Racism in Southern Alberta and Anti-racist Activism for Change

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Edited by Caroline Hodes and Glenda Tibe Bonifacio

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This book is dedicated to the tireless efforts of all those past and present who have devoted their life's work to abolish state-sanctioned, systemic, structural, and interpersonal forms of violence and oppression. Through this dedication, we acknowledge all those whose survival is resistance, who have succumbed to COVID-19, and whom we have lost to these forms of violence.

Aziz Choudry (professor at the Centre for Education Rights and Transformation, University of Johannesburg) and Mónica Trujillo López (professor of international relations, Universidad Popular Autónoma del Estado de Puebla) were taken from this world too soon. This book is crafted in the spirit of their scholarly activism.

Gülden Özcan—our dear, beloved friend, colleague, and contributor to this volume—was diagnosed with terminal cancer on December 24, 2021. She was admitted into palliative care at the Chinook Regional Hospital on May 5, 2022. This book is also dedicated to her life, her work, and the ongoing resilience of her partner, Ozgur, and her son, Ekim. Her research stands at an analytical distance from the traditional disciplines of sociology, political science, history, law and legal studies, and criminology while equally benefiting from the different literature commonly linked to these disciplines. Her projects involve the contested geographies of what is known as Turkey, the UK, Canada, and the US, and her life was devoted to the kinds of scholarly activism celebrated by this volume.

Gülden's concerns with the theory of pacification as a war strategy aimed at ordinary citizens and her explorations of the history of primitive accumulation, exploitation, and work speak directly to the life-threatening work of the contributors to this volume and the colleagues to whom it is dedicated. The work of challenging what Ruth Wilson Gilmore (in Golden Gulag*) refers to as "the state-sanctioned and/or extra-legal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death" kills people. The contemporary neoliberal university—and its perpetuation of systemic and structural forms of violence and discrimination against those who are different—is a deadly instrument of pacification, slow death, and exploitation. We call on our readers to join the resistance. We call on our universities to stop killing our best scholars.*

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Introduction

Race is an unfortunate yet pervasive social construction where difference is used to divide individuals, groups, and communities. Ruth Wilson Gilmore (2007, 28; 2020, 30:23) has defined racism as "the state-sanctioned and/or extra-legal production and exploitation of group-differentiated vulnerability to premature death" in her discussion of what she terms "organized abandonment." As Cedric J. Robinson (1983) has articulated in his discussions on racial capitalism, racism is thereby embedded in histories and narratives of nation building, politics, settler colonialism, economics, exclusionary laws, policies and practices, and all the contemporary institutions that foster their reproduction. Race, while often associated and/or confused with phenotype alone, is not connected to individual, personal, or group characteristics. It has no biological basis. It is, however, endemic to the design of both relationships and institutions and comes with pernicious material consequences.

In colonial and settler-colonial contexts, race has laid out a framework of care and disregard that heightens vulnerability to violence, neglect, and premature death. In settler-colonial contexts like Canada, racism thereby encompasses "economic, political, social and cultural structures, actions and beliefs" that both perpetuate and systematize the unequal distribution of penalty and privilege in a way that benefits white and white-passing settlers at the expense of Indigenous peoples, Black people, and people of colour (DiAngelo 2011, 56). Visible bodies and Indigeneity thereby become markers of difference and sources of ontological claims of "otherness," while whiteness and white privilege remain invisible as unmarked norms that are often erased from discussions of race and racism. In these claims and erasures, normative presumptions about intelligence, capability, and criminality, among many

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other things, become fixed. Gilmore's (2007; 2020) definition and our elaboration on it are therefore intended to ask readers to shift their focus away from what is wrong with individuals or communities and to move toward a consideration of the design of social structures, relationships, institutions, and systems. In doing so, we hope to make visible how various groups come into being and therefore become naturalized for both struggle and political organizing (Gilmore 2020, 32:50).

In this book, we point to the various ways that race is materialized through different forms of racism in a small city. The contributors to this volume show how racism is one of many interlocking systems of oppression that upholds, reinforces, and is inseparable from a range of systemic and structural forms of discrimination and violence that manifest differently at different times and in different spaces in the lives of those who experience them. This volume thereby aims to disrupt the notion that the structural/systemic and the particular, the collective, and the individual are antithetical to one another. To begin, this introductory chapter is divided into five sections. It first covers critical debates about naming race and racism amid the contemporary social upheaval pushed by the Black Lives Matter (BLM) movement and feminist theoretical interrogations on why racialization and Indigeneity matter. It then examines racism and anti-racist activism in Canada, situating the literature around these subjects. This is followed by a discussion about racism and anti-racist initiatives in Alberta and Lethbridge that is set in the backdrop of particular social demographics and an institutional race audit of one of the largest employers in Lethbridge. It then provides an overview of the twelve chapters of the volume.

What's in a Name? The Importance of Naming Racism and Anti-racism

We write this introduction amid the global uprisings that are taking place in response to the systemic anti-Black racism that led to the police killing of George Floyd in Minneapolis, Minnesota; the intersecting anti-Black, anti-Indigenous racisms that led to the police killing of Regis Korchinski-Paquet in Toronto, Ontario; and the anti-Indigenous racism that led to the additional seven police killings over an eight-week period from mid-April to early June of 2020 across Canada: Eishia Hudson, Stewart Kevin Andrews, Everett Patrick, Abraham Natanine, Chantel Moore, Jason Collins, and a thirty-one-year-old

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man from Clyde River in Nunavut whose name has not yet been disclosed. These deaths occurred in the middle of four concurrent, intersecting, synergistic pandemics: the global pandemic of violence against Black, Brown, and Indigenous bodies; the global pandemic of gender-based violence that disproportionately targets women, non-binary, and trans-identified people; the global pandemic of poverty; and finally, COVID-19. None of these pandemics is an accident of nature or an "act of God." Police violence against Black, Brown, and Indigenous people is state-sanctioned violence. Gender-based violence is often framed as a public health problem when it is a problem of misogyny and organized disregard. Poverty, like racism and sexism—in Canada, at least—is often construed as a personal failing rather than a systemic, structural problem. Despite that none of these has been treated with the same urgency as COVID-19, we posit that the global prevalence and health costs combined with the uneven distribution of fatal and severe outcomes of all three make them synergistic pandemics occurring in tandem with COVID-19, rendering some bodies more susceptible to premature death than others.

This framing is uncomfortable. This book is intended to make people uncomfortable. It is intended to draw into question the uncritical move away from naming racism to talking about diversity and inclusion. It is designed to lead to more questions, not to provide answers. It is an act of resistance against what Ien Ang (1995) refers to as a "more sophisticated and complex form of assimilation" (180). As Irfan Chaudhry (2019) has articulated, there is power in naming racism:

> Anytime you use the word anti-racism, people get heightened [. . .] no one wants to be called a racist. [. . .] I think what often happens is when you use that term people still connect it to those overt forms of discrimination [. . .] but what we often [also see] with racism [are] more subtle, micro-aggressions or [. . .] people avoiding certain spaces at certain times because certain demographics occupy that space and they connect that demographic with a lack of safety, so there is a hesitation to utilize the term [. . .] but there is also power in naming it because if you have a problem with discrimination [. . .] it's really important to address it directly [because otherwise] the key issue doesn't get addressed.

Feminist critical race scholars have long been attentive to the costs of reducing difference to "diversity" and racism to a problem of "inclusion." In

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the 1980s, Chandra Talpade Mohanty (1989) pointed out that when difference is "defined as asymmetrical and incommensurate cultural spheres situated within hierarchies of domination and resistance," it "cannot be accommodated within a discourse of 'harmony and diversity'" (181). Absorbing people into pre-existing communities like cities, nations, states, or institutions without "challenging the naturalized legitimacy and status of [those communities] *as* [. . .] communit[ies]" (Ang 1995, 180) does nothing to disrupt the systemic violence that allows for them to remain uninterrogated. It also does nothing to undermine the structural, cultural, and direct forms of violence—including genocide, dispossession, and exclusion—that brought them into being in the first place.

To be included in any combination of these uninterrogated communities often glosses over the structural, systemic, and intersectional nature of the racism, sexism, and classism that persist within them. Rather than imagining new realities, this kind of inclusion ends up reinforcing the white, non-reproductive, able-bodied, cisgendered, propertied, atomized individual as the dominant norm around which everything from the workday to personal priorities are expected to be structured and reinforces heteropatriarchal social scripts and family forms. It also perniciously disavows and erases the ways that racism plays out in the context of everyday life when the experiences of those who are racialized and othered are measured by their proximity to instances of discrimination that mirror those experienced by non-racialized people through pretences to "claimed solidarity" (Ang 1995, 181).

Identity politics and allyships can thereby also be problematic. Sometimes, the collective can be invoked in ways that efface the individual by eclipsing the contexts and specificities of personal experience; at others, the individual can be overemphasized to the exclusion of the collective. Crenshaw (1991) has pointed to the ways that identity politics often obscure intra-group differences, thereby erasing the intersectional failures that are the result of anti-racist organizing that does not address sexism and conversely feminist organizing that fails to address racism. The invisibility of intra-group differences and the tendency to either reduce experience to only a single axis of oppression or have the individual stand in for the collective in ways that erase the structural and systemic nature of intersecting forms of oppression reproduce rather than challenge, erase rather than acknowledge, the particularities that contribute to the overarching structures of racism. It is our contention that

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one need not erase or efface the other. Each personal experience in this volume is unique and qualitatively different. Each academic analysis focuses on the structural and systemic issues that shape many of these personal experiences. Together, they show the structural, systemic, and interdependent nature of intersecting forms of racist violence that both uphold and are upheld by other forms of violence, oppression, and discrimination. This is the intersectional nature of the racisms that are discussed in this volume.

Intersectionality as a concept has not only become foundational to feminist theory and praxis as a way to describe interlocking forms of racist violence; it has also crossed borders, making appearances within and in between multiple legal jurisdictions, theoretical planes, and geographic locations (Hodes 2017, 71). As Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw has noted, "In every generation and in every intellectual sphere and in every political moment, there have been African American women who have articulated the need to think and talk about race through a lens that looks at gender, or think and talk about feminism through a lens that looks at race" (quoted in Adewumni 2014). Crenshaw's initial objective was to create "an everyday metaphor that anyone can use" to interrogate and intervene in the ways that social life is experienced, discussed, represented, structured, and institutionalized (quoted in Adewumni 2014). However, when intersectionality appears on international, national, regional, and municipal social policy and legal agendas, it can end up becoming what Jasbir Puar (2007) has called "a tool of diversity management and a mantra of liberal multiculturalism" (212). As both Puar (2007) and Nira Yuval-Davis (2006) have since pointed out, it thereby often ends up being used in ways that collude with the disciplinary apparatuses of states by recentring universalizing essentialist identity formations, harnessing mobility, and encasing difference "within a structural container that simply wishes the messiness of identity into a formulaic grid" (Puar 2007, 212). As a result, it often ends up working the same way as mainstream diversity and inclusion initiatives by creating a universalizing identity project that recentres whiteness as the measure of normalcy, acceptability, and intelligibility.

Identities are not, however, fixed, unchanging, or absolute. They are instead "processes constituted in and through power relations" (Brah and Phoenix 2004, 277). Sumi Cho, Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw, and Leslie McCall (2013) have responded to these criticisms of institutionalized approaches to intersectional anti-racisms, arguing that intersectionality need not and should not be so narrowly construed. Intersectional approaches are not about who

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people are; this complexity cannot be captured through a structural framework. They are instead about how things work—the structural, systemic, and interdependent systems of oppression that shape everyday life, access to resources, opportunities, and futurity in different times and different places. We therefore assembled this volume of essays and poems to challenge the emerging reductionisms in anti-racist writing, institutional culture, and movement building.

The contributions to this volume all name and interrogate racism and, therefore, power. They also disrupt the notion that the structural and the particular are antithetical to each other—the notion that somehow accounting for the messiness, partiality, fluidity, and temporal limitations of narrative moments of lived experience or snapshots of events situated in particular historical contexts and geographic spaces are not indicative of the broader forms of structural and systemic violence that persists in the present. Instead, the contributions to this volume challenge readers to "de-privilege the human body as a discrete, organic thing" (Puar 2012, 57), a perfectly delimitable sociological object, and invite readers to refuse all final closures; to consider the ways that the structural, temporal, personal, and political intersect with geographical space, settler-colonial practice, and systems of oppression; and to consider the ways that it is possible to simultaneously refuse fixity but nevertheless acknowledge the specificity of textual representations of moments in time and place simultaneous to the structural and ongoing nature of racist violence in all its intersecting forms. As such, this collection refuses tidy dichotomies like oppressed/oppressor, male/female, self/other, and victim/perpetrator by omitting them entirely or interrogating them where they appear as examples of intersectional failure and mechanisms through which to further settler-colonial violence through reductionism and essentialism.

During this time of global transitions, many have asked, When will things go back to normal? This book instead asks readers to think about why anyone would want what has passed for normal up until now. If normal means the tacit acceptance of what contributors to this volume have narrated as settler colonialism; structural genocide; state-sanctioned violence against Indigenous, Black, and people of colour; gender-based violence; poverty; exclusion; denial; and disavowal, following Bernadette Atuahene (2020), consider the following: If this is the normal you want us to return to, what kinds of violence are you comfortable with?

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Racism and Anti-racist Activism in Canada

In one of his COVID-19 daily public addresses (Trudeau 2020), the Canadian prime minister recognized a range of different kinds of racism, including its everyday and institutionalized forms, and their impact across Canada. After hesitating for twenty seconds to consider his answer in response to questions about the threat by the then US president (Donald Trump) to deploy the military to suppress the overwhelming number of public demonstrations that came in the wake of the murder of George Floyd, he eventually acknowledged the structural and systemic nature of racial discrimination—this, two years after photographs of him were found in a 2001 yearbook where he was captured appearing in blackface at a gala event for West Point Grey Academy, where he had worked as a teacher prior to his political career. These moments taken together highlight the interconnectedness of the individual and structural, where personal and state-sanctioned racist violence intersect. Intersectional, systemic, structural, everyday, overt, and covert racisms have, however, been the subject of academic study, activism, national and international reporting, inquiry, and public debate in Canada for a very long time.

In Canada more broadly, a United Nations expert delegation on people of African descent "visited Ottawa, Toronto, Halifax and Montreal to gain first-hand knowledge on racial discrimination, Afrophobia, xenophobia, and related intolerance affecting African-Canadians." Their findings led them to express "serious concerns about systemic anti-Black racism in the Criminal Justice system" (United Nations 2016). In addition, books have been published documenting racism and anti-racist activism across Canada for over twenty years. Most recently, Robyn Maynard (2017) and Rinaldo Walcott and Idil Abdillahi (2019) have published books about state violence against Black bodies, and Rodney Diverlus, Sandy Hudson, and Syrus Marcus Ware (2020) have put together a collection of essays about BLM in the Canadian context. Toronto feminist, queer, anti-racist, anti-capitalist organizer Beverly Bain has been engaged in anti-racist, feminist movement building, organizing, and pedagogy for forty years. In 2014, Janaya Khan and Yusra Ali co-founded Black Lives Matter Canada; Khan is an international ambassador for the BLM network. In Lethbridge, the Group United Against Racial Discrimination, including members Jordan Ledyit and Legacy McAdam, organized a series of anti-racism rallies in solidarity with the BLM movement, drawing what has

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been estimated at one thousand supporters, thereby putting a small southern Alberta city on the map for anti-racist activism in 2020.

Indigenous writers and activists have been interrogating the racisms foundational to the violence of settlement since before Confederation. As a result, there is not enough room in this volume to include all of them here. Leanne Betasamosake Simpson's (2013) "Leaks" from her book and album *Islands of Decolonial Love* provides one example where she describes a young woman's first experiences of racism. Despite her own inability to protect her daughter from this violence, Simpson acknowledges her ability to mitigate its impact on her daughter's life by teaching her to be proud of who she is. Simpson's 2017 book, *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*, provides the context for "Leaks" through the broader settler-colonial history that has generated the contemporary social conditions within which this kind of heteropatriarchal racism is not only normalized but commonplace. Drawing on Glen Sean Coulthard's (2014) challenge to the colonial politics of recognition, Simpson (2017; Coulthard and Simpson 2016) theorizes Indigenous resurgence through grounded normativity, which Coulthard defines as "the modalities of Indigenous land-connected practices and long-standing experiential knowledge that inform and structure our ethical engagements with the world and our relationships with human and non-human others over time" (Coulthard 2014, 13). For Simpson (2017), radical resurgence involves rethinking dispossession as the "gendered removal of our bodies and our minds from our place-based grounded normativities" (45). Refusing dispossession as the foundational force in Indigenous lives means not only reclaiming Indigenous lands but also reimagining nation building outside of settler-colonial states, taking into account the "interdependence of land and bodies in a networked fashion rather than a gendered hierarchy" (46).

Audra Simpson has analyzed the ways that nation building in settler-colonial contexts is dependent on "categorical forms of recognition and misrecognition [that] are indebted to deep philosophical histories of seeing and knowing." Courtrooms and classrooms thereby enable "disproportionately empowered political forms (such as 'Empire' or particular nation-states such as the United States, Canada and Australia) to come into being in a very short time" (2007, 69). Leroy Little Bear (2000) discusses the onto-epistemological violence, discrimination, and oppression inherent in colonial projects that seek to create the "singular social order[s]" that are described

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in Simpson's work "by means of force of law" (2007, 1). Ongoing Canadian settler-colonial practice erases epistemic pluralism, thereby reifying the colonial onto-epistemologies that have fixed the human and extrahuman worlds in place, separating them from each other. Little Bear's work is a resurgence of Indigenous ways of knowing, including a cyclical and holistic view of the world based in constant movement and change. To understand the world in "cyclical or repetitive patterns, emphasizes process over product" through an understanding of "constant motion and flux" as "firmly grounded in a particular place" (2000, 77, 78). Time is therefore not linear. As part of this constant flux, it goes nowhere. Stories and life experiences are not fixed in time, subjective, and unscientific as positivist methods might suggest; they are instead the ways that "customs and values are shared" and identified (80, 81). Racism, therefore, not only manifests through overt and covert judgments based on phenotype, accent, culture, and/or country of origin; it is also built into institutional contexts that devalue and dismiss Indigenous ways of knowing and other kinds of epistemic pluralism, including the repudiation and exclusion of anti-racist, anti-imperialist, anti-capitalist, and Indigenous feminisms.

Anti-racist solidarity movements among Indigenous organizers, labour groups, and people of colour have also long been prominent across Canada. Bonita Lawrence and Enakshi Dua (2005) wrote a pivotal piece that laid the groundwork for Malissa Phung (2011) to ask, "Are people of colour settlers too?" Both these signal works ask refugees and people of colour to think through how they are also "participants in and are the beneficiaries of Canada's" settler-colonial project (Phung 2011, 292). In 2001, Sunera Thobani gave a speech at the Canadian Association of Sexual Assault Centres discussing racial profiling and police violence against Indigenous women, refugees, and women of colour—the very issues that are on national and international political agendas today. She has subsequently written books about these topics. Two years earlier, Sherene Razack (1998) published *Looking White People in the Eye*, a pivotal work outlining institutional forms of racism against Black people, Indigenous peoples, and people of colour. In 2010, they both collaborated with Malinda Smith to publish a book collection entitled *States of Race: Critical Race Feminism for the 21st Century* (Razack, Smith, and Thobani 2010), including chapters by Patricia Monture, author of the signal Indigenous feminist work *Thunder in My Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks* (1995).

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Organizations such as No One Is Illegal also emerged in the 1990s. Founded in Germany, chapters were later established in Canada in the early 2000s. The Canadian chapters are dedicated to Indigenous solidarity and sovereignty. Harsha Walia (2013) has combined personal experience, transnational analysis, and short contributions from more than twenty organizers in her book *Undoing Border Imperialism* in order to provide alternative frameworks for engaging in decolonial practice. Finally, white Canadian settlers have also begun to unpack the connections among anti-Black, anti-Indigenous, and other forms of racism, settler colonialism, and white supremacy in efforts to build solidarity movements and allyships. Emma Battell Lowman and Adam J. Barker (2015) and Paulette Regan (2010) have unpacked settler identity in efforts to challenge settler colonialism and the pervasive and ongoing violence against Indigenous peoples.

In the context of post-secondary institutions, academics have long documented systemic racism, highlighting the failure to collect adequate data as a significant impediment to addressing it. Although the research was conducted in the UK and Australia, Sara Ahmed (2012) has asked the difficult question, What does diversity do? This is a question that Robyn Maynard (2017) has identified as one that has enormous implications in contemporary Canada at the federal, provincial, municipal, and institutional levels. Through interviews with diversity practitioners, Ahmed shows how institutional diversity talk can obscure the racisms that persist in institutional contexts despite the inclusion of racialized bodies. Not long after, in the Canadian context, Frances Henry et al. (2017) also challenged the notion that universities are bastions of liberal democracy where equity and diversity are promoted and racism does not exist. They posit instead that Canadian universities are subtle, complex, and sophisticated sites of exclusion marked by an absence of data that speaks volumes about their persistent, systemic barriers and the ongoing racisms that shape the experiences of faculty, staff, and students alike. The findings in all the literature discussed here are brought into stark relief through the contributions to this volume, showing that the local resonates with the national and global in significant ways that have implications beyond the times and places captured by the authors.

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Racism and Anti-racist Initiatives in Alberta and Lethbridge

Alberta

Despite all the literature and activism, Canadian governments have been slow to address racism, and party priorities typically delimit the number of resources they are willing to expend and the strategies that they use. Alberta is certainly no exception. The Progressive Conservative Party was in power in Alberta from 1971 to 2015. During that time, the municipalities were typically the ones to take on anti-racist initiatives, and while there were programs put in place at the provincial level, it was not until 2018 that the province developed a comprehensive action plan to specifically combat racism by supplementing the existing programs and creating new strategies (Alberta Government 2018). This was an initiative put forward during the brief tenure of the New Democratic Party (NDP) under former premier Rachel Notley that lasted only four years.

In response to the murder of six Muslim people in a mosque in Québec, the NDP provincial government not only generated an action plan, but it established an Anti-Racism Advisory Council and started a Community Anti-Racism Grants Programme, one of which made up part of the impetus for this volume. Despite its action plan, however, the NDP government has also been criticized for its failure to stop the carding and street check practices that have long been the subject of headline news in Alberta. In 2018, the Alberta Government put out a report that placed both it and the NDP government under public scrutiny.

