355).

The failure of the four Constitutional Conferences on Aboriginal 1983-1987 proved that federal-provincial antagonism would tie up the necessary amendments needed to bring the concept of Aboriginal self-government and Aboriginal human rights into accord with Canada's new constitution and charter of rights and freedoms 1982. One step toward solving the issue of equality rights was to clarify rights in the charter, section 27 and section 28, but this still did not resolve the

question of cultural injustice and Aboriginal women's rights as they are subjected under the terms of the Indian Act. In April of 1985, the Indian Act was finally amended. Jo-Anne Fiske explains:

...following a long and bitter political struggle, efforts were made to reduce the sexually discriminating passages of the [Indian] act and to make it conform with the equality provisions in the Charter of Rights and Freedoms (1982). New legislation, popularly known as Bill C-31 (an Act to Amend the Indian Act), redefined who is and who is not a registered Indian. The sexually discriminating passages of the old Indian Act were reinscribed. Now marriage no longer affects legal status. Women who had lost status upon marriage became eligible for reinstatement to band membership and for re-registration as Indians under the act. Their children were also qualified....The new provisions created two official categories of Indians: (1) a charter group of reinstated women and all who had band membership prior to 17 April 1985 (when Bill C31 came into effect); and (2) a group of registered status Indians who are not guaranteed band membership and all its attendant rights and privileges, but who must apply to the band itself....a third category emerged: unregistered Indians with band membership...distinctions now exist between three socio-legal categories of Indians and band members—differences that create unequal resources and to special treatment under federal law...It empowers the Canadian state with new ways to intervene, where and when and with whom women form intimate relations and rear their children. (Jo-Anne Fiske "Political Status of Native Indian Women" in *In The days of Our Grandmothers*...341).

APPENDIX IV



[Http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-5001-e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-5001-e.html) (accessed October 13, 2011).or. Map:1667-Maps:1667-1999-Canadian Confederation-Library and Archives Canada



[Http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-5001-e.html](http://www.collectionscanada.gc.ca/confederation/023001-5001-e.html) (accessed October 13, 2011).or. Map:1667-Maps:1667-1999-Canadian Confederation-Library and Archives Canada