In 2019, Premier Jason Kenney and the United Conservative Party (UCP) won the provincial election and initiated a tough-on-crime policing agenda that brought the current justice minister, Doug Schweitzer, under fire for diverting funding from Victim Services to rural policing initiatives (McCuaig 2020). They also promptly changed the name, content, scope, and amount of the anti-racism grants available under the Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund. Despite a documented increase in racial diversity across the province (Alberta Government 2018) and a concurrent rise in reported racially motivated hate crimes between 2014 and 2017, including an increase in activity on the part of extremist white supremacist groups (OPV 2019), funding for anti-racist initiatives was one of the casualties of

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the UCP government's 2019 austerity budget. Although the program was not completely cut, it was renamed and amalgamated with other sources, making it more competitive and providing less funding per applicant than the previous program. What was previously called the Anti-Racism Community Grant—in keeping with the name of the federal Anti-Racism Action Program and Ontario's more streamlined approach under the Anti-Racism Directorate following their provincial mandate under the Anti-Racism Act—became the Multiculturalism, Indigenous and Inclusion Grant. In conjunction with increasing funds for policing through a reduction in funding to Victim Services, Alberta eliminated the word *racism* from anti-racist programming. Finally, in October of 2022, Danielle Smith took her seat as the premier of Alberta after Jason Kenney stepped down because of a leadership vote that placed his performance under scrutiny. Smith has since earned herself the reputation of being both a provincial and national embarrassment for a range of different reasons, including her party's controversial proposals to ban teaching critical race theory in schools that has since been voted down (Bennett 2022).

Lethbridge

The idea for this book emerged out of the work of the Support Network for Academics of Colour+ (SNAC+), a loose network of scholars and community members who are interested in racial justice in Lethbridge. Since its inception in 2016, the collective has been growing, and most recently, it received a grant from the Alberta Human Rights Commission's Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund for a project entitled RED (rights, equity, diversity) at the University of Lethbridge. This project produced a report and pedagogical outreach tools and workshop materials to address racism on campus and in the broader community. It is one of a number of these kinds of projects funded by the Human Rights Education and Multiculturalism Fund in Alberta.

As the province moves back and forth on its anti-racism initiatives, the municipalities often take more direct approaches, and Lethbridge has been no exception. Despite this, however, Lethbridge has not escaped the lexical trend of burying anti-racism under inclusion. In 2007, Lethbridge joined the Coalition of Municipalities Against Racism (CMARD), a Canadian Commission or UNESCO peacebuilding initiative geared toward knowledge sharing and building better societies (Bonifacio and Drolet 2017, 81). The

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year the Conservative Party in Alberta celebrated forty years in power (2011), Lethbridge's CMARD team created an action plan to combat racism and discrimination of all kinds. In 2019, the action plan was updated and revised to include the insights of stakeholders; this new plan is set to be implemented by the end of 2022. Their central mandates are creating awareness; engaging with government and organizational officials/employees; capacity building for youth, civic organizations, and parents; creating safe places for information delivery, resources, and support groups; distributing information about the ongoing development and implementation of the action plan; and finally, providing support to those working on inclusion and launching community events. In keeping with the Alberta government's move to remove the words *racism* and *anti-racism* from provincial programs, CMARD has also since changed its name to the Lethbridge Diversity and Inclusion Alliance, but sadly, in October of 2022, it dissolved because of disagreements over process, not having the resources to pay permanent staff, and a lack of volunteers because of the pressures and challenges of the pandemic (Sharon Yanichi, email message to author, October 26, 2022).

The City of Lethbridge has also taken action in keeping with the UCP government's tough-on-crime agenda. In 2019, the City of Lethbridge and Lethbridge Police Service created a volunteer-led policing initiative designed to increase the public's perception of safety in the downtown core of the city. This initiative currently has a budget of $1.2 million, set to increase to $1.5 million over the 2021/22 period. In June of 2022, the Watch won a provincial community justice award and has been attracting new volunteers and creating new full-time positions, including a managerial position that pays between $77,000 and $96,000 per year. The position requires the successful candidate to "maneuver between paramilitary aspects of policing and mainstream business culture" (City of Lethbridge, n.d.). Under this program, groups of future police officers canvass city streets on foot or in vehicles to engage in "public service calls which include wellness checks, assisting with found property and motor vehicles, assisting businesses, contacting social services providers and de-escalating situations" (LPS, n.d.). In support of the defund the police campaigns that were initiated in Lethbridge in solidarity with the BLM movement's contemporary reinvigoration of these historical calls to action (see Gilmore, forthcoming; Kelley 2020), the Watch has come under public scrutiny for harassment, displacing homeless people, and anti-Indigenous racism. A petition put out by University of Lethbridge students and alumni

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asking the City of Lethbridge to redirect these resources to municipal public housing and public health initiatives had garnered almost six thousand signatures at the time of writing (Dhaliwal 2020). In the case of Lethbridge, while support and funding for anti-racist initiatives are declining municipally and provincially, increases in public spending for the Lethbridge Police Service have been projected for the 2023–26 period. Therefore, to understand how anti-racist initiatives can be meaningful, relations of race and space need to be explored.

Space refers to both the physical and social locations, the defined and undefined borders of materiality where human interactions take place. Space is a "dynamic structure" in which "processes and situations of inclusion and exclusion" occur (Löw 2016, 5). As a small city of 101,482 in 2019 (Ferris and Roulston 2019), Lethbridge claims "diversity and dynamic population" as its "greatest assets" (Economic Development Lethbridge 2022). The City of Lethbridge, however, has no published profile of its demographics except in relation to age and gender. From the 2016 census data, there were 11,190 people in Lethbridge who spoke non-official languages (i.e., not English or French); another census entry indicates 10,945 non-Aboriginal languages were spoken by the residents in 2017 (Statistics Canada 2017). English is the first official language spoken by 84,465 out of 86,270 in the same census data. Lethbridge is considered to be the "Bhutanese capital" of Canada, with about 1,300 refugees who settled in the city by 2016 (Klingbeil 2016). That same year, Filipinos represented "one in four new immigrants" in Lethbridge (Smith 2017). Five major Philippine languages were noted in the census—Cebuano, Hiligaynon, Ilocano, Pampangan, and Tagalog. The social landscape has therefore dramatically changed in the last five decades, from the mostly British and European immigrants who arrived before 1961 (Mulder and Korenic 2005) to its present diverse demographic pool from around the world. Of course, white settlers have territorially displaced Blackfoot peoples in southern Alberta, where 3,115 were registered as treaty Indians, according to the 2016 census data (Statistics Canada 2018).

Diversity in small cities has a vivid impact. First, the interactions and interrelationships among groups of various demographics are strongly visible, particularly in certain spaces and/or gatherings. Second, the exclusionary practices and modes of "othering"—like avoidance and overpolicing of spaces where a particular group may congregate—create habitual spaces of obvious notoriety. Third, celebratory messages of inclusion from politicians and

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community leaders are readily accepted as genuine. A cursory institutional race audit of the three prominent institutions in Lethbridge, however, reveals that the spaces in which claims of equity, diversity, and inclusion become important may not necessarily reflect their promises. We asked, Who occupies spaces of authority at the University of Lethbridge, at Lethbridge College, and in the City of Lethbridge? These are the three largest employers in the city, and all have high claims to diversity as their avowed principles. Whether their institutional processes are equitable and inclusive, however, remains unanswered and largely non-transparent. For instance, as of November 2022, all the presidents of the University of Lethbridge and mayors of the City of Lethbridge have been white men.

Lethbridge's two post-secondary institutions make it a "university/college town." In 2015, there were 424 students who declared First Nations status and 535 visa students out of 8,296 total enrolment (University of Lethbridge 2016). During the same period, about 62 percent of the student population came from Calgary and Lethbridge. From these numbers, the University of Lethbridge is the "destination university" of mostly locals in Alberta. No data disaggregated on the basis of race has been collected pointing to the demographic makeup of faculty members at the university. Lethbridge College was home to 202 international full-load equivalent (FLE) students, or 5.2 percent of the total FLE students, in 2016–17 (Lethbridge College 2019). Unlike the University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge College is "one of just 17 post-secondary institutions in Canada chosen for the Dimensions pilot program, a national initiative designed to foster transformational change within research bodies and post-secondary institutions" (Lethbridge College 2019, 40). Glenda Tibe Bonifacio, together with three top executives from the University of Lethbridge, participated in a consultation meeting with federal agencies prior to the launch of this national initiative to "promote equity, diversity and inclusion" at Lethbridge College. Sadly, only the college participated. The invitation was open to any interested scholar but was instead released in confidence by the university, thereby limiting the number of participants. The huge space designed for the estimated number of participants, therefore, had just one row filled up. Of the twenty-five publicly funded institutions of higher learning in Alberta, only two—that is, the University of Calgary and Lethbridge College—participated in the Dimensions pilot program, started in September 2019, to "develop a self-assessment team to coordinate EDI [equity, diversity, and inclusion] data collection, analysis

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and action planning" (Government of Canada 2019). Considering what both the presences and absences in this collection of demographic data show, it is clear that not only is there a considerable amount of work to be done, but difficult conversations need to be had. We offer this volume as a contribution to these ends.

Chapter Outlines

This book does not advance the perspective that racism is rooted in ignorance. Instead, its contributors posit that racism is a carefully constructed body of knowledge that has its roots in the foundational violence of settlement in Alberta and Canada more broadly. Therefore, along with building awareness about the range of ways it manifests, racism needs to be unlearned. Racism is real. Racism has been and continues to be central in building, reproducing, and rearticulating the Canadian nation and the Canadian state. Racism therefore happens in Canada across all provinces and within all institutions. Racism is pervasive in small, rural cities like Lethbridge. Racism is violent, structural, and systemic. It takes place daily and plays out differently in the context of people's everyday lives. It is intersectional, and as this brief sketch of available resources and data shows, there is no shortage of documentary evidence of racism, exclusion, and erasure. From academic studies and examples of social movement building and grassroots organizing to international and non-governmental reports and statistical surveys, the absences are just as revealing as what has been documented—as Maynard (2017) points out, however, the "systematic collection of publicly available race-based data is rare at the national, provincial or municipal levels and most universities" in Canada (3). It is nevertheless not hard to see that racism is pervasive, systemic, and ongoing. What is often missing, however, are experiential accounts of the resilience of those who experience it in its intersecting forms or the localized histories and snapshots of moments in time and place that can provide inroads into developing local solutions to large-scale structural, transnational problems. This is the contribution of this volume.

This book is organized around three themes: "Everyday and Institutional Racisms," "Belonging/Unbelonging," and "Policing and Carceral Logics." The themes are tied together by each author's contribution to unsettling underlying practices of everyday racism, settler colonialism, myths surrounding Canadian nation building, and the systemic racisms that structure the Canadian

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state and its institutions through narratives about life in a small, rural Alberta city: Lethbridge. The chapters that fall under the first theme are focused on everyday and institutionalized racisms in secondary and post-secondary contexts, in municipal governance, and as experienced by refugee communities. The authors discuss hopes for and gaps among inclusion, reconciliation and equity talk, policy, institutional practices, and their own lived experiences. The chapters located under the second theme—"Belonging/Unbelonging"—address the complexity of being a visitor in Treaty 7 territory, the instability of racial identities, the invisibility of Métis identities, consciousness, state racisms, and the experience of displacement and occupation between one home and another home. The chapters located under the "Policing and Carceral Logics" theme address practices of carding, racial profiling, the use of victim/perpetrator narratives in crime reporting, anti-Black racism, and local anti-racist initiatives—each interrogating how policing, crime reporting, and discursive carceral logics contribute to the materialization of Canadian settler colonialism.

Dustin Fox opens the collection with an autoethnography of experiences of everyday and institutionalized racism. He takes up and stories questions of history and family as central to the experiences and identity projects of Blackfoot peoples in southern Alberta. Situating these stories within a broader set of colonial histories and structures, he draws on a desire framework to story the resilience of Blackfoot peoples and culture, highlighting evidence of survivance and resurgence in local Blackfoot communities. The second contribution to this section is co-authored by the members of the Reconciliation Lethbridge Advisory Committee, a committee created to develop meaningful relationships between the City of Lethbridge and surrounding communities. These stories explore questions of truth and reconciliation to provoke meaningful dialogue by emphasizing individual journeys to reconciliation, the importance of truth telling, and the recognition that individual voices, experiences, and stories can transform collective realities in ways that honour and give life to the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada's Calls to Action. The third contribution to this section examines the experiences of two Filipino women teaching in a "white classroom" at the University of Lethbridge. Using an approach to duoethnography, one faculty member (Glenda Tibe Bonifacio) and one international student (Roxanna Balbido Epe, PhD) juxtapose their experiences against institutional policies and practices in order to bring to light shared but different meanings and interpretations of pedagogy. The

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final contribution under this theme is a critical engagement with discourses of multiculturalism and the everyday experiences of racism described by Bhutanese refugees currently living in Lethbridge. Through semi-structured open-ended interviews, Rabindra Chaulagain examines how those who were interviewed have conceptualized race and racism, their feelings and thoughts about racializing practices in Lethbridge, and their perceptions of the impact of multicultural policy on their lives.

The first contribution to the second theme, "Belonging/Unbelonging," is an edited conversation between Roderick McLeod (a Métis elder living in Lethbridge) and Monique Giroux (Canada Research Chair, University of Lethbridge). Following the work of Dylan Robinson (2016), this chapter serves to centre Indigenous voices through the redress of the exclusion of Métis people in discussions of race/racialization in southern Alberta. Through this conversation, McLeod and Giroux highlight the challenges faced by Métis people in Lethbridge as they work to gain recognition from the settler public—and a sense of belonging for themselves—while also respecting the Blackfoot territory on which they live. The second contribution under this theme critically engages with the concepts of ~~b~~elonging, unbelonging, diaspora, and pan-Indigeneity to introduce the concept of ephemeral trans territories (ETTs). Migueltzinta Solís creates a non-traditional academic essay using techniques of reflective personal narrative, experiential research, and critical theory to bring these ETTs to life. In the third contribution under this theme, Darren J. Aoki and Carly Adams draw on a montage of memories from oral histories gathered between 2011 and 2019 in Lethbridge and surrounding areas. Critically assessing strategies of self-exoneration and progress narratives that position Lethbridge as "a paradise of racial harmony," they interrogate Canada's twentieth-century nation-building processes, inviting readers to question how Japanese Canadians went from being categorized as "yellow peril" and "enemy aliens" to "the most assimilated of all visible minorities in Canada." In the final contribution, Deema Abushaban's poem, "Beneath the Olive Tree," narrates the memory of living on Palestinian land and losing home. Through the collective voice "I," she represents all people who have lost family members, friends, and place through occupation and displacement, with a reflection on her experiences of racism and racialization in Lethbridge.

The final theme, "Policing and Carceral Logics," begins with an overview of how institutional racism operates through policing in Lethbridge. Providing a

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historical overview of the role of policing in settler-colonial societies, Gülden Özcan moves through racial profiling, carding, and the public policy that perpetuates racism and the criminalization of people of colour in Lethbridge. She concludes with a discussion of anti-racist initiatives and social movements that have emerged in response to racialized policing to offer and invite readers to think through alternatives to racist policing. Ibrahim Turay then takes a discourse-historical approach to analyzing what language is doing in mass media portrayals of racial profiling in Alberta. He concludes that racial profiling is either justified or denied across the media sources selected for his study. Next, Caroline Hodes examines victim/perpetrator narratives in mainstream media coverage of the 2016 arrest and 2018 sentencing of Denzel Dre Colton Bird for aggravated sexual assault in Lethbridge. Her contribution outlines how critical discourse analysis can be a powerful tool for understanding framing. She concludes that the media representations of this case unyoke past from present, contributing to the opposing ways that Indigeneity, whiteness, masculinity, and femininity become both hypervisible and invisible and thereby reinforce racist sexisms both inside and outside the text. In the final contribution to the volume, Jason Laurendeau interrogates (social) media engagements with the Black Lives Matter rally in Lethbridge, with two contributions to the *Lethbridge Herald* that criticize policing in the city, and with the (mostly) volunteer organization the Watch. He concludes that the reactions offered point to the ongoing persistence and perniciousness of racism in Lethbridge and the reluctance of local media to go beyond "feel-good" stories to a deeper engagement with anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racisms in Lethbridge. This chapter invites readers to imagine different futures through reflections on and possibilities for anti-racist work in the city.

Not-So-Final Thoughts

In this historic moment, the emblems, statues, and street names of those who became instrumental in the institutionalization of racism and who were the key architects of colonial genocide in various cities across the US, Canada, and elsewhere are being removed, upended, and destroyed. This transnational public outcry against both historical and contemporary wrongs signifies one of the many beginnings—past and present—that have and will continue to generate painful yet meaningful introspection on what has been done, what persists in the present, and how to transform the future. It is our hope that this

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global destruction of public symbols may slowly shift collective consciousness away from the commemoration and glorification of violence, genocide, domination, dispossession, and abuse of power and the valuation of all that we call "privilege" that has been garnered at incalculable cost to our collective humanity and relationships with the extrahuman world. Understanding the multiple ways that exploitation, dispossession, genocide, and other intersecting forms of racist violence erode the bonds of humanity and make equity, respect, and dignity impossibilities is the first step toward unlearning the knowledge that has produced the intolerable conditions that make upheavals such as these necessary. This book is a collection of the voices of those who have found strength in adversity, who instill a consciousness of different futures, alternative presents. It is dedicated to all those who use not only adversity but pandemic and global upheaval as portals, as gateways "between one world and the next" (Roy 2020).

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Part I

Everyday and Institutional Racisms

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1 Conditioned for Resilience

Dustin Fox

> *The destroyers are merely men enforcing the whims of our country, correctly interpreting its heritage and legacy.*
>
> —Ta-Nehisi Coates (2015)

> *Ignorance? It thrives on the incestuous mating of indifference and bigotry and in turn breeds more of the same. Ignorance is irreversibly locked in with prejudice.*
>
> —Harold Cardinal (1969)

"Do you smell that?" my third-grade teacher asked her teaching assistant.

"Yeah, it's like a . . . ," she paused to point her little nose in the air and took a whiff. "A musty smell, eh?"

"Yeah, almost like pee," my teacher replied, her eyebrows furrowed.

A strong wave of ammonia wafted through the class as the two women began to survey the room. The young assistant got up and began to walk around, circling us like a guard as we coloured our Thanksgiving-themed activity with our orange, red, and yellow crayons on the desks. The older teacher sat at the front of the class. She was a stout, older woman. She must have only been five and a half feet tall, but to us, she was a giant. She had the most intense red hair I had ever seen; it was short too. Her face is burned into my memory. She had a sharp nose, gold shiny glasses, and skin that was white as snow but would go as red as her hair when she was mad. She scanned over

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us seven-year-olds like a robot built for scaring kids, her eyes moving from left to right ever so slowly. Her eyeballs pivoted in their sockets searching out mine; I looked away. I felt her eyes burn across my body as she scanned to the kid on my left. This little Native boy was staring back at her. I should have told him to look away; I wanted to, but it was too late. The fear was in his eyes and piss was running down his leg; she found him.

"There!"

With one nod of her fiery red head, the younger teacher moved in on him like he had drugs or something. She whispered in his ear and he stood up, hiding his face in his hands. His tears seeped through the gaps in his fingers, like tiny streams off the side of a mountain. She escorted him out of the class with her freckled nose pinched and, with all our little eyes watching, hollered, "Woo! Your pee smells so strong." The class burst out with laughter—that little roar of screams and giggles. She was trying to contain her smile as the students laughed. They turned the corner and left the room.

The bell rang for recess. As we ran around the corner and toward the doors, we saw our classmate. He was shy, too shy to ask to use the bathroom. He had his head down and was playing with his braid, rubbing and meddling with the fuzzy end of it. Kicking his little Converse shoes, he wiped his tears and listened to what the younger teacher had to say.

I walked by, the nosey little Native kid I was. "Don't worry, kiddo. It happens," she said with care. "Just go home and come on back tomorrow." I ran out for recess.

His mom didn't arrive until after recess. She walked in the classroom with that concerned motherly look. She had her turquoise Pendleton bag on her sharp skinny shoulder that poked through her black leather jacket and grabbed her little boy's hand. They walked hurriedly across the room toward the red-headed teacher; the mom had a word or two with the teacher, grabbed her son's half-finished Thanksgiving activity, and left with her boy. I remember her look of anger, like she knew something was up—something bad. Now that I'm older, I recognize that I have seen that look many times before. It was the suspicious look in one's eyes when someone is talking about you behind your back. Not just any people but white people. She couldn't have been older than thirty. Thinking about it, she must have been just a little older than I am now. But it's like she knew the true nature of these teachers; she knew what they were doing, and soon, I would find out too.

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Later that day, the class overheard a conversation between our teacher and another standing outside of the classroom. Since the class was told to be quiet, we could hear a constant stream of noise coming from the hallway. Sometimes we would hear full conversations—conversations about Mormon functions, trips to Utah, kids' playdates, and concerns about the discussion at the community civic centre. This time we heard something different.

"Did you hear what happened this morning?" my teacher asked.

"No, what happened?" the other teacher replied.

"This Indian mother came in to pick up her son and was so rude about it." The soundwaves of her unsuccessful whisper rang my eardrum, so I listened.

"He peed his pants. Now, my classroom stinks, and that dirty Indian is coming back tomorrow."

I was shocked beyond belief. Is this what they said about all of us behind our backs? I didn't understand then, but it didn't take me long to understand why that mother seemed so angry, why she was so "rude": because her twenty plus years of dealing with racist white people in southern Alberta took a toll. She knew what those teachers thought about her and what they thought about her son, even before they said anything. Now I see, ultimately, what white people around here continue to think about us—that we are lesser than, dirty Indians, and uncivilized savages. She knew. With that look, she showed me something so valuable as I was sitting there colouring my scene of pilgrims and Indians; I was shown racism, the uncomfortable interaction of synthetic kindness followed by an aggressive exit and behind-the-back insults. I've seen it too many times. I learned how all the talk about church functions, playdates, and the community of Cardston, ostensibly innocently offered, really meant "not fucking welcome." Growing up here, I would have to learn this time and time again.

Going to school in Cardston echoed residential school for some reason. The reason(s) could be as obvious as being called a "dirty Indian" by a teacher or as subtle as being favoured or rewarded over other Native kids. And like residential school, not all the Native kids were Blackfoot. We had some kids who were adopted by families in Cardston and would pick up a common last name held by the Mormons in town. When we would ask where they were from, these kids would say "I think I'm Cree" or tell us that they straight up didn't know what kind of Native they were; they just knew they were. Regardless of church affiliation or last name, we noticed they were treated differently too. I remember one time that same red-headed teacher pulled me aside after

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I finished a writing assignment and told me, "Dustin, we would like to put you into a special reading class. You're not like the other Native kids; you're reading is so much better!" She said it with such enthusiasm, like she was doing me a huge favour. You would have thought her own child was chosen for the class. Now that I think of it, I don't know if she was helping me or herself. Maybe she thought she was upholding her Canadian responsibility of promoting multiculturalism. Either way, she was happier than I was. I didn't want to take the class, but my mom made me; it did help. By this time, I had started to observe my teacher critically. My friends and I would have our elementary school recess discussions at the tire swing. Over the years, that swing was our own classroom; we learned so much from one another at that age, including who the racist teachers were. I learned through observation that our fiery teacher would pick out the good and bad Native kids—savage from civil. This was the same teacher who demonstrated the most petty and punitive measures for Native students. She would always give us "blue cards," which were like civil citations for third graders. But one of my friends got it the worst. He was always fighting with this little blonde white kid, and since my friend was much bigger and knew how to fight, he would kick and chase that little kid's ass around the class. This usually happened when the teachers were out of the room; one of them would always come back when the kid was on the ground crying. This happened a lot, but one of these times was especially bad.

My friend was sitting at his desk when the red-headed teacher approached him with an assignment. She started to scrutinize him in front of the class, as she so regularly did. She loomed over his desk with her furrows of anger and boiling red skin and asked, "Do you think this kind of work is okay? Are you dumb?" Looking down at him, she waited for his response, but he just put his head down. She snarled, asked her assistant to accompany her, and stormed out of the room.

The class was dead silent.

"What do you expect? He's from the reserve," the little blonde antagonist said aloud.

Only a couple of laughs were heard, then the loud screech of desks sliding across the floor followed. My friend was sprinting after the kid, zigging and zagging. The chase didn't last long; only a couple of figure eights around the class and the kid was caught. My friend's fists rained down like a hailstorm, as if the pain he was inflicting would erase the pain being brought on him.

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They were both on the ground. The white boy was kicking and screaming, crying for help.

"Get him off!"

Usually these incidents only lasted a couple of seconds. This time my friend didn't stop until one of us stepped in to pull him off. The kid was gasping for air, bleeding, and trying to stand up when the teachers walked in with the reprinted assignments. I could barely describe the rage in her eyes. They swelled; it seemed that every blood vessel in her eyeballs burst instantly when her racism struck yet again.

"Stop it! Get off him, you savage!"

Her scream was heard down the hall, and we all gasped. I was frozen.

She separated the two enemies. Her favouritism toward the kid couldn't have been more obvious. She violently tugged my friend's arm and brought him outside the class while the younger teacher checked if the kid was okay. He was. He had a busted lip and a bruise on his cheek. His eyes swelled and the tears fell, the white fragility leaking to the floor (Liebow and Glazer 2023).

Then, in the blink of an eye, the red-headed teacher was grabbing something from the supply closet. We didn't know what she was going to do, but we knew it was meant for the "savage." She emerged from the closet with a roll of green painter's tape and started laying strips of it on the classroom floor.

She stepped aside and we saw what it was: a green box, about four feet by four feet, at the back of the class. She dragged his desk to the reserved area, told him to take a seat, and left him there.

His desk was about twenty feet from the rest of us third graders, making it impossible to communicate with him. She would tell him, "This is your box. If you leave this box, I will send you to the principal's office." Her anger didn't seem to fade one bit.

"*This*," she pointed her sausage finger toward the green taped square on the ground, "this is your jail."

Thinking about it now, I realize that teacher has turned out to be a perfect metaphor for Canada. We were also put on reserved areas, out of sight from the majority of the population yet still expected to succeed the same as the rest of the population. This system was implemented while Canada became a country. Today, there are more than six hundred reserves in Canada, and according to Statistics Canada (2018), Indigenous people in Canada make up 4 percent of the population but are grossly overrepresented in correctional institutions. Men and women in every province across this country are being

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locked away in disturbingly high numbers. Most of these people come from communities that have been discriminated against for the past 150 years. The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and Indigenous people have history. This history has been sustained and perpetuated into the present. I myself have had numerous little encounters with the RCMP. I have been handcuffed and put in the back of an RCMP vehicle, I have been carded and pulled over, and while walking down the street, I have had too many cops pull over and want to see "what's up." All in all, my experience with the RCMP has given me the impression that they are more suspicious of my behaviour than not. Their physical presence is needed in Canada because we are considered suspicious; therefore there is a need to display power—to keep the Indians in line. In fact, Indigenous people and the RCMP have a very long and dark history, starting with their involvement in the implementation of reserves to their policing during the genocidal Indian Act.

Now, stories consist of the Starlight Tours in Saskatchewan (Campbell 2016), where the RCMP in Saskatoon would leave Native men, without shoes, in the middle of winter, tens of kilometres outside of the city and tell them to walk back to civilization. Many of these men died. Other stories consist of Native women not being taken seriously while reporting a rape, sometimes being asked if they were "asking for it." These stories are so common that they have contributed to the national issue of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG) described in *Reclaiming Power and Place: The Final Report of the National Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls* (National Inquiry into MMIWG 2019). This history is scattered with horrendous stories. Grounded in the narrative of colonization, the actions of the government and the RCMP were justified. I didn't learn this in the school system. I have heard all these stories from my grandparents, parents, uncles, aunties, cousins, and friends, who all have stories recalling their experiences with the cops. For instance, my dad was fourteen when he was first manhandled, cuffed, and arrested by a cop; it was at a protest in Cardston. Stories like this are how I learned a very important lesson, one that was opposite from the one I was taught in school: that people who break the law are criminals, not bad people. I think some people have real difficulty defining the difference, especially white people. My teacher foreshadowed this so well.

My fiery-headed teacher would never see the white kid taunting my friend, never witnessed the insults of "savage" or "stupid Native"; he would even say degrading things about our community. All this would happen while she

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was out of the room. Honestly, if she caught him saying that stuff, I doubt she would have even done anything, let alone think of putting him in a box. We would always try to defend our friend from the wrath of the teacher and plead his case, but she never believed us. She was only a witness to his savage behaviour. She was our police. I know for a fact she made my friend hate school. Even at seven years old, we felt judged.

From grade three to grade five, I was the only Native in that "special" class. I felt judged by not only the teachers but all the other kids as well. The white kids in that reading class would leave me out of group activities, laugh when I couldn't pronounce words, and always make degrading comments about my brown skin. Meanwhile, while I was in that class, some of the other Native kids would call me a "white boy" when I'd pass them in the hallway or play at recess. My stomach would start to hurt in these moments. My palms would sweat and my heart would race because I knew these moments would end up in some sort of push or shove from one or another, followed by a shouting match and, sometimes, a fight. All was necessary to validate my identity; at least that's what I thought.

At the time, I could never understand why this was the case with some of the other Native kids, but now, I know it was because most of us associated the Canadian education system with residential school, the church, white people, and ultimately, assimilation. Moments of lateral violence would be common in my life and for most Native people living on reserves. This kind of violence is the worst because it goes nowhere. It may be one of the hardest aspects to deal with when it comes to growing up on the Rez; this was also inherited.

* * *

In my sixth-grade class, the teacher asked if we had any good jokes we could share with the class before going home for the day. One after another, we heard knock-knock joke after knock-knock joke, then one kid raised his hand.

"Go ahead, Joseph."

He stood up from his desk and walked confidently to the front of the class. This kid was one of the smartest in the grade, let alone the class. He was athletic, good at math, and a prominent up-and-comer in the Mormon Church. Everyone adored this little white specimen.

He would piss me off so much.

Joseph slithered around the desks with a crooked little smile on his face. He knew he had a joke that was going to make some people laugh; he was too

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smart for a knock-knock joke. He stood at the front of the class, blue eyes full of excitement, and began his first day as a Mormon stand-up comic.

"What's the difference between a bucket of dog poop . . . ," the class burst out with laughter already, "and a Native?"

He paused for comedic effect, squared his shoulders, and smirked as he delivered the punchline: "The BUCKET!"

The room echoed with nothing but crickets and his weaselly little laugh. I saw the colour rush from my teacher's face faster than she rushed to the front of the class. Her attempt to patch the racism with the old "Everyone is special" speech was futile. It was too late; the damage was done. The racism would slowly trickle down from teachers and adults to students as we got older.

I grew up on the Blood Reserve, but I went to school in a small, three-thousand-person prairie town called Cardston. The reserve has thirteen thousand members, which makes it one of the largest reserves in the country. Even though we were literally right across the highway from each other, it felt as if we were worlds apart. On one side, you have one of the largest Indigenous reserves in Canada; on the other, you have one of Canada's largest Mormon communities. One of them is plagued with poverty, addiction, violence, and trauma. The other has a Mormon temple, a million-dollar golf course, little diversity, and some of the highest standardized test scores in the province. For some strange reason, my friends and I were perfectly stuck in between. Even though we couldn't articulate our feelings well at that age, we felt our souls being split in two.

I hadn't really thought of that joke until I started writing this chapter on the subject of racism, but it's funny how many memories have come up, actually—funny in the sense that I have begun to take for granted how racist Cardston actually is and have normalized it. If you weren't fitting in or abiding by their rules, then why not drop out or transfer to the school on the Rez? At least you wouldn't deal with racist white kids, right? That's what some parents and kids thought. A lot of Native kids would come to Cardston and quickly leave, not being able to handle the extreme nature of the school system; I don't blame them either. On the contrary, other Native kids would use the old "If you can't beat 'em, then join 'em" motto and not associate with other Native kids at all. Even at that age, we had to pick our poisons; my friends and I hung on to one another for dear life.

One thing the education system is really effective at is picking and choosing winners from losers. We were always taught that the Indians lost to the

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cowboys. So when these teachers would pick and choose Native students, being one of the chosen was followed by praise—praise from parents, teachers, and even other students. "You're not like the others" operated as positive reinforcement, and you would be rewarded for being a "good Indian." When I was chosen for that "special" class in the third grade, most of what I was writing about at that age would detail my obsession with hockey. But this time, we were asked to write about Thanksgiving. It was a holiday that didn't mean much to me, honestly. It was only an excuse to eat turkey and spend time with family. So before we wrote about Thanksgiving, we had to learn about Thanksgiving.

"Okay, kids. Sit down. We're going to tell the story of the first Thanksgiving."

It was the fiery-haired teacher's assistant. She couldn't have been older than I am right now, so I'd guess she was in her late twenties. She was blonde, had pink braces, and would always wear a hoodie with the letters "BYU" (Brigham Young University) on it. Later I would learn what this was; it was the continuance of the religious culture of influence within the town of Cardston and the larger Mormon community. We were immersed in this culture.

She continued.

"When the pilgrims came from Europe on the ships, the Indians greeted them with gifts and food. They waited on the shore in their headdresses and costumes." She would read this as if she was reading a Disney storybook, which hypnotized us kids.

"They put their supplies together and started to make the setting for the feast. They cut the wood for tables; they hunted the turkeys, mashed the potatoes, and picked the corn. They all had the most wonderful feast with the pilgrims. We gave them forks and knives and silver cups, so they let us live on the land. Ever since then, we have lived peacefully with the Indians, and we continue that tradition by having a feast every year." She ended with a smile full of innocence, glee, and pink braces. "The end."

This is a story we would hear every year. In grade three, we would have been relatively new to the story; I think that's why I remember it so well. She told the story with such certainty and honesty; she believed every word. My young mind couldn't perceive the colonial narrative that draped this simple story. All I paid attention to was the "we." When *we* gave *them* "forks and knives and silver cups"; she wasn't talking about everybody. *We* does not mean everybody. The story she was telling us was written with a colonial pen, through a colonial lens. This lens is home to more cynical things

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than just a peaceful Thanksgiving. It promotes the erasure of Indigenous people, supports the institution of slavery, perpetuates the degradation of women, and upholds the systemic mandate of white supremacy. This can be seen through practice and policy, such as residential schools and the Indian Act. The pen and the lens were crafted over hundreds of years through the global process of colonialization. Now, we were the heirs.

Nevertheless, we were asked to write about "what Thanksgiving meant to us." The only choice I had was to write through the lens we were just taught. The fallacy was fresh. I remember writing something like "I think it was really nice that the Indians made peace with the pilgrims. That way, we were able to have school, hockey, and a chance to be smart."

Oh, what a good Canadian boy, eh?

Thinking of how naive I used to be is sickening to me now. Whatever the full extent of my writing was, it got me into that "special" class.

This narrative really messed with my head. It made me believe I wasn't like the others. It enabled me to push my own people away—because being a "savage" was undesirable, and I didn't want that. So I would try to be a "good Indian," but my desire to be "good" was embedded in an old system, one that needed to "kill the Indian in the child" (Burnett and Read 2012, 220).

Last I heard, Joseph, the stand-up comic from earlier, was married and on his way to becoming a doctor.

I wonder if he still tells jokes.

* * *

No matter how people come to learn about Indigenous people living in Canada, they will stumble on the historical instance of residential schools. The purpose of these schools was to "kill the Indian in the child" (Burnett and Read 2012, 220). Indigenous people supposedly needed to be civilized: because in the eyes of the government, "Indians" were an obstacle that needed to be dealt with, and quickly, for the sake of colonial expansion. The government operated through their belief of Indigenous peoples' racial differences, differences that manifested from the Eurocentric idea that "[we] were unable to move forward along the linear continuum of civilization, that we were waiting for someone to come along and lead us in the right direction. To free us from ourselves" (King 2013, 79). So they came for the children.

The Canadian government implemented the national policy of residential schools, with assistance from various churches. This is why we have so many

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different religions on the reserve; our souls appeared to be up for auction. Through the power of church and state, instances of sexual abuse were not only common but routine. Physical and emotional abuse were horrendously apparent and recurring within these institutions, which would lead to toddlers and teenagers dying by suicide. Some kids would be sold in the Sixties Scoop (Dart 2019) and never saw their homes or families again. Now, at least where I am from, they have turned these old residential schools into apartments and housing for tribal members. One of them was turned into a tribal community college; it was burned to the ground.

This education system forced generations of children into these morally tainted institutions, which led to waves of individuals who were and are trying to numb the trauma with alcohol, drugs, and dysfunctional relationships; some committed suicide. One thing we learn is that there is a difference between living and surviving; people in the struggle know this distinction. This condition is only a by-product of the differences perceived by settler colonizers, which is the variation in civility and physical attributes. If the people who made it through residential schools were lucky enough to not have been sexually abused or died of disease, abuse, starvation, or suicide, they would have just made it out with a Canadian education—or in other words, left the school as a civilized individual who held the same Eurocentric values as their abusers and were able to function in civilized society. They left as individuals who have been amputated from the way of life that kept their ancestors alive for so long. I say "they" and it sounds so abstract; I think this is also part of the problem.

To white people, most of this chapter will be in the abstract, the way most of our social problems as Indigenous people seem to be abstract. Instead of using "they," I could easily say my grandpa, grandma, aunties, uncles, and father left residential school with these conditions. This has left an imprint on my personality, my emotions, my relationships, and most importantly, the respect I had for my people and myself. This is the way the Canadian government worked to assimilate the Indigenous population, and it worked for the most part. These schools produced the first generation of civilized Indians, Indians who were educated, which was a step in the direction of being labelled "civilized." Yet the schools produced the antagonistic relationship between Indigenous epistemology and institutionalized Eurocentric education, deeming one as inferior to the other. These schools created, as Stuart Hall would characterize, a discourse.

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Hall states that "discourses are ways of talking, thinking, or representing a particular subject or topic. They produce meaningful knowledge about that subject. This knowledge influences social practices, and so has real consequences and effects. [. . .] The question of whether a discourse is true or false is less important than whether it is effective in practice" (1996, 205). The Canadian government took this knowledge about Indigenous people being uncivilized and needing to be helped, whether it was true or false, and used it to influence their decision to implement social practices (residential schools) that led to real-life consequences—consequences that left lasting effects on our identities. Our family members left these schools with reminders of our supposed inferiority; they left with an implicit sense of being lesser than their oppressors in every way. Many of my family members have alcohol and drug problems. I have had family members drown themselves in alcohol until they were on life-support with liver failure and yellow skin. Unfortunately, many of us know how addiction looks and feels. We also know, too well, what the crushing weight of grief feels like. So we love because we know we won't live for very long.

Coming from Cardston High School to the University of Lethbridge was strange for a lot of us. The most noticeable thing for me was that the amount of explicit racism was almost non-existent. One perfect example I could think of is this Mormon kid I went to high school with: he would yell the N-word out of habit. When he would get a bad grade in class or when he would stub his toe, he would just yell "N**GER!" at the top of his lungs. Not one teacher, principal, or counsellor who heard him would do anything about it; only us. That was Cardston. Now, if that kid tried to say that in university, he would be shamed out of the building. This is the explicit racism I'm talking about. We observed white people like this. They acted as if everything was for the taking, as if everything was theirs; we were taught the opposite.

This sense of inferiority, dependence, and hopelessness was not an accident; it was the plan all along. To kill the Indian meant to kill the sense of community and to solidify their sense of individuality. Even though the last residential school closed in 1996, Eurocentric values are still being reproduced in the education system and continue to be taught. In university, racism isn't explicit but implicit. Curricula still have this primitive versus civilized narrative when it comes to Indigenous people, or most just forget to talk about Indigenous people altogether. I bet a majority of students in the psychology field still don't know that Abraham Maslow developed the hierarchy of

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needs *while observing Blackfoot kids in residential school* (Ravilochan 2021). Regardless, we still have to learn the narrative. Various fields are practicing Indigenous erasure and claiming their values are superior through the same discourses created by residential schools. In the twenty-first century, these differences and assumptions about Indigenous people are still taught—just not in the way residential schools went about it, with the abuse and all. Instead, they used subtle ways, ways in which Indigenous people would be willing to learn these values and continue to be "civilized."

It's not an accident for people living in Cardston to behave this way. As a matter of fact, the discourse of Native savagery is more ingrained in the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints than any of us thought. In Thomas King's book *The Inconvenient Indian*, he explains how the church actually implemented a "special" program for Native children:

> The Mormon church, or the Church of Jesus Christ and the Latter-Day Saints (LDS), has for years maintained an impressive collection of photographs of Indian children, taken when the children were first brought into the church's Home Placement Program. This was a program in place from 1947 to 1996, through which Native families were encouraged to send their kids off-reservation to live with Mormon families, the expectation being that these children would have a greater chance at success if they were raised and educated in White society. The purpose of the photographs was to track the change in the children's skin colour, from dark to light, from savagery to civilization. Indeed, *The Book of Mormon* specifically teaches that dark-skinned Lamanites Indians, as they accept the Mormon gospel, will turn "white and delightsome." (King 2013, 69)

To think that these teachers, principals, counsellors, and students were all part of the church—and how much this played a role in my socialization as a child, teenager, and young adult—is really f*cked up. Some teachers would sneak some Mormon rhetoric in with their lessons, even advise some Native parents to join the church; that's if the missionaries didn't get to them first. It makes me wonder if they were keeping an eye on my complexion, wondering if I'd slowly turn from savage to civil. Yet it isn't like the story of Indigenous people being sold, coaxed, and caressed by some God is new, especially in Canada.

My family chose the Catholic Church. In fact, I was a dedicated holy roller as a kid. I loved going to church with my family and worshipping white Jesus,

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especially his birthday. Most of my immediate family bought into Catholicism; the concept of good and evil was ingrained in me. Some of my cousins were Anglican, and I have uncles and aunties who are Full Gospel; they worshipped in tents out on the reserve. And yes, I have Mormon family members. Some of these religious family members saw our traditional Sundance as "witchcraft," saying it was the "devil's work." They would also label anyone who attended as a "devil worshipper." They forgot our belief in God is only 150 years old, and if the white man brought our family God, he brought us the devil too. In all but one of those beliefs, the white man reigned.

My grandmother on my father's side is still very traditional. She would bring me to the Sundance, and she still talks to me in Blackfoot. Over the years, I have come to appreciate these things more than I ever have before. Even as I write this, I think back to growing up in a small town like that and realize that I've had to compromise my identity all my life. My whole life I was taught by white people, worshipped their God, spoke their language, and was influenced by them in more ways than I can count. From kindergarten through grade twelve, my education was taught by the heavily religious; then into university, it was the godless. Regardless of religion, I was taught one narrative of history, one truth, one view of the world, one way of thinking. I was taught to be Canadian. Play hockey, support oil, eat Alberta beef, support farmers, and most of all, be a "good Indian." Don't make too much noise, don't speak that language here, don't cause a scene, don't be a savage—or else. This is how I lived most of my life, trying to be a "good Indian." In elementary school, I won a poetry contest because I wrote a Remembrance Day poem; I faked sick and didn't go.

This desire to be "good" only caused this rip in my identity to lengthen and sprawl; it almost tore me in half. My wanting to be "good" in school would also rip my relationships with friends apart. Most of us were exposed to alcohol, sex, and drugs at a really young age. On the Rez, these things just kind of came along with the trauma we inherited. My cousins and I would see our parents start to party on a Friday evening, keep going, and leak into the Monday morning. We would rent movies and order pizza, but I missed a lot of Mondays throughout the years. We would wake up to the smell of cigarettes and stale beer and hear the lonely sound of Don Mclean's "American Pie" echo throughout the house. This is where some of us would start experimenting with smoking cigarettes and weed and take sips of the leftover

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beers our parents left after they would pass out. This was normal for us but alien to the Mormons, and they treated us as such.

As I got to be a teenager, some of my cousins and friends started to drink regularly. When my parents found out, I wasn't allowed to hang out with them anymore. In turn, I would be called a "white boy" by some friends or told I was scared or even that I was acting "too good" for them. This was one of my first experiences with lateral violence. We would fight among ourselves, characterizing one another as savage, just like the teachers. I would be teased because I was doing well in school, and out of anger, I would turn and make fun of those kids for not. It's difficult to admit this because I feel like a hypocrite. I wish I could tell you that I was fighting the good fight my whole life, but that's not the case. At one point, I was ashamed to be who I was. As rapper Earl Sweatshirt (2012) says, "Too white for the black[foot] kids and too black[foot] for the whites. Going from honour roll to crackin' bike locks off them bicycle racks." I could relate, except I was Blackfoot and still felt stuck.

Unfortunately, the feeling of being civil does not substitute for a collective loss of identity. I have witnessed so many of my people and friends drop out of high school and post-secondary and end up having addiction problems or being dependent on government institutions for the duration of their lives. Some of them have ended up incarcerated or, worse, dead. I'm twenty-four now, and I'd like to think I'm one of the lucky ones. I say this because I myself and many of my childhood friends have been pulled into social black holes in southern Alberta. I like to call them black holes because once you cross into that event horizon, it seems that all hope and light are swallowed. From dealing with the RCMP, to dealing with racism and discomfort throughout school and the community, to buying drugs and witnessing gang initiations in the neighbourhood, to dysfunctional relationships—we could have been pulled into any one of these black holes while trying to find ourselves in the cosmos of the colonized. But it still feels like the Rez and southern Alberta, especially Cardston, are worlds apart.

One planet has its own creation stories, language, humour, friends, and families, but this planet is also stricken with addiction, lateral violence, jail, and trauma. These things made it impossible to give a shit about what the other world was offering—or had the opposite effect and made entering the atmosphere of the other planet the sole objective of our mundane lives. Nevertheless, across the highway, on the other planet, there was the school, and despite the racism, it was one of the only ways I would get out of there.

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Unfortunately, some of us spend our whole lives trying to pull ourselves out of the gravity of one world, unknowingly putting its importance over the other, always being shaped and torn by the pull of both worlds, forever having two choices, two decisions, two ways of thinking. I am not saying I have found my way, nor am I declaring there is only one way to best understand this identity rip. But for me, it came through an understanding that being Brown in Canada puts you in a position where things such as unfairness, mistrust, and inequality are not only commonalities but certainties. I learned this through history, not the one taught in the school curriculum, but the one taught to me by my parents, my uncles, my aunties, my grandparents, the land, and the literature that was never going to be offered in a Mormon school. Blackfoot history, our history was the buffalo, the mountains, the prairies, the language, and family lineages. All aspects of our history were essential to the survivance of the Blackfoot world, but our relationship with all these aspects was disregarded when it came to my formal education. When that teacher called that young Native what she did or when I heard that white kid's racist joke, it wouldn't be the last or the first racist experience for myself or any other Natives in that class. It was only but a glimpse of what we would be exposed to for the rest of our lives and what the schools in southern Alberta would condition us for, what we would have to be for the rest of our lives: resilient. From Cardston Elementary, Junior High, and High School to the University of Lethbridge, I have felt the discomfort of racism and the gravity of these various black holes—if not first-hand, then I was holding the hand of someone who was about to be pulled away from me and into the darkness. Before I knew how to articulate this split, rip, or fracture of my identity, I could only feel it. I could never put into words the divisiveness taking place within myself. I only knew the struggle of being put in the middle of things, having the burden to choose between one world and the other. Being stuck in between these two extremes caused this rip or tear in my identity that I have not been able to articulate until recently.

I struggled with seeing the world through the eyes of a "savage" and "good Indian" until I read someone who felt the same. W. E. B. Du Bois wrote this over a hundred years ago, yet it holds such truth now, especially for a young Blackfoot man like me:

> The innate love of harmony and beauty that set the ruder souls of his people a-dancing and a-singing raised but confusion and doubt in the

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> soul of the black artist; for the beauty revealed to him was the soul-beauty of a race which his larger audience despised, and he could not articulate the message of another people. This waste of double aims, this seeking to satisfy two unreconciled ideals, has wrought sad havoc with the courage and faith and deeds of ten thousand people—has sent them often wooing false gods and invoking false means of salvation, and at times has even seemed about to make them ashamed of themselves. (Du Bois 2013, 128)

With Du Bois, his struggle was being a Black man in white America, trying to understand why he feels like himself and his people are a problem in white America's eyes. I struggle with being Indigenous in Canada, more specifically a Blackfoot man in southern Alberta. The actions of both Canada and the US were influenced by the notion that we were somehow lesser beings because of our physical attributes and cultural differences. The experiences we have had are very different, from slavery to residential schools, but one commonality seems to be that we all have this sense of seeing ourselves through the lens of white people. As Indigenous people, we have been put into this category of being two things. On one hand, we are Blackfoot or whatever tribe we are from. We have had our own traditions, stories, and traditional territories long before Canada was even an idea. Our stories are a convoluted web including history, family, and depictions of the land as it was thousands of years ago. It was only 150 years ago that my people were still living on the land and with the buffalo. Only recently were we exposed to the colonial narrative; only until recently we were savages and "dirty Indians." On the other hand, we are Canadian. The Great White North. We drink beer, watch hockey, and love multiculturalism. We are a country whose reputation of politeness is an international joke. When in reality, Canada has tricked the world. People forget about residential schools, the Indian Act, the ongoing genocide of Indigenous women and girls, poverty, trauma, incarceration, and the fact that most of us don't have access to clean water or adequate health care. Being Indigenous and Canadian comes with its own set of problems, but these problems are put under the spotlight of racism to be analyzed and amplified, from pipelines to health care, drug addiction, and violence. The ubiquity of this identity rip and racism can be consuming at times because colonialism is everywhere, the people and the land. Now that this veil has been lifted from over my eyes, I will never look away.

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I could only assume that Du Bois would also ponder the plethora of the societal problems his people faced. You can learn a lot through observation and theorizing, but experience is so essential in learning what is most important. For me, the concept of "double consciousness" was the theory that cradled my experience and articulated it so well. But before I read the theory, I had the experience. There was a time before I even realized there was a veil, a time before which I would be consumed with a head full of undesirable contradictions—"savage" and "good Indian"—contradictions that related to my family, friends, community, and self-perception. There was a time before I knew what the beauty of my culture could do for one's inner peace; I had to experience inner chaos, the chaos that was out there, in the cosmos of the colonized. Southern Alberta is scattered with black holes that constantly pull and tug at one's potential, identity, and life itself—from racist students, teachers, cops, and the media, to the Eurocentric education and criminal justice systems, to the local drug dealers and gangs that are on the Rez. All are by-products created by the discourse of colonization and racism that are all present in this convoluted social web on the Rez. We have been taught to forget our history, customs, and language. We have had our children and identities stolen, our customs and languages beaten out of us, and our traditional territories diminished to nothing but pinpricks on a map.

As I write this, social problems in southern Alberta have evolved. Our people are dying from the opioid crisis (Chacon 2019), which is spreading like nothing ever seen before. Pills seem to be the drug of choice for people who want to forget the trauma they're struggling with. Meanwhile, our people's addiction issues continue to spiral. It seems we are enabling contemporary racial discourses of "savage" to blossom, as if addicts are the failed projects on the assembly line of civility. Even local doctors in Cardston and Blood Tribe members have started to lose trust in each other (Southwick 2019), if there ever was any trust at all. Instances of racism within and outside the clinics by Mormon doctors have been reported—if not officially, then through word on the street. Also, crimes between Indigenous people and settlers throughout Canada have widened the gap to reconciliation. This is clear when looking at the continued genocide of Indigenous women and girls (MMIWG), the injustice that came with the death of Tina Fontaine (Maclean 2018), the compromised relationships between us and the RCMP (Tucker 2017), and more locally, the crimes of community members (who have also attended Cardston High School; Schmidt 2018). More recently, the Blood Tribe won a forty-year

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court battle titled the Big Claim. After sifting through a century of evidence and oral testimony from our Elders, as Grant (2019) reports, a "Federal Court judge ruled in favour of the Blood Tribe, finding that Canada shortchanged the band when the boundaries were drawn as part of 1877's Treaty 7. The reserve stretches 1,400 square kilometres across the southwestern Alberta prairie, from west of Lethbridge and south to Cardston." Reparations are in order. But until then, the tension between the Blood Reserve and town of Cardston may start to become more intense, especially when considering the history of Alberta and treaty rights.

Despite all these issues and despite the lingering notions of hopelessness, we are still here, surviving the storm.

* * *

> I want to defend Indian reserves since I believe too few politicians, academics, and newspaper columnists make this case. In fact, if anything, it seems as if most take the opposite approach—they run down our homelands. In my eyes, it appears that most opinion leaders deride those places Indigenous peoples love the most. Of course, there is a lot of critique, and such analysis must be crisp, loud, and clear. I never want to shy away from addressing the serious problems found on reserves, and I have made this a focus of my work too. At the same time, such evaluations must be balanced to account for how many Indigenous peoples feel about their reserves and larger traditional territories. They love them. They would die for them. Many do die for them. When people choose to stay on reserve or move back to one, they statistically shorten their life span. Yet they do this anyway, because, despite all their challenges, there is also love at home. Reserves are a well-spring of family life, language, culture, sustenance, tradition, social belonging, and meaning for many Indigenous peoples. The public is often misled into thinking that Indian reserves are unremitting sources of unfailing misery because of this lack of vigorous defence of reserves. This is not the case; reserves are complex spaces that also contain humour, care, concern, sharing, mutual aid, and deep spiritual and physical connectedness. (Borrows 2019, 46)

I stopped believing in God when I was eleven years old. I always found the Western manifestation of God to be a projection of fear toward the unknown while also casting judgment on what is known; this is how the Sundance

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became home to "devil worshippers." Furthermore, after learning what happened to our people in these schools and in the name of God, churches filled me with a tummy-turning discomfort, so I stayed away. I still only go when I have to. Stories of residential school would reinforce this decision. I always found more spiritual satisfaction when we would be fishing or hiking in the mountains than I did in church anyway. That calming sound of the river rippling over the rocks mixed with the smell of pine makes sitting in church seem only spiritually punitive. My interests would lead me to read about and watch documentaries on ecosystems around the world and the animals within them. Then I would go outside and try to learn about the animals in southern Alberta and how they interacted with one another. But what I didn't realize was that most of what these books and documentaries were teaching me about the ecosystem was already known by my people.

See, being brought up Catholic, going to a Mormon-dominated school, and having my Blackfoot identity disregarded were all part of the objective to colonize the mind. I didn't know who I was; a lot of us don't. I didn't know who I was until I failed out of university my first year, until I tried my first drug, until I had my first drink, until one of my friends died. I didn't know what the point of any of this was until I learned about my culture—the very thing the government tried to kill inside of us.

I failed out of university my first time. I didn't know what to do when I got there. I was undecided about being a grizzly bear biologist or a journalist. Being undecided for so long allowed school to fade into the background, and before I knew it, I was being asked to leave. I took a year off to work in the asbestos industry with an uncle. I made more money than I ever had up until that point. I was doing whatever I wanted. But I still felt stuck. So I decided to go back to school: the community college on my reserve.

Everything was 100 percent Blackfoot. This was the first time I had ever had a class where every student and instructor was Blackfoot, and just as importantly, so was the curriculum. Up until then, I was only taught to know who we were perceived to be: failures, savages, "dirty Indians," undesirables. All I learned was the narrative. Finally, the curriculum would talk about issues relevant to our lives. The lessons would weave together the land, history, and our families as we experienced this trauma together. There are many social issues on our reserves, but the reserve is home. I love my home and everything that comes along with it. This chapter is about everyday and institutionalized racism, but at the core of it is Indigenous resilience. Resilience

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comes with love and with understanding one another's trauma, understanding that we all come from generations of people who survived Canada's genocidal project. Our communities are loving, supportive, strong, humorous, and complex. Throughout the years in Cardston, we would rarely talk about Blackfoot people, even when we would learn about Aboriginal people in social studies. We would always learn about tribes in the US or out East, like the Mohawk, Mi'kmaq, and Cree, but the lessons were as shallow as the story of Thanksgiving. We never knew about Indigenous philosophies, Indigenous epistemologies, traditional territory, or the extent of our intelligence. And for once, I was learning.

We learned about the Royal Proclamation of 1763, the Indian Act of 1876, the signing of Treaty 7 in 1877, the 1969 White Paper, and the Red Paper that followed. All were government decisions to take the children to school, corral us on reserves, and "help" us assimilate into the rest of society—again, make the transition from savage to civil. We would also discuss how colonization took place in the mind and left an empty space where only fragments of one's Blackfoot self existed. This is where I started to see the colonial narrative and where it differs from the Blackfoot paradigm. Just these fragments of my culture were powerful enough to offset all the years of formal education I had received. For once, what I was learning was relevant. I took every class I could until I had enough credits to transfer to the university. This time around, I wasn't stuck between majors. When I was accepted back into university, I chose sociology as a major and took every Indigenous studies class I could register for. Being critical toward the narrative continued into my post-secondary education because I was beginning to know who I was and where I came from. Knowing where I came from gave me a connection to my ancestors and what they fought for while also grounding me in the very landscape the university is built on.

Most of what I learned at Red Crow Community College was Blackfoot centred. So when I got back into the university, I wanted to learn more. I was so happy to be reading so many other Indigenous academics and their theories. I was reading Leanne Betasamosake Simpson, John Borrows, Glen Coulthard, Alicia Elliott, Tanya Talaga, Cindy Blackstock, Harold Cardinal, Greg Cajete, Thomas King, and many others and being taught by people like Leroy Little Bear, Betty Bastien, Linda Many Guns, Maura Hanrahan, Beverly Hungry Wolf, and the other Native students in those classes—all of whom have their own stories of resilience and have come back to share

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it with our people. All have come to fight the perpetuation of ignorance by unconditionally loving our communities and perpetuating our culture. Now, the number of Indigenous people who are lighting up the literature world is truly inspiring—from writers such as Alicia Elliott, Tanya Talaga, Thomas King, Waubgeshig Rice, Eden Robinson, Lee Maracle, and Darryl Mcleod, just to name a few; to Indigenous people emerging into the music world, such as Tanya Tagaq, A Tribe Called Red, Jeremy Dutcher, Melody Mckiver, Jordan Cook (Reignwolf), and Snotty Nose Rez Kids; to all the people visually bringing about their work in the film industry. These people are all but a sliver when it comes to the vast number of Indigenous artists directing this Indigenous renaissance. In the words of Alicia Elliott, "Our art carries a weight that goes beyond a song or a poem or a dance. By surviving, by creating meaningful work that ensures our cultures and languages can survive too, we're showing our ancestors our love. We're still here because they were there. Their pain and trauma wasn't for nothing" (Elliott 2018). I couldn't agree more.

Furthermore, in academia, I was honoured to have attended Leroy Little Bear's philosophy class. He would discuss the five aspects of our Blackfoot philosophy: flux, energy waves, spirit, relationships, and renewal, all of which are ubiquitous throughout one's physical and emotional journey as well as the planet and the universe itself. It would take another chapter for me to even scratch the surface of the philosophy, but there is something to be said about a group of people who were able to live sustainably for thousands of years without having to suck the life out of the earth through pipelines (Little Bear 2015). Leanne Betasamosake Simpson (2017), in her book *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance*, combines her experience with Glen Coulthard's (2014; another Indigenous academic) theory of "grounded normativity." Theories such as these are crucial in understanding Indigenous paradigms as well as the communities that give them life. Simpson articulates grounded normativity as "ethical frameworks generated by place-based practices and associated knowledges" (2017, 22). Simpson is Anishinaabe. This means that the knowledge she has heard throughout her life is specific to the place she comes from. The stories told by our grandparents and parents originate from somewhere; that place is traditional territory. As Simpson says, "I believe our responsibility as Indigenous peoples is to work alongside our Ancestors and those not yet born to continually give birth to an Indigenous present that generates Indigenous freedom, and this means

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creating generations that are in love with, attached to, and committed to their land" (25).

These territories contain certain animals, ecologies, and landmarks. An Anishinaabe story is not going to have the same landmarks as a Blackfoot story because the region and landmarks are different, and so is the knowledge. For example, the buffalo, or *iinniwa*, are integral to Blackfoot culture. They are respected in all aspects of life; we depended on them for material things such as food, shelter, clothing, and everyday items, but they were also an essential piece of our way of life. Our Sundance and the various societies within it continue to be examples of this relationship. *Iinniwa* were a source of knowledge, teaching us animal behaviour and how to move about the landscape while the seasons change. We learned from them in this way, through observation and interaction, which is why we are working diligently to bring the buffalo back home. It makes ecological sense to preserve this animal's habitat because the buffalo are a key species in the ecosystem of the Plains. We knew this through our philosophies and creation stories that enabled the reciprocity of respect toward this animal. This respect became intrinsic to our knowledge and to our relationship with the land; this is traditional ecological knowledge. This knowledge comes down to what we learn from our grandparents and parents about the traditional territory of our own people. We hear the stories they told and how our relationship with the buffalo was intrinsic to the land along with the sustainability of it. These stories were not only for entertainment, but they were history and ecology lessons. The knowledge comes from the land and our communities. As Indigenous people, we have the ability to see two worlds. We have a Western scientific point of view, but we also have the ability to see the world through the eyes of our ancestors, and even though our lives have been so fragmented because of colonization, we are still here, and we're not going anywhere.

* * *

In Blackfoot, we have the word *Noohkiitsitaat*. It translates to something similar to "bear down," or to "wait it out," or to almost "endure" something. The translation gets lost in English, but stories help with that.

When a blizzard or thunderstorm is approaching, a herd of buffalo will make their way to the top of the rolling hills. Once they reach the top of these hills, together, they face the storm as it looms. Once it swallows the landscape, *iinniwa* close their eyes and dig their hooves into the ground below.

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Surrounded by the disarray and chaos of the storm, with their eyes closed, they face it head-on and become immovable objects waiting it out.

In the storm we are trying to survive, we, too, need to become immovable objects conditioned for resilience.

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2 Niksookowaks / All My Relations
Reflections on Reconciliation

Reconciliation Lethbridge Advisory Committee

Every single piece in this collective chapter has been written by a self-motivated, dedicated Indigenous or non-Indigenous member of the Reconciliation Lethbridge Advisory Committee (RLAC). This committee is dedicated to the process of developing meaningful relationships within the City of Lethbridge and surrounding communities.

The stories are personal narratives, explorations, and questions of truth and reconciliation. They are stories of experiences told through prose, vulnerability, and hope—hope that the words expressed inspire individuals to embrace their own voices, as each of these stories about the journey to reconciliation is important to the collective voice that is and will be the City of Lethbridge. The stories present individual experiences with threads of commonality on diversity and inclusiveness. The authors are asking questions to provoke thought for meaningful dialogue to occur. The RLAC is honoured to contribute to important work that will keep the momentum of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's Calls to Action.

When we focus on issues relevant to reconciliation and work at promoting mutual understanding, we are able to continue the raw process of truth telling and healing and contribute to the ongoing development of a cohesive existence. Reconciliation can be elusive. It is a vague experience of the unknown: What is it? Can we make it a part of our everyday lives? Is it feasible? Absolutely. Reconciliation will happen in everyone, in their own way, on their own terms, in their own time. This is allowed. But first, individuals need to understand the context: the social complexities surrounding Canada's dark

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history, the relationship of settlers with Indigenous people, and how that has evolved. The transition from our current reality to reconciliation will be overwhelming, but it needs to happen.

If understanding the past means that the present will be less frightening and the move toward a united future becomes more appealing, we are succeeding. It is in these moments of reflection and questing for reconciliation that we can transform and move into open, honest acceptance of one another.

Katie Jo Rabbit

The Many Moods of My Grandma

As a young child, I did not fully understand my grandmother. Throughout her life, moments in time would bring her to a place that my young self could only describe as far away. The adults in my family described these moments as Grandma *being in her mood*: a myriad of emotions associated with sharing stories directly or indirectly of the many times in her life during which she seemed to be happy. Although I got used to her going into her moods, my mind was always searching for sure reasoning, while my heart just wanted her to be okay all the time.

During the journey of my undergraduate studies, some of the answers to my *whys* started to surface—intergenerational effects were being talked about, and the *Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples* (RCAP 1996) was an important document. I would sit with my mother, and since it seemed we did not talk much about it, I got brave and asked why my grandma had these moods. My great-grandmother raised my mom, so the life they shared was more like a close and honest mother-daughter relationship. Thus, my mom knew the very likely reason why her own mom had these moods, and she shared with me what she had never before shared with anyone. In sum, the truth was covered with trauma that my grandma endured in residential school when she was fourteen years old. The story was hers, and it was one that she never talked about in her life, while living through it, she found something within herself to forgive those who caused her trauma.

As I got older and had my own children, I wanted to come to a place of understanding for my grandma; I just wanted time with her that was not spent trying to stay out of her way or feel that yearning for my idea of normalcy. I was

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a stay-at-home mom for about five years, and during that time, I picked her up to go to town and brought her out to my house for visits so she could make the bannock for stew. I remembered moments that I loved about her—like our shared love for country music—and I would say stuff like "Grandma, I bet you used to wish Hank Williams Sr. was your boyfriend. Or I suppose Elvis." She would giggle, and like all of us Blackfoot women, she would hit me, we would laugh, and she would say, "Geh you! Don't say that to me." I would tell her, "Well, I might consider leaving my husband for George Strait if he would give you all his horses. I wonder how many horses he has." She would be laughing and say, "Probably not as many horses as your grandpa." We had some silly conversations, and when I just wanted to hear her voice, I would call and ask, "Grandma, how many cups of flour for bannock?" Her answer was always "Two, maybe three cups if it's just for your family, but you'll end up using about four cups." I always took note of how she made certain that she spelled my children's names right—first, middle, and last. She always got it right; it mattered to her.

I never spoke much about my grandma's story until my work in post-secondary institutions had me leading the cultural awareness initiatives for Lethbridge College. My heart ached with both love and inspiration for the woman my grandma Shirley was. Maybe she was not perfect, but her life, like so many, was interrupted by the Indian residential school system, and from this, she tried her best to care for herself, never depending too much on anyone. When she was in her best moods, she supported her children and grandchildren the way she could. I think of her often in all that I do, understanding that the trauma she lived through helped me consider where my life has been easier, a life I have that does not have much suffering. So many of the grandparents of our nations persevered the best they could; like theirs, my grandma's story—young Shirley's life—mattered. As I am of a generation after the residential schools, I will never fully grasp what my grandmother endured within those walls. However, my understanding of her story, honouring her life in my continued steps as her granddaughter, has helped me move forward stronger as a Blackfoot woman. Truth can evoke a space of empathy to begin an understanding of the *interrupted* lives of many Niitsitapiiks (the Real People). Reconciliation is that effort by non-Indigenous people to embrace learning and turn any perceptions they may have into positive changes of thought. By gaining a sincere understanding of Canada's dark past and current

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state of systemic racism, it might be possible to grow a compassionate heart and positively change the moods of many Indigenous people.

Marcia Black Water, Iito'tawoahkaakii (Walking Beside)

Reconciliation

The word *reconciliation* is defined differently depending on who you talk to. For some, it is based on past experiences, while others adopt the academic definition. Academically, it is defined within the disciplines of law, social science, psychology, and sociology. It is also defined by the experiences of both Indigenous and non-Indigenous people and by the holistic concept of the impacts of colonization on the body, mind, and spirit. Therefore, it depends on the level of education a person has, who the person is, and the person's real-life experiences with colonization and the residential schools. Flisfeder (2010, 1) writes, "A truth commission or truth and reconciliation commission is a commission tasked with discovering and revealing past wrongdoing by a government (or, depending on the circumstances, non-state actors also), in the hope of resolving conflict left over from the past." This includes the restoration of friendly relations, the action of making one view or belief compatible with another, and the action of making financial accounts consistent through harmonization.

My personal view of reconciliation is best expressed through a series of questions: How do I reconcile with a white government that used its legal documentation to put me in the residential school where I was told that being Indian was bad, where I was told that my grandparents, whom I loved very much, were praying to this evil entity called the devil? How do I reconcile with the white workers for trying to do things their way and getting punished without an explanation, for experiencing the emotional pain of loneliness and their attempt to destroy my ancestors' spiritual way of life as they talked about a loving God? Beyond residential school, how do I reconcile for the mistakes I have made because of my anger and hatred toward a white government that has no face? John A. Macdonald, the first prime minister, is dead, but his policies continue today. I will never get the cultural knowledge and love from my grandparents and great-grandparents that I lost when I was sent to residential school. How am I supposed to "reconcile" that?

The only way that I was able to move on in life and deal with my anger and hatred was by going back to the culture—one that the white man had instilled

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in me was bad and evil—and listening to the Elders. So is reconciliation for the experiences in residential school? Is reconciliation for taking this land away from the Kainai people and putting us on reserves? What are we really reconciling?

Going beyond that, the white government has corralled all people of Native ancestry into a pool called Indigenous people. Because of that, now we are struggling to keep our ancestral territorial names. The Kainai people were here before the white man came. Then the white man came. Then people of mixed blood appeared after the white men had babies with the Native women. Then designated races—such as the Métis, people of Cree and French ancestry, and the Inuit—appeared. Although government legislation today distinguishes between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit, all have become Indigenous people. The Kainai, and the rest of the Blackfoot, were the first people to live in this territory, and that needs to be strongly recognized. It seems we are still being directed by the white government on how we distinguish the traditional inhabitants of this land.

Macdonald has succeeded in directing the Kainai Blackfoot people toward adopting the European way of life. The Buffalo is gone, and the Kainai people have adopted the white style of governance. Therefore, if we are talking about reconciliation at the level of governance and having equal representation, then we require a Kainai Blackfoot seat at the Lethbridge mayor and council chambers.

Academics define reconciliation through their research and have a definition that they think is correct. Politicians have their own definitions based on what is "politically correct." As a First Nation member of the Kainai Nation, my question about reconciliation is, How do I regain what I have lost, or will that ever happen? I speak for myself because everybody has their own story to tell.

Or is reconciliation the next phase of Macdonald's initiative "to have all Indians adopt the European way of life"? Academics played a significant role in the cultural genocide of Indigenous people because the government adopted and built policy around academic papers and studies. The creation of residential schools was based on the 1879 *Davin Report*. How did this help the Indigenous people? Have we assimilated? Was the attempt successful?

Today, it is a fight for inclusion so we can further our initiatives to participate in local, regional, and national groups. Kainai was here before the white man came, and now the academics are including the Métis and Inuit as being a part of this territory. Academic research can be steered in any direction.

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I do understand that research is essential to move some things forward or to understand how certain things function, but the research that has been done on First Nations created a cultural genocide. Now, do we do more research on reconciliation? After the reconciliation initiative dies down, then will we have a research project titled "From Cultural Genocide to Reconciliation and the Positive Outcomes of Getting Kainai to Lead a European Lifestyle"? We are headed that way as I fight for Kainai inclusion through designated seats on the City of Lethbridge mayor and council.

Jordan Head, Makoikiskisnam (White Wolf)

The Light

In the middle of nowhere, I sit and feel the sun scratching my skin. I notice the silence and my thoughts tangling with one another. Everything around me looks different, as if my consciousness is bruised. My thoughts no longer feel like mine as I begin to wonder how I became who I am and where all this began. My bruised consciousness then takes my existence to a different place, a place of non-existence, a place of complete darkness and waste. My consciousness hangs on to a thought, a hope, as I realize that there may be no such thing as a soul. I begin to feel the echoes of fear and death camouflaged in the wind and hitting my emotions like I'm falling into a freezing lake. Fear begins seeping up into my spine, like I'm stepping on broken glass, then blackness, silence, nothingness. My heart begins to race, my fingers feel tingly, and I have shortness of breath. The land looks unreal, as if it is a dream. My body begins to tighten, and I can no longer control my thoughts. I realize that I am dying, and there is not a soul in sight to help me. I cross my arms across my chest and fall to my side. I have no idea where I am or what my name is. I see complete blackness around me, covering me one cell at a time. I realize there is no God, no eternal soul. We are only lab rats, a coincidence, a random event in the universe. My tongue rolls back into my throat as my last few thoughts have nothing to hold. A complete silence enters my consciousness, and it immerses into complete doubt, fear, and unknowingness. My last thought is not even my own as I dissolve into nothing.

I open my eyes and below me is my body, convulsing. I look at it and realize that is not me. I am separate yet connected to the universe, like a drop of water in a sea. I am neither a human nor an animal. I am pure thought,

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pure consciousness, pure energy. My one eternal question is answered to me intuitively, like looking at a sunrise. My question: Why have I suffered so much? The answer: Suffering was the element, the tool to keep my spirit, my soul, intact, a choice I made before I was born.

A spirit evolves from a rock and signals me to follow him into his consciousness. I look back and see my body motionless. I then find myself standing on top of a hill overlooking a huge canyon. I look to the sky and I see night and day on fire. An angry violent wind blows on top of itself and pushes me down the canyon. I begin to realize that this place may keep me here. I begin running back up the canyon, but I am blocked by a huge heat wave that smiles and winks at me. I find myself in complete fear and sadness, like a thousand heartbreaks.

I notice in the distance some hills on fire. I begin to run to them, slowed by fear. As I arrive, the fire dies down, and I see a marbled road crossing the canyon, and at the end is a light. I hear thunder and rain but there are no raindrops. A spirit points at a purplish pinpoint light at the end of the marbled road. He tells me, "Keep that light one thought away from you; this light is the way out." The spirit then takes me to a place that has fierce hot winds and hills that look as if they have been sitting upright crying. As I begin to walk toward these hills, I feel fear leave my lungs, like a flock of birds flying away. I come to the edge of a hill, and I see thousands of people doubting eternity as their spirits watch in pain. I look up to the burning sky as anger rides on raindrops and fills their lives. I see lost romances falling and disappearing into the dark canyon. I see a hand desperately reaching for someone. The fiery sky cracks open, and I see people's dreams fall and melt on the cold ground. I see so many lost souls wandering aimlessly with no light in their eyes. Then in an instant everything vanishes; I am standing next to my body. The spirit tells me, "You can come with me into this light and you will be fine, or you can go back and make a difference in people's lives." I say, "I choose to go back." He then smiles and says, "You are a warrior; I will be back when the time is right."

I slowly open my eyes, and the tingling in my face and arms slowly starts going away. I slowly sit up and see the blue sky. A cool breeze swims into my lungs as I slowly begin to breathe again. I see the sun. I am ready to live my life.

John Chief Calf

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Oki Niksokowaawa

Upon my return to Lethbridge as an educator in 2018, I sent out to Creator my willingness to be a conduit for learning and a support to all children of Lethbridge. I was provided with the great opportunity to be on the RLAC in the fall of 2019. In my short time on this committee, I have been surprised and encouraged that our city is engaging in work that has the potential to change the way we see one another as neighbours.

One of my first public speaking assignments in my new role was to speak to "storytelling" and what that might mean to mental health workers in education and other educators. As I researched the history of Blackfoot people in Lethbridge and vice versa, an article jumped out at me about how Blackfoot women were treated in the historical context of the city. The image I had has remained with me and has provided me with further resolve to ensure that students of all cultures are aware of the proud Blackfoot heritage our ancestors had for millennia, and although our recent history was of colonization and oppression, together and with our neighbours we can overcome the adversity that Blackfoot people face and continue to encounter in our journey to once again being the proud community members our ancestors taught.

The RLAC has provided the opportunity to meet with people who have a shared understanding of and commitment to reconciliation.

Annette Bruised Head, Naato'saakii

Mayor of Lethbridge

The reconciliation initiative has just completed its third year.

Led by the RLAC, it is evident that 2019 built on the momentum established in the first two years. The United Nations declared 2019 to be the year of Indigenous languages. Lethbridge City Council unanimously adopted the Blackfoot word *Oki* as our city's official greeting. Community groups and organizations in the city added their support. The Heart of the City Committee commissioned a large three-dimensional "Oki" sign, the University of Lethbridge produced "Oki" desktop signs, "Oki" buttons were circulated, and the Lethbridge Public Library produced "Oki" pins.

Blackfoot language classes were initiated at the Galt Museum and received strong support. For the first time, there was a Blackfoot component as part of

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the Lethbridge Jane's Walk. The City of Lethbridge began a summer program focused on providing employment for Indigenous people.

All these activities helped promote respect and understanding. I am looking forward to more progress in 2020.

Chris Spearman, Nitsikimmapiiyipitsi
(A Compassionate Person or One with a Heart)

Two Worlds Converging

This is a story of unsettling the horrific history of Canada born from the plight of Indigenous peoples. It is also a reflection of two worldviews converging and the unsettling journey across these two worlds. It is told as a story because, as Thomas King would say, "the truth about stories is, that's all we are" (Parkinson 2018)—and this is my story, as told from the perspective of a third-generation Canadian-born white male.

Born in a small southern Alberta town, I didn't have much of a lens to view the world. As far as I knew, there wasn't much of a world beyond our little town. To some degree, that was okay with me because even that small world was often daunting and complicated enough. It was easier to hide away in comfort when that privilege was afforded to me. However, I always thought and felt that there was something not quite right, that somehow, I had been told a lie by which I must live.

Where I grew up, there wasn't much of a diverse community, and those who would be identified as diverse were easily absorbed by assimilating forces. When it came to Indigenous peoples, the only times I heard of them were in racist jokes, some of which I had told, or descriptions of them as savages in colonial history books or fantasized as mythology in movies. I would later come to the awareness that there were First Nations and Métis families in our community, some of whom I grew up with or knew in some way.

It wasn't really until I moved from that small town that I started to experience the world more broadly. Not just the greater part of the world I lived in, I started to experience the worlds of others, the ways others experience and connect with life. This is where this particular story really begins. The story of unsettling the lessons of history and an unsettling of self that sparked reflection and profound learning and growth.

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Through various life circumstances, my horizon of how I saw the world was both disturbed and expanded, much of this occurring after I went to university for the first time in my life at the age of thirty-one. It was there that I gained a greater learning of the real truth of our Canadian history. It took thirty plus years before I started to learn this truth. That's a crime in and of itself. Our national history has a stain that many have covered up to hide it or just completely ignore it as if it were a normal facet of society. It is a history that has done everything but completely annihilate Indigenous peoples.

At first, I felt immense guilt and shame. I don't think this was misplaced. How could I not feel shame for what our nation has done to the traditional people of the land we have occupied? Of course, I felt guilty for my ignorance of the history but also for perpetuating racism through the jokes I told and the narrow lens through which I identified Indigenous people. But with guidance and mentoring from a Niitsitapi (Blackfoot) Elder, I learned that guilt and shame only hold us in the grips of colonization. I was taught that this history is not our fault, but it is our responsibility. If we are to truly move forward in reconciliation, we must first hear the truth and then situate ourselves to take action. Guilt and shame hold us in time, while knowledge and action propel us forward.

Many times along this new journey of reconciliation I arrived at a crossroads between two worlds and had to consent to be uncomfortable and to have my perceptions questioned. I began a path of decolonization, which requires more than surface-level change—it is a deep awakening and healing from the lies I've been told and by which I lived. At each crossroad, I journey down a new path of learning and growth. I've learned that this will be a lifelong learning and a lifelong awakening, and it is not easy but it is necessary.

The path of walking between two worlds has become my symbol and my journey, literally and metaphorically. I was honoured to have a significant part in creating the logo for the work of RLAC as the logo designer. The concept of what became the logo came to me almost immediately, but then I provided some other concepts to have some options. But this one concept kept calling to me, so I pursued it the most.

For those who aren't familiar with the logo, it is a circular design that has two halves of a circle within it, each with a jagged edge that merges into the other. There are three dots placed in each half-circle. The colours are sacred colours; ochre is often used. Without going too in depth, this story is the basis of the logo. The concept came from an article written by a prominent

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Blackfoot scholar, Leroy Little Bear (2010), called "Jagged Worldviews Colliding." Essentially, this is the path of colonialism, with Western, colonial worldviews dominating and imposing themselves on the traditional worldviews of the various Indigenous peoples of the lands on which Canada now exists. These worldviews are not very compatible, thus the jagged edges represented in figure 2.1.

The reality is these two worlds exist alongside each other, with the revival and growth of cultural ways among many of the First Nations, Métis, and Inuit people and the persistence of Western ways as a dominant narrative. It seems that the path forward in reconciliation is to minimize the collateral damage of these worlds colliding and find a way for them to converge, come together, or coexist. People need to support this coming together, to walk the path between these two worlds as a bridge. This is where I find myself situated from a settler's perspective, working alongside many Indigenous people in understanding how to bring these worldviews together while maintaining the integrity and the revitalization of the Indigenous worldviews.

To walk along this path between these two worlds is to be open to learning the truth of our history but to also learn about a worldview into which I was not born. I am to create relationships with people whom I grew up only knowing as a fantasy or as "other." I am to be uncomfortable while challenging my perceptions and bias to unravel my own racism. I am to create a place of healing for myself and build a community of respect, understanding, and reciprocity.

Figure 2.1. The Oki sign in Lethbridge, Alberta. Photograph courtesy of the City of Lethbridge.

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Although I have been involved in efforts of reconciliation and decolonization for about a decade now, it is still really new. I know that there is a long path ahead, one that will continue to be jagged but is necessary. It is also one that has been healing. I have been honoured to be a part of a world that is truly built on community, collaboration, and reciprocity. I have been invited to participate in many ceremonies and be involved in some significant ways. I was gifted a Blackfoot name, Piitaana, which means Eagle Man—a name I was told is of high regard but also a big responsibility.

To honour my name, I am to be humble in this path, to walk alongside my family, friends, and neighbours from both worldviews. I am to remember the truth of our history and to share it with all I know and lean into a better tomorrow where we can grow together. My role is to see a future where we can all coexist in mutual respect and understanding, not at the cost of furthering colonialism, but to honour and respect what I have been taught and gifted. My role is not at the forefront. My role is from within this new community. My role is to continue to explore and experience the processes of self-decolonization as a non-Indigenous, Canadian-born person and to help others take this same path.

Although I still journey along a path greatly unknown, I have more clarity than ever. But this isn't just my journey to travel. As we share the collective history that connects us all, the work of decolonization and reconciliation is for everyone. I invite and encourage my family, friends, and neighbours to consent to being uncomfortable and to learn and reflect on the truth of our history, to unsettle ourselves and open space for growth.

If anything, change, even if small, will happen as a result of my daughters never telling the same racist jokes I told and knowing the truth and living with respect for those who lived on this land long before our ancestors did. If this becomes the new reality for more families, change is possible. I was taught that it will take seven generations for the Indigenous peoples to experience full healing from colonialism. I hope this can be true for all of us, to heal from the destructive path of colonialism, one that has torn us apart from one another and created jagged edges that collide. I hope that we can find reconciliation with one another, and if my journey so far is any indication of the healing it can bring, I see hope for us.

Jerry Firth, Piitaana (Eagle Man)

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What Is Reconciliation?

Councillor, City of Lethbridge

What does reconciliation mean to me?

This seems like such a simple question, but for reconciliation to work, it requires much of all of us, both privately and publicly.

As a city councillor, reconciliation is a call to action. Reconciliation means building a better, stronger relationship with the Blood Tribe Council and supporting/building partnerships between the Kainai Reserve and the city. Reconciliation means supporting, advocating for, and building partnerships and relationships with urban Indigenous and Métis organizations. Reconciliation is a reminder that I must do my work as a councillor focused on what I, city council as a group, and the City of Lethbridge as a corporation are doing to ensure that racism is addressed in Lethbridge. What are we doing to ensure that all people living in Lethbridge have an opportunity for employment, food security, and affordable housing and feel a part of the community? Do we have appropriate mechanisms to ensure that all people—especially those who have traditionally been marginalized—have access to the council to share their ideas/opinions/concerns, are being heard, and are part of the decision-making that is helping to build the future? What are we doing to ensure the work of the city is considered through the lens of Indigeneity?

As an individual, reconciliation is a responsibility. I have a responsibility to educate myself about the realities faced by many others in the community. I have a responsibility to offer support and understanding to those who need it. It's also my responsibility to approach reconciliation with the best possible mindset—to be open-minded to other perspectives and to support people as they require and wish. As someone with power and a platform, I have the responsibility to make room for others and support others having a seat at the table (even if that means leaving the table myself).

As a local public historian and researcher for the Lethbridge Historical Society, reconciliation is truth. It is vital that we remember that it is *truth* and reconciliation, even though many jump immediately to reconciliation. But moving forward as a community means we must also face the truth of our shared history and the truth of people's experiences. Reconciliation is ensuring that the stories and histories of all the peoples of Lethbridge and

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southern Alberta are told. Reconciliation is listening to and considering the many voices of the community and not simply the ones that have traditionally been the loudest.

What does reconciliation mean to me? All I have already written and so much more. In brief, it means a way forward for Lethbridge in truth, togetherness, justice, and love. Reconciliation means the future we must all work to build.

Belinda Crowson, A'okiwannowah (Seen by All)

Moh'kins'tsis and Sik-Ooh-Kotok

I grew up and spent the first eighteen or so years of my life in Calgary, Alberta—at least, that's the name that I knew the place as. It wasn't until many years later that I came to learn that the geographic area I knew as Calgary indeed already had a name (or rather many). For the Blackfoot, the name is Moh'kins'tsis, a reference to the confluence of the Bow and Elbow Rivers—the same place out of which the colonial townsite grew and a traditional gathering space for Blackfoot and other Indigenous peoples for millennia. This later-life realization that I live in a world surrounded by unshared history, culture, and language has troubled me and caused me to evaluate the ways in which I contribute both positively and negatively to colonization and decolonization, exclusion and inclusion, including in my professional work.

One of the things I often look back to from when I lived in Moh'kins'tsis is the fact that I happened to live within walking distance of the Tsuut'ina First Nation. I remember travelling to the Chief Dick Big Plume arena every few weeks as a youth for minor hockey games. I remember walking into the rink and feeling that this place was unlike any other place "in my city." I felt different there, though I was uncertain as a youth as to why. I remember there being display cases and framed images on the walls of chiefs and people in traditional regalia and thinking to myself, "Who are these people?" as they seemed to come from a world different from mine.

In fact, other than a few cursory and fleeting references to "Indians," the buffalo, and teepees in my K-12 education, from what I can recall of my youth, I really had no other memorable points of interaction with Indigenous peoples. That of course is just from what I can recollect looking at the past through my mind's eye. I'm sure that in the eighteen years I lived in

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Moh'kins'tsis, I interacted with Blackfoot, Dene, Stoney, Métis, and many other Indigenous peoples on almost a daily basis without actually thinking about it. And at the very least, I interacted daily with their territories: visiting rivers, parks, mountains, and valleys that all have names and stories that had yet to be revealed to me or, in the case of Calgary, travelling along roadways that are named after people or peoples but are devoid of context (places like Crowchild or Blackfoot Trail).

It wasn't until I went to university that I came to be exposed to this other layer of historical, political, and cultural complexity that dominated (unknowingly) my world. And even then, it was only through experiencing the histories and cultures of Indigenous peoples in other parts of the world that I came to reflect in any meaningful or critical way on my own country's and city's colonial and pre-colonial history. In expanding my perspective, I also came to better understand the role that my chosen career path (community planning) has had on perpetuating colonial and post-colonial settlement in Indigenous territories and with it the active deconstruction of knowledge and embedded ecocultural values held by people and places—and moreover, how this contributes to exclusion, discrimination, and genocide.

Once I finished my post-secondary education, through chance (or fate), my first real job involved working as a community planner in Indigenous communities in western Canada. Through that work with Indigenous communities and Elders, I was offered a glimpse into perspectives and approaches to community planning that I was never exposed to in planning school, which left me, again, feeling as though my Western educational system had failed me, leaving me ill-equipped to understand the true complexities of not only the world around me but the very geographies I aspired to (and was supposedly taught to) "plan." Since taking on my role in the City of Lethbridge—another city of many names, including Sik-Ooh-Kotok, meaning "black rocks"—as their first-ever Indigenous relations adviser, I have felt a great privilege to be able to now work with other community members and even fellow professionals to return the favour: suggesting ever so gently that there is much more to be seen and understood than first meets the eye.

When thinking about racism in Lethbridge and southern Alberta more broadly, so many of the root causes of the racism and marginalization faced by many members of the Indigenous community relate back to a lack of basic understanding of our neighbours and of the interconnectedness of our histories. I think of the role of the RLAC and indeed my role in the city as being

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to offer non-Indigenous peoples entry points to engage with a world and with peoples that until relatively recently have seemingly been hidden (the Truth and Reconciliation Commission [TRC] of Canada helped, as have the increasingly reconciliatory tones of some of our country's leaders). Although when we look around our community (and all communities, for that matter), nothing had ever really been hidden, just gone unnoticed by most non-Indigenous peoples.

I feel that Sik-Ooh-Kotok is on a strong path toward understanding what reconciliation is, but we still have much work to do. A lot of that work is very basic. It's bringing people together and telling more expansive and truthful histories. But a lot of the heavy lifting is yet to come. Racism is an ugly beast that tends to rear its head when economic times are challenging and when social crises emerge. Our community and province are currently gripped by both. My hope is that over time we can learn to be more compassionate and work to create a more inclusive and respectful post-colonial community where we can all thrive and feel a sense of belonging.

Perry Stein, Miistaksi'piitaa (Mountain Eagle)

Conclusions

The contributors from the RLAC reveal a couple of key themes that point to the urgency of reconciliation work within the City of Lethbridge and the way that the experiences of residents (both Indigenous and non-Indigenous) compel us to examine colonialist legacies and enduring ideologies of race as they permeate in our social environment. The work that the committee has accomplished, while important, is largely centred on establishing a symbolic field through which the process of reconciliation can continue. The hard work is yet to come, and that work appears to fall in four different thematic areas: indigenizing urban spaces, having sincere and difficult conversations, advancing structural changes that contribute to the work of decolonization, and convincing non-Indigenous city leaders and residents that we must be leaders in demonstrating that we are willing and committed to taking the lead on the necessary hard work and difficult conversations.

Jerry Firth and Perry Stein both discuss, through their childhood experiences, how and why urban spaces must be indigenized. In both of their experiences, their Indigenous neighbours and the Indigenous spaces in the town and city where they lived were illegible to them, rendered invisible by

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the ways in which Indigenous peoples have historically been exiled from urban centres or silenced when they have transgressed urban boundaries and entered those spaces. Jordan Head discusses the legacy of the Pass System, a formal mechanism of attempting to create an urban space that was decidedly non-Indigenous as contraposed to the Indigenous reserve. Both of these spaces were products of European colonialism, and both were fictions from the start, as the boundaries between the city and the reserve are constantly crossed by people, Indigenous and non-Indigenous. Yet this racialized geography is resilient, and the ideologies it buttresses work against creating an inclusive city and against a process of building relationships among Indigenous and non-Indigenous residents and neighbours. This makes the task of indigenizing the city a pressing one, as it will contribute to a process of making the multitude of Indigenous contributions to our city's landscape (past, present, and future) visible and viable, making us realize the white city is and has always been not only fantasy but also an unfortunate legacy of the colonial encounter.

My Indigenous colleagues—Marcia Black Water, John Chief Calf, Annette Bruised Head, and Jordan Head—all reveal that the transgenerational trauma emanating from experiences of residential schooling and colonial domination more generally is not reconciled in the minds and experiences of our Indigenous friends and neighbours. Each, through their own unique yet patterned experiences, points to multifaceted wrongs that emanate out from experiences that we cannot treat as in the past because the consequences are felt in the present. These experiences are sometimes felt as anger and resentment, and those emotions are legitimate and justified. In a sincere process of reconciliation, we need to be able to have tough conversations; listen to the anger, pain, and resentment condensed through generations of cultural domination; and allow those voices to speak and be heard. It is the responsibility of the non-Indigenous leaders and residents of the city to make these conversations possible and to demonstrate that we are capable of listening, capable of empathizing, and eventually, perhaps, capable of healing together through these conversations.

We organized our chapter as a set of stand-alone contributions by different committee members of the RLAC so that we could demonstrate both the diversity and overlap in our understanding of what reconciliation might look like and why it is critical at this historical juncture. When we came to choose an order for presenting the contributors, we situated our Indigenous colleagues

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first and our non-Indigenous colleagues second. This was intentional. We wished to demonstrate that there is a sequence to the work of reconciliation, and that work toward reconciliation has been long-standing but very one-sided. Indigenous members of our community have been generous with their time, have welcomed us into their lives, and have taken pains to explain their cultural perspectives and worldviews to their non-Indigenous counterparts. For reconciliation to be successful, however, our non-Indigenous leaders and residents must do more than simply partake in moments of cross-cultural sharing or celebrate diversity but rather open the space for airing difficult conversations and confronting the structural inequities that disadvantage our Indigenous counterparts in access to employment, education, health care, and political empowerment. Councilwoman Crowson and Mayor Spearman each speak to the council's commitment to the work of reconciliation, and each, in their own way, reveals the obligation of non-Indigenous people to take the lead in making these conversations possible. In closing, we believe that reconciliation, for it to succeed, must be energized by the dedication and commitment of non-Indigenous people to show, through their investment in time and energy, that the commitment is sincere.

Patrick C. Wilson, Iipiams'kapo
(Man Who Travels Far South)

Postscript

After this contribution completed the review process but prior to publication, the City of Lethbridge held municipal elections, electing a new mayor (following Mayor Spearman's retirement) and several new members to the council. The current mayor and council, as is true for all political transitions, hold a different set of priorities and with them a new perspective on the work of the RLAC. The first months have revealed the relevance of long-standing debates in social movement research between those who have promoted working within government to promote change and those who have argued that change must be advocated from outside (see Lapegna 2014 for a nice discussion of these debates). Those who have argued for working outside government organizations to promote change worry about the prospect of movement co-optation and the risk that goals and principles will be compromised by bureaucracy and the political ideologies of elected officials

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and staff. Those who advocate for working inside government to enact change argue that the opportunity to forge structural change can only come within those offices and that the potential benefits outweigh those risks.

In the case of the RLAC, the ideological shifts on the council have threatened the work of reconciliation, and members of the committee are confronting a new political reality where the mayor and council are less receptive to the hard work of truth telling that must precede and accompany advances toward realizing the Calls to Action of the TRC. While elected officials voice support for the work of reconciliation, their understanding of what this should entail departs from the previous work of the committee and represents a more sanitized view of reconciliation (such as cultural celebrations or symbolic gestures), leaving out the difficult conversations that could help reveal the historical injustices that pattern the inequalities of the present. To give but one example, at a recent RLAC meeting, we were informed a Zamboni would be painted orange with an "Every Child Matters" logo for an upcoming hockey tournament. One RLAC member suggested that we should produce fliers with a bit of information about the legacies of residential schooling and the continuing violence against Indigenous women and girls, to which the mayor suggested that "you would have to have been living under a rock these last years to not know what 'Every Child Matters' refers to." True work toward reconciliation is likely not possible in this political climate and reveals the obstacles to effectively incorporating Indigenous ontologies and practices in Western institutions, particularly in a context in which there are barriers to fully engaging the truths that must precede the work of reconciliation.

The following is a partial list of resources related to truth and reconciliation; missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people; and residential schooling and Orange Shirt Day:

- Truth and reconciliation
  https://reconciliationcanada.ca/
  https://nctr.ca/about/history-of-the-trc/trc-website/
  https://fncaringsociety.com/
- Missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit people
  https://www.mmiwg-ffada.ca/
  https://www.nwac.ca/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/NWAC-action-plan-FULL-ALL-EDITS.pdf

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- Residential schooling and Orange Shirt Day
  https://www.orangeshirtday.org/
  https://legacyofhope.ca/
- Other information
  https://www.cbc.ca/news/indigenous

Patrick C. Wilson, Iipiams'kapo, and Katie Jo Rabbit

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3 Filipino Duoethnography
Race in the Classroom

Glenda Tibe Bonifacio and Roxanna Balbido Epe

"Lethbridge is in the middle of nowhere! Where are the people?" This is the statement and the question that lingered on—from family, friends, and even colleagues elsewhere—through the years of being associated with a city in Canada. We are Filipinos who came from more populated cities in the Philippines, where we grew up. We also lived in more urbanized cities of more than three hundred thousand people before coming to Lethbridge. In fact, Lethbridge is the smallest place in terms of population density and area we have ever lived. Our origin and our place in this city are, however, always seemingly questioned because racialized bodies like ours occupy predominantly "white" spaces, including the classroom. Where do we "originally come from" appears to be the standard question asked during our first encounters with others, including students, staff, colleagues, and even those in executive positions.

In this chapter, we share our teaching experiences at a university where there is comparatively little diversity and people are visibly more "white." For over fifteen years, Glenda has been and is currently the only tenured Filipino professor at the University of Lethbridge, and Roxanna is the first, first-generation Filipino PhD candidate in the CSPT (Cultural, Social, and Political Thought) program attached to the Department of Women and Gender Studies. We share historic spots in the academic space beyond Calgary in southern Alberta, and this chapter is about our negotiation of race in the classroom using duoethnography. Data for this chapter essentially emanates from a dialogic method integral in duoethnography (Norris, Sawyer, and Lund 2012) where we outline three aspects of our lived experiences in the

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classroom: negotiating racialized identities, managing racism, and reflecting on biases in student evaluations. These address the following questions we have asked ourselves over the years: How do we negotiate our identity as Filipinos? How do we manage racism in the classroom? And how do we make sense of our student evaluations when race intersects with gender and becomes a factor that filters through teaching and learning? Our narratives are intertwined in understanding the place in which we work and interact with the community. In duoethnography, we are "both the researcher and researched" (Norris 2008, 234) and, through countless conversations, give meaning to two narratives of the same experience. As feminist scholars, we lean toward standpoint theory, where our positions of racial marginality in Lethbridge possibly bring "epistemic advantage" (Rolin 2009, 218). But in the end, our conclusion offers nothing at all about race and equality in the city. After sharing our experiences, this take on race and equality in the city is no surprise at all to those who face systemic abuse in the public domain. The inconclusive position is an open challenge that is complex to discern at the personal and collective dimensions of white privilege. But for us, this is a continuous stride in seeking genuine pathways to *equity and inclusion* within social institutions and beyond. We aspire to gain respect as knowledge producers and as equals among colleagues.

Since we both emigrated from the Philippines, race has become a fact of life. Although much more than this, for many, race is a construct of difference that is based on physical attributes like skin colour (Better 2002). Race therefore constantly marks our daily existence: we are "Brown" Filipinos in a predominantly "white" community. Our skin colour is more than the symbolic divide among social groups; it also defines attached privileges and notions of inclusion and exclusion (Ferrante and Brown 2001; López 2006). Some popular perceptions of race are linked to Brown Filipino gendered bodies in Canada, foremost of which is the assumption that we are all nannies and caregivers based on stereotypes created by the Live-in Caregiver Program (LCP), a precursor of the Foreign Domestic Workers Scheme.[1]

1 Filipino women represented nearly 90 percent of participants of the LCP, a temporary foreign worker program from 1992 until 2014, when the live-in requirement and automatic permanent residency after completing the program were removed by the

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Representations are important because they tend to affirm whose bodies have a rightful place in particular spaces and professions. In southern Alberta, this is not an exception; our experiences dictate fluidity and contrast in norms. A Filipino professor is an unexpected reality for many local students who grew up with a Filipino nanny or have a Filipino caregiver who tends to the elderly, sick, and physically challenged. On the one hand, a Filipino professor appears to be an anomaly in the academy. On the other hand, a Filipino PhD candidate in the CSPT program is a welcome addition to the highly diverse pool of international graduate students.[2] In general, internationalization is a core mandate of Canadian universities. International students provide much-needed revenue with higher fees compared to domestic students. As scholars, we situate gender and race at the crux of our campus and institutional engagements regardless of our credentials and status. For example, access to opportunities and resources is one of the salient equity issues that racialized scholars—students, instructors, and professors—contend with in institutions with no substantive employment and equity programs. Our own experiences amplify the voices of racialized scholars, including Indigenous scholars, in Canadian universities, as "the denial of racism is also the denial of equity" (Henry et al. 2017, 3).

Unpacking our experiences needs an introspective analysis of what it means to be Filipinos in Canada who were brought in to work and study in Lethbridge. Our story is part of the larger story of the Filipino labour diaspora,

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Conservative government (Banerjee et al. 2017; Galerand, Galliè, and Gobeil 2015). Previously, the Foreign Domestic Workers Scheme underwent several policy changes that maintained the exploitation and vulnerability of migrant women from developing countries. About three thousand women from the Caribbean migrated as domestic workers between 1955 and 1967 under the West Indian Domestic Scheme (Mabusela 2021). In the 1970s, the Non-Immigrant Employment Authorization Program was launched, which did not allow access to permanent residency. In 1981, the Foreign Domestic Movement Program took effect, and it gave access to permanent residency after two years of live-in work (Hsiung and Nicol 2010). The activism of Caribbean domestic workers in Canada led to changes in policies and source countries; the Philippines later became the number one source of live-in caregivers, and Filipino women were perceived to be more compliant than others (Silvera 1993).

2 During the 2017–18 academic period, there were 596 graduate students. In fall 2019, there were 558 visa students enrolled and 640 masters and doctoral students (University of Lethbridge 2017, 2020).

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made up of over ten million (Asis 2017) people. We are therefore among one of the largest new cohorts of Asians in the world (San Juan 2001), a consequence of Western colonialism and imperialism and contemporary globalization.[3] In Canada, Filipinos compose about 2 percent of the total population, or 837,130 in 2016 (Statistics Canada 2017) and 901,218 in 2018 (Embassy of the Philippines in Canada, n.d.). The number of Filipinos increased by 26 percent from 2011 to 2016, and the majority reside in the metropolitan areas of Vancouver, Montréal, and Toronto. Alberta is a recently preferred destination for Filipinos. The province gained about a 34 percent growth rate in Calgary and is considered one of the highest among key metropolitan centres during the same period. The Philippines is one of the top sources of immigrants in Lethbridge, making up about 9 percent of the total number of immigrants in the city. In 2016, the Filipino population of Lethbridge amounted to roughly 1,105 people (City of Lethbridge 2019). Consistent with the national demographics, Filipino immigrants in Lethbridge are predominantly female (Statistics Canada 2017).

We embody the constructs of the gendered migration of Filipinos in the community, albeit with our own particular histories. Migration is a universal phenomenon, but the experience is personal. Glenda first arrived in Ontario as an independent, skilled immigrant with her family, while Roxanna arrived alone as an international PhD student in Lethbridge. Meeting up in Lethbridge in the academic environment of supervisor-student relations for the past three years allowed us to share our experiences as Filipinos teaching in a university setting in Canada. We weave our insights into these experiences in the following sections.

Negotiating Racialized Identities

Our racialized bodies occupy a space of marginality in the university. As of 2016, racialized people such as Indigenous and non-white persons compose about 21 percent of all university teachers in Canada (CAUT 2018). Of this group, Filipinos represent less than 1 percent, or about 0.03 percent of university teachers and 0.08 percent of college instructors in the country (CAUT 2018). As noted in Coloma et al. (2012), Glenda was the only tenured Filipino

3 The Philippines was colonized by Spain for almost four hundred years and by the United States for over fifty years (Herrera 2015).

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professor for some time in the province of Alberta. In Lethbridge, Glenda remains the only first-generation Filipino academic teaching at the university. Her first years teaching classes were perhaps the most deeply disturbing, as an all-white student enrolment first made manifest her race, relegating her instruction to second place. As the years went by, a handful of non-white students started taking her classes. In contrast, Roxanna came at a time when the university began moving toward equity services, and the city became famous as the destination hub of Nepali-speaking Bhutanese refugees and for its community sponsorships of Syrian refugees.[4]

Our position of marginality is where, according to hooks (1984, vii), "we developed a particular way of seeing reality." We are both insiders and outsiders of the university: insiders because of our assigned academic roles but outsiders as Filipinos with *disturbing invisibility* (Coloma et al. 2012). Filipinos are mainly in the service economy, such as health care, caregiving, cleaning, food, customer attendance, and the manufacturing sectors in Canada (Laquian 2008). Very few are in the academy. When we do appear in the halls of the university as teachers or teaching assistants, our bodies become markers of our ethnic identity as Filipinos. Again, we are Filipinos first and teachers second; we embody a hierarchy within.

Identity is a contentious mask of labels (Appiah 2018). It may refer to our belonging to a social group with shared normative values and traditions and perhaps our sense of who we are, among other conceptualizations. But what we do understand is that our lives, past and present, are riddled with "identity politics" (Fukuyama 2019) that pit one group against another.

Our experiences exemplify Edward Said's argument that "intellectuals are individuals with a vocation for the art of representing [a standpoint of some kind], whether that is talking, writing, teaching, appearing on television [. . .] and that is publicly recognizable and involves both commitment and risk, boldness and vulnerability" (1996, 12–13). As Filipino expatriates, our academic journeys or lived experiences embody the "intellectuals as exiles" who

4 Lethbridge is considered the Bhutanese capital of Canada, with the largest settlement of Bhutanese, or about 1,300 (Klingbeil 2016). Following the Syrian civil war and the millions of refugees fleeing the conflict, community groups organized sponsorships to help Syrian families (St. Augustine's Church, n.d.; University of Lethbridge 2020). A campus chapter of the World University Service of Canada sponsors student refugees attending the University of Lethbridge (University of Lethbridge 2019).

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are at the margins of "privilege, power, honor" (Said 1993, 117). With our intersecting identities and markers of difference (e.g., race, gender, citizenship) navigating in different structures of power and privilege in predominantly white spaces, we have become unsettled and are unsettling others as we demonstrate difference as both a process and outcomes. These realities have made us think in a broader context while adopting the local-global approach in our teaching and scholarship, even our ways of living. Hence it is necessary for us to invent or reimagine our thoughts and actions from a different standpoint.

Our identities construct particular stereotypes and assumptions about our abilities and our place in society. At universities in Canada, particularly in Lethbridge, a Filipino academic like Glenda is uncommon. Knowingly, the place of Filipinos is constructed by stereotypes in popular media and their visible presence in particular sectors. For example, in Lethbridge, where Filipinos are disproportionately visible working in seniors' homes, their presence in the academy appears as a contradiction to many. When Glenda steps outside the university campus, often the questions posed relate to Filipino caregivers. On one occasion, when asked "Who is your employer?" she replied, "I work in the university to clean the minds of students!"

In our teaching experiences, the classroom is akin to what Razack (2018, 113) notes as an experience of "place becom[ing] race." How, then, do we negotiate our identity as Filipinos in a place mostly occupied by white people? We count on three dimensions of our identities: education, family, and culture.

Education

We feel equal with the rest of the university constituents. Our education has brought us into teaching and learning with others regardless of where we accomplished our credentials. Roxanna believes that maturity foregrounded by education enables her to expect mutual respect: "I espoused mutual respect and collective effort to ensure a safe space, enabling a learning environment where everyone is encouraged to engage, listen, and learn in a respectful manner." When we step into the classroom, we tend to forget we are Filipinos because we are teachers first, contrary to what we perceive our students in the room think about us. We make it a point to introduce ourselves via our educational achievements during the first days of classes. It's a gesture affirming our right to be in the classroom. Perhaps our white colleagues do too. Our first point of classroom contact is like "judgment day," where students decide

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whether to take the course or not after seeing our racialized bodies on the podium. They do remain on par with other colleagues presumably after the "add-drop" period regardless of race.

Aside from our educational accomplishments, we situate our place in local-global contexts. We are the "global" in the classroom, and the students our "local" counterpart. Contextualizing our presence in this way makes sense to broaden the inclusion of who teaches and what is taught. Roxanna has worked in different international organizations for over fifteen years and is well-travelled as a development worker in the Philippines. Glenda, as a Filipino youth leader, was a member of the YMCA Asia Alliance Task Group for Youth Concerns based in Hong Kong and a country delegate to the Ship for Southeast Asian Youth Program of the Association of Southeast Asian Nations and Japan. These allowed Glenda to travel in Asia, Australia, and Canada while still in the Philippines. Glenda also taught at the University of the Philippines and completed her PhD in Australia. Our education and related experiences provide examples of our "global" outlook that necessitates grounding of what is "local" in the classroom in Lethbridge.

Our identity as Filipinos has varied trajectories of who we are in the classroom. And for us to explain our qualifications to teach the course in front of students is really an embarrassing exercise but something we are compelled to do. At times, the eager eyes and deep gazes in front of us seem to convey "let's get into it." The local-global approach speaks to not only us but also the thematic delivery of the course. Roxanna, as a teaching assistant and instructor, followed this approach too: "I also adopted the local-global strategy [. . .] to enhance critical thinking, reflexivity, and relevance of social issues." We conduct workshops and other group activities to have more conversations about the assigned reading materials. This is a "process of fitting in," and the "backgrounds [faculty women of colour] bring to academia need not take a back seat. [. . .] [They] can be placed in the foreground of our work" (Turner 2000, 133).

Family and Culture

Family and culture are other dimensions of negotiating our racialized identity as Filipinos in the classroom and in the university community at large. Filipinos are known to have a collectivist orientation, similar to other non-Western worldviews and unlike the predominance of individualism in

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Western societies. This apparent social dichotomy between "our world" and "their world" is based on sociological and anthropological studies of our difference. But as transnational Pinays (Bonifacio 2013),[5] of having a home here and there, of being connected with various cultures in the midst of our life journeys, we are both: individualistic and collectivist. Both of these have allowed us to develop resilience and survive the social terrains of "whiteness" until now. Roxanna says,

> The core values that I learned and developed from the nurturing of my parents and family [. . .] have moulded my personhood and how I perceive and relate with others. [. . .] I try to adapt and understand the norms of the new culture. [. . .] I already conditioned myself to be strong and resilient—to be genuine of my Filipino identity in any social relation and remain culturally grounded while integrating into a new one.

As Filipinos, we cannot escape our identity sans the whitening products popular in the Philippines. This is our identity all the time, anywhere. Our connections with family are embedded in our life experiences, and these make us who we are today. We all have families, but what is studied most is the labour of Filipino diasporic bodies to support their families in the Philippines (Gonzalez 1998; Maimbo and Ratha 2005). Filipinos have one of the highest rates of remittances, and the largest sources are in North America (Flores 2019). Essentially, the benefits of our work are shared with others, and our socialization keeps us grounded because we have our families on our backs. We tend to endure the challenges along the way because we see ourselves succeeding not only for ourselves but for others, family or otherwise.

When Glenda first arrived in Lethbridge, her family of five daughters was made central to her Filipino identity by others. A white colleague would often introduce her by saying, "Oh! This is Glenda; she has five kids!" The *Lethbridge Herald* even published a full article in 2005 highlighting her reproductive ability instead of her supposed research program and teaching areas, after nearly an hour of interviewing her. To break away from this "family spell," Glenda decided to publish five books in the hope that colleagues would say, "This is Glenda; she has five kids and five books!" Five published books done, and more today. But now the question she gets is, "How do you find time to do

5 *Pinay* is the colloquial term for Filipino women.

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that?" Then the cycle of five kids begins. Glenda is made to accept her position of marginality based on gender and race. In hindsight, studies indicate that women and faculty of colour tend to invest heavily in research, publications, and teaching instructions to prove their competence (Gutiérrez et al. 2012).

From our standpoint, the difference based on our identity as Filipinos becomes a fact and the means from which all other knowledge and skills flow and from which our subjectivities are thereby constructed. Following Smith (1987), our understanding of the world is affected by where we stand as Pinays. And in this world of academia in Lethbridge, race, gender, and migration status, among other identities, all come together to shape our place in it.

Managing Racism in the Classroom

Racism is a "social disease" (Stevens 2019) that has been left uncured for ages and remains at the core of human interactions primarily based on phenotype, ethnicity, and other markers of difference. It plagues our social institutions and our practices, whether subtly or overtly. As racialized Filipinos in Canada, our physical markers of identity include brown skin and our accent; however, these are not homogeneous classifiers, as there are white-skinned Filipinos known as *mestizos*. We are of the brown Malay race, seemingly related to the Indigenous inhabitants of Southeast Asian islands. Our compatriot *mestizos* are, then, the product of interracial relations under colonialism. Because of our marked racial difference in the classroom, at times, we face overt racism. During her first day as a teaching assistant at the university and unsure of where to fix the sound from the attached computer system in the classroom to play a video documentary, a white female student sitting in front of Roxanna blatantly expressed, "Don't help her. Leave her alone." We find that white students tend to readily assert themselves in expressing negative or blunt ideas in front of us, contrary to the caution and respect they would have given to a white instructor or professor.

Physical differences coupled with our strange accents are points to ponder when we face racism in a white classroom, both to ourselves and to our non-white students. Covert acts of microaggression include eye-rolling when students of colour talk and purposely being inattentive or preoccupied when discussions take place. We both experience these types of students in our classes. In one case, when students were called on to participate in a discussion, a white male student in Glenda's class refused to answer, simply

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saying, "Don't have to talk." In another class, a student declared the right to sit anywhere when requested to occupy the lower seats in a huge classroom with no microphone. Faculty of colour "experience microaggressions in the way students' challenge their authority and knowledge due to their race and/or gender" (Dancy and Gaetane 2014, 355). Some time ago, another male student who was disappointed with his mark on a written assignment boldly told Glenda, "This will affect your student evaluations."

How, then, do we manage racism in the classroom when the attack is directed at us as instructors or a collective embodiment of coloured students? Everyday racism is embedded in practices that underscore the power relations between groups (Essed 1991). In practice, we manage in different ways depending on the situation. But we do it mainly in two ways: counteraction and graduated silence. Counteraction means that we respond to each direct and obvious racist statement to provide an alternative narrative right away, upon impact; in this way, passive students also get to be part of the dialogue. Glenda finds this effective but unbearably painful in her heart to have to do in the twenty-first century. Roxanna tends to ignore covert acts of microaggression in class and finds ways to strategize, assessing how to respond, especially noting the rights-based approach in her sessions. In some instances, Glenda applies a form of graduated silence wherein students' racist overtones in discussions are silently noted followed by an explosive response.

Our approach to participatory learning is also beneficial in handling racism in the classroom. Sometimes we do not have to offer alternative views, as the students themselves become our voice of reason. When progressive or enlightened students have their voices heard, they do make our day. What comes after is a feeling of collective relief—that our world could be better for all. Continuous engagement with critical materials using anti-racist frameworks comes within the purview of the discipline, and we feel strongly connected with its delivery. Empowerment through learning alternative discourses is not only for the students but also for us as facilitators of knowledge production.

Bias in Student Evaluations

Student evaluations have been ruled as the primary performance indicator of university teachers for a long time; they are deemed crucial for tenure and promotion. In November 2016, the Canadian Association of University Teachers (CAUT) approved a policy statement on the "use of student opinion surveys"

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that "do not measure teaching effectiveness" and are laden with "prejudices to the disadvantage of equity-seeking groups" (CAUT 2016). In 2018, the arbitration ruling involving Ryerson University in Ontario set the precedent of "student evaluations of teaching [. . .] not [to be] used to measure teaching effectiveness for promotion or tenure" (Farr 2018). Before this ruling, student evaluations were noted for their bias against women, racialized faculty, faculty with physical challenges, non-heterosexual faculty, and even other disciplines (Chisadza 2019; Flaherty 2019). The assumption is that good student evaluations are indicative of good teaching and effective teaching pedagogy. Bad student evaluations supposedly mean that one is not good enough to teach and, thus, must seek another profession. What about good and bad student evaluations in the same document? Who decides what metric to follow? And for what purpose? As the popular adage goes, we cannot please everybody. But when we examine the biases inherent in our student evaluations, we note the common thread of these comments:

"she has an accent and hard to understand sometimes"
"cannot understand her instructions"
"unclear guidelines and sometimes confusing"
"she talks fast and mumbles to herself"
"she laughs"

Of course, there are many other examples in our files.

Reflecting on these general commentaries of our teaching, Roxanna said, "I could not reconcile in what aspect I was not being clear on those matters. At the start of the semester and weeks before due dates, I always reminded the class and reviewed the course syllabus, the assignment guidelines, and the marking grid." We tend to give flexibility in assignment deadlines and consider unforeseen circumstances. When we ask our students if they have any concerns or questions about the assignments, the overall response is yes. In what aspect are we then unclear? When we discuss the guidelines with an accent? Purwar (2004, 52) argues that "authority is seen to be especially misplaced when it is clearly vested in a woman of color." As racialized academics, we bear the brunt of disappointment from students who claim that

"it's a waste of money"
"course did not show promise as expected"
"could have been better"

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From our standpoint, critical thinking is part of the learning process in the production of and completion of assignments. The process of completion forms part of the grade, especially group projects using peer reviews of performance. Based on our experiences, students want a clear goal toward a preferred mark using a checkbox technique: if I do this, I get X points. It seems that when student expectations fail, the onus is on us for having not provided clarity in instruction. The unfavourable perceptions about our legitimacy to teach at the university find evidence in poor student evaluations of teaching (Ross and Edwards 2016), particularly from these students. Sometimes it's difficult to accept that some high-performing students in the class do not care about completing the online student evaluations. For Glenda, she has opted for an in-class student evaluation to get a real-time performance of students as well.

Bias is a given, but there are more acceptable biases than others. Race should not be a factor in our student evaluations. Race should not matter in the evaluation of how we teach or handle our classes. Race is not a measure of our educational and professional qualifications to effectively deliver the content of the syllabus. But IT is. Our colleagues who are represented in administrative bodies that serve as the gatekeepers of our academic careers all tend to be white and often use student evaluations as evidentiary material to justify effective teaching, broadly construed. They too often demonstrate the same barrier to inclusive teaching practices when biases become the bases for assessments. On the one hand, as racialized academics, we seem to be constructed as possible good teachers first regardless of our research and publication record. For non-racialized academics, on the other hand, the first focus is on research and publications, while teaching effectiveness is secondary. These are the realities we come to believe while working at the university.

No Conclusion: Race and Equality

The university is ideally a space of diversity, inclusion, and belonging for students, staff, faculty, and the community. It serves the mandate of providing higher education and learning to those who participate in its programs, projects, and activities, whether directly or indirectly sponsored. As a space, it constructs an ambiance of equality for all following principles of non-discrimination through policies and laws. But this space is contested by

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the differing values held by those who populate it, one of which is the place of race in academia. Our experience using duoethnography suggests that race matters in the university—with our students and among themselves and with our colleagues. As Filipinos, our identity as racialized academics in Lethbridge is a continuous quest for acceptance and recognition of who we are as individuals. Our gendered bodies do not exist in a cultural vacuum; they form part of who we are constructed to be. As instructors and knowledge producers in a discipline that remains connected with political moments, our standpoint from difference is our path toward equality.

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4 Resettlement, Racism, and Resilience

Lived Experiences of Bhutanese Refugees in the City of Lethbridge

Rabindra Chaulagain

> *Racism is power. It is institutional, systemic, and cultural. In fact, racism as a system, in which one group exercises power over another on the basis of real, perceived, or imagined physical and cultural differences, has had numerous and persistent effects in Canadian history.*
>
> —George S. Dei (2005, 97)

This chapter explores the lived experiences of Bhutanese refugees residing in Lethbridge, looking closely at how they have negotiated resettlement and racism. Participants for this research project are people who were born in Bhutan or in refugee camps in Nepal. It examines the personal narratives of five people who tell stories of everyday racism, starting with their arrival in Canada. I begin by providing a brief overview of my methods and approach to the interviews. I then engage in a short discussion of the history of Bhutanese refugees and their participation in the third-country settlement process, followed by a discussion of their everyday experiences as a minoritized population negotiating racism in Lethbridge. This chapter concludes with some preliminary ideas for developing better refugee settlement and equity policies based on the different forms of racism that participants have encountered.

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This chapter provides readers with inroads into how to begin exploring the intersections between and among various forms of racism that refugee populations experience in small cities in Canada and beyond.

The Interview Process

This chapter adopts a qualitative research method to deeply explore the subjective experiences of Bhutanese refugees in Lethbridge (Kvale and Brinkmann 2009; Whiting 2008; Leavy 2017). While conducting interviews, two categories of people participated from the Canadian Bhutanese Society (CBS) in Lethbridge: those who grew up in camps and those who were born in camps. Both groups are revenue-generating forces in the Canadian labour market. The participants agreed to the request for interviews after I placed posters through the CBS. Since I work as a volunteer within the Bhutanese community in Lethbridge, I approached people individually to see if they were interested in sharing their experiences living in and working for different employers in Lethbridge. Twenty people from the community expressed interest in participating in the interviews. Participants were free to choose either English or the Nepali language during the interview process. An ability to communicate with the participants in more than one language enabled me to understand the variety of their experiences and perspectives. Through the interviews, I realized that participants were eager to share their stories and experiences openly.

There were five participants and five interview sessions altogether. No participants worked in the same workplace. Among them, two were university students, two were factory workers, and one was a businessman. All the participants were male, and they belonged to three different ethnic groups within the CBS in Lethbridge. I believed that the more diverse the participants were, the more their experiences would vary, providing a richer and more diverse collection of stories and insights. I conducted one-on-one interviews, each lasting about two hours. All participants opted to have their privacy protected through anonymity. I therefore assured them that I would encrypt any details they provided and would use pseudonyms. I have therefore referred to each of the five participants as A, B, C, D, and E. This interviewing strategy allowed participants to talk about their experiences openly without worrying that members from the same community would be able to identify them. As a result, they could articulate their thoughts and feelings spontaneously.

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Since Bhutanese refugees often have traumatic experiences of displacement, I was also aware of the risk of asking questions that might recall their history. No serious issues emerged during the interviews. However, all participants expressed concerns with recording. So instead, I decided to jot down the conversations with the intention of not losing essential information. This study used several locations for interviewing, according to participant preference. Some participants were more comfortable conducting the interviews in their homes, while others wanted to meet in restaurants or Tim Hortons.

These Bhutanese refugees said that they did not speak the Bhutanese language; they spoke Nepali as their first language. The interviews were conducted in the Nepali language based on the preference of the participants. This enabled me to explore their memories of displacement and their present situation in a third-country settlement more deeply. The interview process allowed for a more reciprocal conversation, since participants did not appear to have had met with a stranger previously. I did, however, experience some difficulties with note taking, as simultaneously taking notes and making conversation sometimes made it difficult to fully engage with participants in conversation. I later translated my notes into English, coded them according to themes, and analyzed them according to the issue areas that emerged. The interviews focused primarily on experiences of racism and discrimination, their daily lives, and their resilience in the face of a number of challenges. They were happy with my request to revisit them for more clarification, if needed.

In addition to interviews, I had opportunities to participate in various cultural, sport, and other programs organized by the CBS in Lethbridge. My community involvement allowed me to interact and observe the activities people were engaging in, the opportunities they were given, and the barriers they faced during the process of resettlement in Canada.

Bhutanese Refugees in Lethbridge

Bhutan is a small, mountainous country located in South Asia. It is landlocked and surrounded by two rising world powers: China and India. The northern part of the country borders China, and the rest borders India (Pulla 2016). Some ethnic Nepali had already migrated to Bhutan from Nepal before King Wangchuck, who had come from Tibet and was first crowned in 1907 (Bird 2012), united the country. Bhutanese refugees are primarily descended from ethnic Nepali people and belong to ethnolinguistic groups and various castes

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that had migrated to Bhutan between 1890 and 1920 (Hutt 2003). People who were part of the mass migration from the eastern part of Nepal to Bhutan between 1890 and 1920 were from peasant families (Pradhan 2009). Traditionally, they were inhabitants of the eastern districts of Nepal, identifying with multiple cultural values within the ethnic Nepali community (Rose 1994). In the nineteenth century, during the time of mass migration, Gurung and Dorjee families in Bhutan were the authorities who permitted Nepali immigrants to settle in the southern part of Bhutan (Rizal 2004).

In the early phase of migration, the royal government of Bhutan managed the settlement of ethnic Nepali in the southern region, which was predominantly dense forest and thereby largely uninhabitable (Rizal 2004). At that time, the government of Bhutan developed agriculture for the purposes of economic growth by using the labour of people who had migrated from eastern Nepal (Hutt 2005). As a result, ethnic Nepali residing in the southern part of Bhutan contributed to the national economy through agriculture (Hutt 2003). However, they integrated very little with the people living in the north, where the residents had different cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious backgrounds.

There are four main dominant ethnic groups in Bhutan: Ngalong, Bhutanese, Sarchop, and Lhotshampa (Pulla 2016). Lhotshampa are diverse ethnically and linguistically, with an ancestral history in Nepal. Ethnic Nepali Bhutanese (Lhotshampa) are predominantly Hindu and—to a lesser extent—Buddhist (Evans 2010). Eventually, some ethnic Nepali residing in the southern part of Bhutan got opportunities to work in government up until the 1970s (Hutt 1996). Subsequently, they achieved significant growth in food production alongside agricultural innovation, which contributed to the fast economic growth of Bhutan. However, their success did not last long because of cultural genocide.

Jigme Dorji Wangchuck, the former king of Bhutan, guaranteed citizenship rights to all people—including ethnic Nepali—in the first Citizenship Act that was passed in 1958. After the king died in 1972, Jigme Singye Wangchuck came into power. In the beginning, he seemed amicable to the Lhotshampa (Rai 2013). Gradually, in the latter part of the 1970s, however, Wangchuck began exercising state power against the Lhotshampa (Rai 2013; Pulla 2016). The perception that the royal government had of the Lhotshampa people in South Bhutan changed, and it began imposing severe restrictions, including banning the Nepali language. In due course, the government of Bhutan conducted a census program in southern Bhutan that identified the Lhotshampa

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people as non-nationals (Pulla 2016; Rizal 2004; Hutt 2003). The new Citizenship Act that came into effect in 1985 required the Lhotshampa to provide evidence of their tax receipts before 1958. In the end, people were compelled to hold demonstrations for their natural rights in their country of birth.

The Bhutanese monarchy gradually enforced state-sanctioned brutality toward ethnic Nepali people. The Nepali language was banned from schools by completely phasing it out of the curriculum, and the Dzongkha language became mandatory for the Lhotshampa. This became a cultural barrier (Pulla 2016; Rizal 2004; Hutt 2003). Lhotshampas were then restricted from celebrating their festivals and were forced to wear Drukpa dress (Rose 1994; Rai 2013). The state-initiated terror gradually became mercilessly violent: people were arrested and killed, women were raped and ordered to cut their hair short by the Bhutanese military, and houses and properties were burned down (Rizal 2004; Pulla 2016). The situation compelled people to flee their land. Almost one hundred thousand ethnic Nepali became refugees, forced to leave their homes up until 1994. First, they fled to the neighbouring country, India, hoping for shelter.

The Indian government trucked and dumped refugees at Panitanki, on the eastern border of Nepal (Pulla 2016; Bird 2012; Rizal 2004), but with the help of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), the government of Nepal responded positively, letting the refugees in and providing seven camps in the eastern part of Nepal. Between March 16, 1996, and March 11, 2000, the United Nations passed resolutions advising the royal government of Bhutan to accept refugees back to their land under the supervision of the UNHCR (Pulla 2016; Hutt 2003; Rizal 2004). The United Nations wanted to bring the royal governments of Bhutan and Nepal together to resolve the problem. The government of Bhutan, however, was reluctant to discuss the issue of refugee repatriation. The government of Nepal organized multiple dialogues with the government of Bhutan to repatriate the Bhutanese refugees to their land, but their efforts could not reach a sanguine conclusion.

The only option for the Bhutanese refugees was a third-country settlement program, since the effort to repatriate them to their own land ultimately failed (Evan 2010; Dhungana 2010). After the dialogue failed to resolve the refugee crisis by restoring refugees to their land in Bhutan, the UNHCR started humanitarian efforts for third-country settlement (Bird 2012; Dhungana 2010). During my interviews with them, all participants expressed reverence and admiration for the UNHCR for their success in establishing third-country

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settlement. They remembered their past, in particular the fractured identities of the children who were born in the camps in Nepal: they were neither Nepali nor Bhutanese. Being neither-nor was one indicator of their displacement.

Participants expressed that the liminality of their identities was the measure of every obstacle in the camps in Nepal. The UNHCR reported that "amid hope, fear, and anxiety, a large number of refugees departed from Nepal for eight different countries—the United States of America, Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Denmark, Norway, Netherlands, and the United Kingdom" (Pulla 2016, 81). Followed by a significant number of acceptances in other countries (e.g., 84,819 by the US), Canada admitted 6,600 Bhutanese refugees from the camps in Nepal up until 2015 (UNHCR 2016). On the one hand, the participants indicated that they were happy with the third-country settlement program because their children would have secure lives in the days to come. On the other, they were all confused because they did not know what the new country would be like in terms of a new culture, language, and environment.

Bhutanese refugees are among the largest minority groups in Lethbridge (Tams 2014). Many families of Bhutanese refugees relocated to Lethbridge from different cities in Canada after their friends and relatives had told them that the southern Alberta community was friendly (Klingbeil 2016). The ethnic Nepali who came to Canada through the UNHCR third-country settlement program started arriving in 2008. In the beginning, Bhutanese refugees were scattered to twenty-one communities, including Charlottetown, Fredericton, St. John's, Saint-Jérôme, Québec City, Laval, Ottawa, Toronto, London, Windsor, Hamilton, Winnipeg, Saskatoon, Lethbridge, and Vancouver (UNHCR 2016). According to the participants, these Bhutanese refugees felt lonely and disappointed and started searching for their friends and families across the country (participant A, personal interview, August 10, 2019; participant B, personal interview, August 14, 2019). According to one of two founding members of the CBS in Lethbridge, almost ninety Bhutanese refugees came to Lethbridge directly in 2009 (participant A, personal interview, August 10, 2019).

Family is very important for Bhutanese refugees, and they have a cultural tradition of practicing joint families (Rai 2013). Through these interviews, it became clear that vulnerable people want to be with not only their family but also their broader community to get psychological support in dealing with their traumatic past. The shared memory of displacement and the killing of family members developed their sense of unification and solidarity. In

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the pre-settlement phase, the two founding members of the CBS, who were already residents of Lethbridge, helped newcomers come to Lethbridge by providing a list of names to Lethbridge Family Services. Lethbridge Family Services managed the entire settlement process by receiving the refugees from the Calgary International Airport in coordination with the two founding members of the CBS (participant A, personal interview, August 10, 2019). Eventually, Bhutanese refugees who had landed in other Canadian communities started relocating to Lethbridge. The participants indicated that the reasons behind their relocation to Lethbridge included family ties, job opportunities, language, cultural attachment to the group, and seniors' attraction to the landscape (participant B, personal interview, August 14, 2019; participant C, personal interview, August 17, 2019). The open and hilly landscapes remind the seniors of their home (participant A, personal interview, August 10, 2019; participant B, personal interview, August 14, 2019; participant C, personal interview, August 17, 2019)

The first generation of Bhutanese refugees never received a chance to go to school. As a result, they have poor English-speaking skills, making it difficult to compete in the Canadian job market. In Lethbridge, most of the Bhutanese refugees who have no English-speaking ability work for three different companies: Maple Leaf, Cavendish, and Sunrise (participant B, personal interview, August 14, 2019). In the beginning of their job searches, they were helped by interpreters and did not require English skills to be hired by the companies. This was a significant reason for relocating to Lethbridge.

People from the Bhutanese community have also opened small businesses on the north side of the city. These have played a crucial role in helping Bhutanese refugees integrate into the city. As of 2019, more than two hundred families have settled in Lethbridge (City of Lethbridge 2019). Many of them have bought homes and small businesses, such as grocery shops and restaurants, which have helped them create a sense of belonging and integrate socially and culturally. The youth have participated in and organized various sports tournaments such as soccer, volleyball, badminton, and cricket, among diverse communities. People are active in community engagement and volunteerism and represent the community at multicultural events hosted by various ethnic communities as the CBS through music, dance, and food.

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Negotiating Racism

The experience of cultural and ethnic genocide often acts as a barrier for Bhutanese refugees. It makes them reluctant to question racism, discrimination, and domination in their new country of settlement because they are afraid of being subject to another displacement or deportation. This fear causes delays in their social integration process. The relationship between this fear and their understanding of deportation, policing, and systemic racism is best expressed by participant B:

> Because of fear and lack of language skills, people in our community do not dare to speak; they would rather tolerate bullying and domination in the workplace and elsewhere. When people feel discrimination, the situation becomes a matter of tracing them back to their social reputation and cultural values they had. We have to compromise many things that sometimes make us disappointed, but there is no option for us to convince ourselves. (Personal interview, August 14, 2019)

Experiences of racism, discrimination, and otherness are common issues. Language is one of the most notable barriers for Bhutanese refugees working in different factories in Lethbridge. The absence of English seems to have obstructed them from having face-to-face communication in their workplace. Coworkers might not understand their experiences, and given the language barrier, they are often understood to be rude and unsocial. Bhutanese refugees are unlikely to complain about this kind of discrimination because they are afraid of being fired and cannot articulate what they want to express on account of a lack of English language skills. This puts them in a double bind. Working in Lethbridge factories thereby creates a compromising situation. As participant C explains,

> We have to encounter a lot of domination and harassment from coworkers. They unnecessarily order us to do extra work. There is a union, but the executive members of the union are all white people. There is no single person in administrative positions that is a person of colour. We never dare to apply for the higher position jobs because we know we never get hired. (Personal interview, August 17, 2019)

This narrative points to the systemic nature of workplace discrimination in Lethbridge. Discriminatory and white-dominated workplace structures limit

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the positions available to refugees and racialized people during hiring and promotion processes. Systemic racism in the workplace has created multiple forms of discrimination in which the people from dominant groups exercise power over minority groups. The decision to not apply for positions they think they are eligible for is linked to their everyday experiences of racism over time. As participant C articulates,

> People of our community are not encouraged to apply for higher positions regardless of their years of experience working in the same company. At the same time, they have doubts and fear of being fired even if they are promoted to senior positions because they always think of the consequences if they lack in required performance. There is another fear of not getting a job after, and they remember their predicaments with the mortgage and the support they have to provide for seniors and children. It hurts when people say "you are refugees"; such expressions are frequently heard from our white coworkers that make us frustrated and disappointed, escalating the sense of our people to be more vulnerable. [. . .] We also had houses, properties, jobs, and social prestige in Bhutan, but the politics of displacement decayed all those things. I was harassed many times by coworkers complaining about my food; those situations always made me conscious when being at the same table during lunch breaks. (Personal interview, August 17, 2019)

These participants clearly describe forms of othering, domination, and discrimination in their lived experiences. They describe their co-workers' rejection of the values of diversity and multiculturalism that are espoused in Canadian law. These examples of workplace discrimination indicate that there is a significant gap between people's experiences and what is written down in Canadian human rights laws and equity and labour policies.

Racial biases and discrimination are not only limited to workplaces and union halls. They also appear in academic settings in Lethbridge. Participant D expresses how racism was endemic to their entire educational experience, beginning in junior high school:

> When I was in grade nine, I fought with a white boy after he continuously bullied and poured water on me. He also abused the word *refugee*. That offended me a lot. How did the boy learn the word *refugee* and abuse it at school? What will the impact of such practices be on schoolchildren during their social integration within Canada?

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> Is this not the seed for the source of frustration that leads the victim to commit a crime if this kind of activity frequently happens at school and other places? After completing high school and some courses at Lethbridge College, I joined the University of Lethbridge. They were all white besides me, a Brown person, in some of the classes. I experienced a sort of anxiety, and I was uncomfortable, and I was afraid of whether these feelings would affect my commitment to complete the program. I wanted to ask questions but could not due to the fear that people in the class would not understand me because of my accent. That could remind me of someone pointing out my accent at the university. Moreover, white students were the priority in every aspect—for instance, questioning, answering, and speaking in class. (Personal interview, August 12, 2019)

Participant E describes their experience of the university admissions process as follows:

> It took me quite a long time to learn English and Canadian culture, but not until it was time for me to join the University of Lethbridge to pursue my post-secondary education did I come to know that my skin colour had already said more about me than my transcript and reference letter ever did. That's when I realized, perhaps, I didn't belong here. When the university asked me where I was from, then my honest answer was like how any of my Canadian friends from Chinook High School in Lethbridge responded. That didn't seem to suffice or sufficiently explain my divergence to them. Not until I said I was born in Nepal, not until I labelled myself as a foreigner, did their faces brighten. I was immediately asked to provide them with my language proficiency certificate just because English was not my first language. I came home in great sadness knowing that my friends were accepted while I was being put on as "pending" because I didn't score what they thought "not neutral" students should score in the English 30–1 diploma exam to be able to communicate effectively, even though my overall grade for that class was 78 percent, well above my "neutral" friends who had just been accepted to the university. I immediately came to realize that Brown was equal to "different." How else would I have understood when the people and system, especially ones that are considered most talented and educated, of the country that I am a legal citizen of labelled me as an outsider? Then and there, I was again the victim of this systemic academic racism. Not until I

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> came back to my high school to talk to my teachers about what had just happened, and then they decided to step in, was I even listened to. I still ended up going back to high school for an extra year to finish my English class, but not until I scored what the system wanted me as "different" from the "neutral" student to score did they even look at me, when they saw me [his non-white name]. But do I really have to be better than my other friends to get the same opportunity, to be viewed as equally qualified? (Personal interview, August 15, 2019)

This participant's experience indicates that language has been an influential part of the structure of racism in terms of its use as a means of categorizing and racializing people. Despite having enough years of study in a Canadian high school to get accepted to the university program, he was nevertheless asked for language proficiency evidence soon after revealing that he was from Nepal. His years of study in a Canadian high school and the overall score he attained were not sufficient evidence for his ability or competence in English. Systemic racism appears to have ensured his initial rejection. This kind of discrimination might be one reason that Bhutanese refugee youth often do not pursue higher education.

This discrimination is also intergenerational. Upon arrival to Canada, despite wanting to learn English, some participants revealed their parents were put in another unworkable double bind where they were structurally prevented from doing so. The following participant not only reveals a desire to build and be part of the broader community in Lethbridge but also offers solutions to the structural barriers faced by their family:

> When my parents, brother, and I initially moved to Canada from the refugee camp, we were sponsored by the government of Canada and helped by the Lethbridge Family Services—immigrant services—to settle here. We were provided with different orientations about cultural norms and practices with help from interpreters. Soon after, we were referred to different institutions to learn the English language. Having to struggle to find a spot, my parents finally got to go to the classes, but after a few months, even before they realized that they had learned anything, it was time for them to start finding a job [. . .] but you are already labelled "lazy" living off of the public's money. Relentlessly, my parents started looking for a job and soon began working to support their family, as my brother and I were still minors and their responsibility. They had the option to either start working or continue to go

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> to school to learn English and become homeless. Now, having lived in this country for almost ten years, my parents still struggle to speak the language. Yet people say my parents were never interested in learning English and they only care about their own country and language. But I say to them, this isn't about my parents; it's about the systematic racism and oppression that restricted them from reaching their potential. They still have a minimum-paying job, and they still live cheque to cheque. They never had the opportunity to rise above because they never had a chance to learn the language, not then, not now. Now, this isn't the story of just my parents; many refugees have similar experiences. People in our community are sometimes misdiagnosed with mental health issues because of this language barrier. I wish some places would provide language classes, not daylong courses, but rather a compressed hour or two class at different times. This program would provide opportunities for language learning to struggling people to attend those classes at different times to improve their language ability. (Participant E, personal interview, August 15, 2019)

Participant E further articulates how structural barriers contribute to the inability to obtain higher education. In this case, the inaccessibility of social programs for the elderly compounds the already existent barriers that young people face in accessing higher education:

> One of the hardest things for our people is to get approval for AISH [Assured Income for the Severely Handicapped]. Youth are compelled to go to work rather than school, since they have an obligation to support their family financially. Regardless of the difficulties of taking care of their seniors, youth are more interested in going to school. Although the fear of policing in our people increased when a member of our community was shot dead by the Lethbridge Police in 2012, many youths from our community go the Lethbridge College to earn a diploma in criminal justice policing. (Personal interview, August 15, 2019)

As expressed by the participant, in addition to elder care and other family responsibilities, many students from the CBS community have joined the policing program at Lethbridge College. Bhutanese refugees have bitter experiences with police, from Bhutan to Nepal to Lethbridge. In addition to extrajudicial killing and arrest at the hands of police in Bhutan, they were also limited to the camp boundaries controlled by the Nepalese, and finally, in

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Canada, they are also among the racialized groups that have experienced fatalities at the hands of police. Many in the community believe that it is imperative for Bhutanese refugee youth to get integrated within the Lethbridge Police to mitigate the fear and support building relationships between the Lethbridge Police and the Bhutanese community.

Building Community: Sustaining a New Life

There is no set of circumstances that agonized participants more in every moment of their lives than losing their language, land, cultural values, and social status. Storytelling about displacement and experiences in the refugee camps was described by participants as part of building resilience through the maintenance of cultural continuity, interconnectedness, shared histories, and community. Participants described the act of storytelling as a central way that the survivors of the ethnic genocide made younger generations aware of the importance of preserving language, cultural practices, and traditional norms. Participant B narrates the importance of the stories told by their parents:

> My families and I are happy in Canada. It has given us life with a new settlement. The government of Bhutan threw our lives into the garbage; many of our relatives lost their lives in fighting for the natural rights to become citizens of their nation. I do not remember anything that happened in Bhutan during the time of the ethnic genocide because I was two years old when my parents fled to Nepal; however, I listened to the stories from my parents. Lives in the camps were complicated in every aspect. Canada brought us here and gave us opportunities to resettle in a new home, so we are happy about the humanitarian efforts that Canada practiced. I landed in Canada in 2009 with my family. I directly came to Lethbridge. (Personal interview, August 14, 2019)

Participant E describes the role of the CBS in advancing and supporting both cultural continuity and programs for Bhutanese youth in Lethbridge, all things that contribute to the resilience of those who have fled their countries of origin to both escape genocide and protect future generations. Despite the fact that the youth are more responsible for taking care of their elders, they also play a crucial role in community building:

> CBS is the umbrella organization of our community. There are several different religious groups in our community in Lethbridge. All these

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> groups have made the community strong. Participating in organizing sports tournaments, such as volleyball, soccer, badminton, and cricket, has helped youth integrate into different communities in western Canada. Our youth gather and volunteer for sports at the Boys and Girls Club every Sunday evening. One of the CBS board members teaches karate class every Friday and Saturday at the Boys and Girls Club. There are almost forty students admitted, including students from different communities as well. CBS frequently organizes cultural programs and movie showings that have helped our seniors develop cultural ties by meeting their friends and relatives. Celebrating festivals and inviting relatives is one of the most important cultural values of our community. (Participant E, personal interview, August 15, 2019)

Regardless of the different forms of discrimination and racism they have experienced in Canadian workplaces, academic institutions, and elsewhere, no participants or their families said they were unhappy in Canada. The typical reaction of participants to this question of happiness was a sense of gratitude to the Canadian government. In terms of the degree of their happiness, those who were born in Nepal (two participants) miss it terribly. According to the participants who were born in camps in Nepal, the place of people's birth is an imperative factor; people's sense of belonging is often attached to their birthplace. Participant E narrates, "I was born in camps in Nepal. Nepal was my home, and I missed Nepal so much." In this sense, the generation who was born in the camps in Nepal articulates it as their birth country and depicts their affection toward it. Therefore, the identities of people change in terms of migration, mobility, geography, time, and situation:

> Besides our experiences of discrimination and harassment in the workplace, I am happy in Canada, but I was happier in Nepal. I was born in Nepal and came to Canada, Lethbridge, in 2009. I am very happy with the Canadian government for bringing our community and letting us settle here. I was one of the top five students in Nepal. From my childhood, my goal was to acquire higher education, but the situation was unpredictable because of displacement. I miss Nepal every time, especially during the festivals. (Participant D, personal interview, August 12, 2019)

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Final Thoughts

Lethbridge has attracted immigrants from around the world. The experiences of the Bhutanese refugees interviewed for this chapter have led me to conclude that better strategies need to be developed to deal with racism in Lethbridge. More specifically, both policy and practice must address the different facets of the lives of refugees, including their values and beliefs. This chapter shows that one-size-fits-all programs do not work. Instead, listening to those who are impacted the most is imperative to developing policy, practice, and programs that work for those attempting to access them. Changing the eligibility requirements and hours of various social programs, including AISH and language programs, and developing community policing strategies that involve the Bhutanese community were identified by different participants as meaningful starting points to achieve these ends.

Racism has an enormous impact on Canadian socio-economic and socio-political reality. The range of different kinds of racism—from the direct forms experienced by factory workers and students to the systemic forms that led to police violence and fatality, that determine university admission criteria, that prevent hiring and promotion, and that create impossible double binds for those who require social services and language courses—continue to create social and institutional barriers for racialized refugee populations across Canada. As shown in the narratives of all participants, refugees are particularly vulnerable to experiencing "circumstances such as fear of losing their jobs, inadequate social support, and lack of institutional sanction for reporting racist incidents to militate against confrontational responses to discrimination" (Noh et al. 1999, 194) because of the fear of deportation. Anti-racism should therefore begin not only with a commitment from everyone to fight racism wherever they are situated in the world today (Stanley 2000), but this also needs to be done with a commitment to listen to those who experience racism in all its intersecting forms.

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Part II

Belonging/ Unbelonging

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5 Métis in Lethbridge

A Conversation with Elder Roderick McLeod

Monique Giroux and Roderick McLeod

Alberta is home to about 114, 000 Métis people, more than any other Canadian province. In fact, nearly 45 percent of Indigenous people living in the province identify as Métis (Statistics Canada 2017a). Alberta is furthermore the only province where Métis have a land base, spread across eight settlements.[1] While these statistics are a reminder of the significant presence of Métis people in Alberta, they belie regional differences. In the north, Métis have a well-recognized presence and strong historical and contemporary ties with other Indigenous nations—specifically the Cree and Dene—whose territory covers the province's north. Indeed, Métis have political and kinship ties to the Cree, having formed the Iron Confederacy, or Nehiyaw-Pwat, with Cree, Nakoda (Assiniboine), and Plains Ojibwe peoples during the fur trade era (see Vrooman 2012). This relationship continues to this day through shared culture (such as fiddle and dance traditions and the Cree/Michif language) and the ongoing practice of kinship, or *wahkotowin* (Macdougall 2010, 8).

Métis claims to territory/homeland in southern Alberta are, however, deeply contested. Lethbridge is home to about 1,600 Métis people, a number that soars to over 22,000 in Calgary (Statistics Canada 2018, 2017b). While many Métis moved into the area in recent years, Métis presence in southern Alberta predates effective control of the region by the colonial government.

1 For more information on these Métis settlements, see Beharry (1984), Bell (1994), Martin (1989), and Pocklington (1991).

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As such, the Métis National Council considers southern Alberta part of the Métis homeland, a stance that was officially endorsed in 2018.[2] Yet historically, Métis did not have socio-political ties with Blackfoot people (whose territory includes southern Alberta and beyond), and the last major conflict between Indigenous nations in what is now Canada took place within Lethbridge's city limits between the Iron and Blackfoot Confederacies. The claim that southern Alberta is part of the Métis homeland is therefore challenged by many, including by some Métis (see, e.g., Voth and Loyer 2019). As such, issues of presence, belonging, in/visibility, and "living an ethic of reciprocal visiting" (124) figure centrally for Métis in the area.

This chapter explores some of these issues through an edited conversation between the authors Roderick McLeod (a Métis elder who has lived in Lethbridge since the late 1990s) and Monique Giroux (a settler scholar who began working at the University of Lethbridge in 2017). About two weeks prior to the interview, Giroux provided McLeod with a series of six questions that addressed connections to Métis kin, challenges faced by Métis people in Lethbridge and beyond, and visions for the future of Métis in Lethbridge. McLeod then created a written document responding to these questions. On October 18, 2019, they sat down to record a conversation, which was then transcribed. Giroux edited the transcription to clarify meaning, to organize answers (e.g., when McLeod returned to an idea that was discussed earlier in the conversation), or to add points that were not discussed during the conversation but that were included in McLeod's prepared notes. After completing these edits, Giroux provided McLeod with a copy of the edited conversation for feedback and then made the final edits.

Following the work of Anna Hoefnagels and Beverley Diamond (2012) and Dylan Robinson (2016), this form of publication serves to centre Indigenous voices. In this case, it aims to create space to better understand one Métis person's experiences as a resident of Lethbridge as well as his experiences as a Métis person in Canada. Several themes come out in the conversation. First, McLeod pays considerable attention to his family history, a practice that establishes where he is from and to whom he belongs. Second, McLeod notes that his Métis culture was passed on to him in a "quiet sort of way" by his father, who never spoke explicitly about being Métis. Third, McLeod

2 For more information on the homeland and a more detailed map, see O'Toole (2017).

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discusses the stereotypes and discrimination he has faced and how it quickly taught him that "it was not wise to say you were Métis." Fourth, McLeod discusses the lack of knowledge around Métis identity, both among Métis who have not had the opportunity to learn about their culture and among non-Métis. And finally, McLeod talks about how learning his family history renewed his sense of pride.

* * *

Monique Giroux: Could you start by telling readers about yourself and your kin: where you grew up and where your Métis family is from?

Roderick McLeod: I was born on August 15, 1936, at Vancouver General Hospital. My mother and dad lived in a small lumber town called Giscome, British Columbia. It was twenty-nine miles northeast of Prince George, on the Canadian National Railway line. Giscome was a company-owned town, with a population of about four to six hundred people. The road from Giscome to Prince George, although only twenty-nine miles, could take anywhere from two to four hours, depending on the time of year. The spring was just terrible. Parts of the road were corduroyed,[3] and some places had Caterpillars to pull you out when the flooding was going. The summer brought very bumpy roads, and the dust made it difficult to see when meeting oncoming traffic. We often had to stop until the dust settled. And then, in the winter, the roads weren't sanded like they are these days; the steep hills into Prince George made the trip impossible. I had grandparents in Vancouver (George and Josey Hutton, from Robin Hood's Bay, Yorkshire, England),[4] and so my parents decided that my mother should stay with my grandparents so she could be near a hospital to have me.

Monique Giroux: Were there no midwives in Giscome?

Roderick McLeod: No, there wasn't, no. And so my father (John Edward McLeod) was born on a Hudson's Bay post,

3 A corduroy road is a road created by placing logs perpendicular to the roadway, usually as a way to deal with swampy areas.

4 Items in parentheses have been added by Giroux for clarification.

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called Rapid River post (on July 2, 1885). Rapid River post is not too far from Lac La Ronge, now called La Ronge, Saskatchewan. My father spoke Cree and I strongly suspect Michif because every once in a while he'd use some French-type words.[5] His father, Angus McLeod, was an interpreter and then a clerk.[6] He was born at Rapid River post as well (in 1847). He spoke eight different languages. When Angus and the family were in Cumberland House, Saskatchewan, they just spoke Cree around the house. All the trappers spoke Cree, both white and Indigenous. When Angus and his family moved to Prince Albert so the children could have schooling, my father didn't speak English at all. He had to learn English. Angus McLeod's father (my great-grandfather) was John McLeod from the Isle of Lewis, Scotland. He was a fisherman for the North West Company. My grandfather Angus's mother was Mary Mckenzie dit Rivière. She was able to get Métis scrip.[7]

Monique Giroux: Where was her family from?

Roderick McLeod: She was Métis, and, I don't know, she came from of course First Nations, probably Cree. Yeah, so on the other side, the Mckenzie side, that'd be on my dad's mother's side, Roderick Mckenzie was the first one to come out to Canada. He worked with the North West Company and

5 Michif is the language of the Métis people. Although there are several dialects, it is usually described as using French nouns and Cree verbs.

6 As part of our conversation, McLeod clarified these terms: the difference between an interpreter and a clerk was that the interpreter ate with all the labourers and slept in the same area, whereas a clerk was considered a servant of the Hudson's Bay Company and ate with the Hudson's Bay factor and the chief factor, or chief trader. There was silver and linen on the tables, and a clerk received ten times more tea a year.

7 Métis, or "half-breed," scrip was a document issued by the government that was redeemable for land or money. Scrip was given to some Métis with the intention of extinguishing their claim to Indian title. The process was highly disorganized and complex legally. As a result, many Métis never acquired the granted land, and fraud/dispossession was rampant. Indeed, in a 2013 ruling, the Supreme Court found that Canada failed to follow through on its promises to Métis following Manitoba's entry into Confederation. For further information, see Tough (1999) and Chartier (1978).

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was first stationed at Attawapiskat in Ontario and then later on at Pic (a North West Company post on the northern shore of Lake Superior) and then Thunder Bay. When the Hudson's Bay and the North West Company amalgamated in 1821, he was sent to Île-à-la-Crosse, where he finished his career. He had a dozen children. His wife, her name was Angelique, came from Lake Nipigon. That was one of Roderick's postings. They were married for fifty-six years, so he was really devoted to her. She was a daughter of a chief. Everyone hates that story; people say their ancestor was a chief (and it's not true), but in this case, it was recorded by the Hudson's Bay Company and by others too. Some of Roderick and Angelique's children worked with the Hudson's Bay Company. One of their children, Samuel, became a chief factor, which was not too usual for a Métis because of the power they had. There were only twenty-nine chief factors in all of Canada. They were in charge of a huge territory, right across Canada and right down into Washington and Oregon State. That was a big responsibility. A chief factor would get paid quite well and would also have shares in the Hudson's Bay Company. When Roderick retired after fifty-six years with the Hudson's Bay Company, he didn't go back to Scotland—never did go back to Scotland. He retired and lived in a place they called Caberleigh Cottage.

Monique Giroux: Where was that?

Roderick McLeod: In Manitoba. Elizabeth Arthur wrote an article on Angelique's children.[8] But there's no mention of the feelings of Angelique or anything that she said at all. Nothing. You know, having twelve children but not saying "this is my favourite" or "this is a terrible loss I had." There was just nothing about what she said. And it seems to go all the way through the history of Métis women. Have you ever heard of Reverend Evans, going way back to the 1840s or something?

Monique Giroux: No, I haven't.

Roderick McLeod: One of my relatives on the female side helped him translate the Bible into Cree syllabics. This was one

8 See Arthur (2003).

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of my female relations who helped him. But there's very little on the female line.

Monique Giroux: Why is that the case?

Roderick McLeod: I think it was just part and parcel of the times, for one. And probably in some cases, it wasn't just that but because they probably just spoke their native language, not English. But the thing is, when Roderick McKenzie married Angelique, it's written, just a snippet in Arthur's article, about "a silver set in an elegant home in Toronto." And that's something from Roderick. That silver set would be used on a Hudson's Bay post. The big thing was that Angelique would have had a lot of power because they were in a separate room, and they were served with linen and silver and the whole lot, and she was there. So they were very high up. It wasn't until about the time of George Simpson's wife coming over, that was kind of right near the start of when white women started coming in, that's when the prejudice started.

Monique Giroux: Before that, Indigenous women would have been seen as desirable wives.

Roderick McLeod: Yeah, so this is what I'm gathering. I could be wrong, but I'm not hearing too much about the female line. Have you read the book *Many Tender Ties*?

Monique Giroux: Yes, by Sylvia Van Kirk (1983). So there are scholars who are writing about Métis (and other Indigenous) women and addressing the way that they've been left out of historical accounts.

Roderick McLeod: And the worst part of it is that women did such wonderful things. Mary (Mary Mackagonne, a Cree woman), the wife of Peter Fidler, she really helped him a lot. (Their descendant, Eliza McLeod, née McKenzie, was my paternal grandmother.) Peter Fidler, he didn't know the customs and whatnot. Even if the woman came from another area, they would soon get to talking with the other women and would get to know the customs. And they were the ones who made all the moccasins for the fort. They were the ones who were out there snaring rabbits and fishing and keeping them alive when big game was scarce.

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Monique Giroux: Can you tell me about why your parents ended up in Giscome?

Roderick McLeod: My father started a homestead in 1906 in Shellbrook, Saskatchewan. The reason they moved to Shellbrook is my grandfather, Angus, left the Hudson's Bay Company to work as a free trader. He backed the Liberal Party heavily. He thought that he would get some type of a post out of it, a government post out of it. I don't know what he expected, maybe on a reserve or only the good lord knows, but he lost everything. That was in Prince Albert (Saskatchewan). So then my father and my uncle Buck, William Roderick, went into homesteads near Shellbrook. They had adjoining homesteads and worked together. Then my dad got married to my mother in 1917. My mother remembers going out to the homestead in a Red River cart and could remember the squeaking of the wheels. Then he had his crops wiped out in 1922, 1923, and 1924. Some people had moved from Shellbrook to Giscome, British Columbia. They wrote and said there were lots of jobs out there. That's why he moved.

Monique Giroux: What happened to the crops?

Roderick McLeod: Hail.

Monique Giroux: Three years in a row?

Roderick McLeod: Well, hail and something else, I guess. Poor crops. So he moved out there, and he was forty years old. He worked in the Giscome sawmill doing different jobs, and then he became a lumber grader, which wasn't a supervisory job, but it was very, very important that lumber came by him. Just like a sidewalk. It was a huge, big mill, used to cut about 140,000 board feet a day. He was grading, and every board had to be turned over and graded, and that's where a lot of the money was made because if you graded it down, it's lower-priced lumber. But if your grades were on and you were able to pick all the good lumber, then the company would make much more money. He worked until he was seventy-five. He had a terrible limp because of being in an accident with a steam engine while thrashing in 1903. There were only three people

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who ever got a pension from the mill, and he was one of them. He never missed a day.

Monique Giroux: What was it like being Métis in Giscome?

Roderick McLeod: Well it was kind of a funny thing because we didn't use the term *Métis*, or "half-breed" as it was then. It was just an unspoken law around our place that we never mentioned that at all, even at home. Never mentioned "half-breed" or "Métis" or anything. But my father would quietly teach me things like tracking, bird recognition, bird flights. He would tell me about how some birds would flap three times and then drop and then up, and he taught me about berries and herbs. So I'd learn quite a bit like that. And he taught me how to call geese and muskrats. And we had a big garden.

Monique Giroux: He found ways to teach you these things without telling you that this was Métis knowledge?

Roderick McLeod: Yeah, he never said that, but he told me some of the stories, like about Wiisakaychak.[9] But I don't remember him telling me about being Métis, and he never spoke Cree, never spoke Cree for years. I guess since he left Saskatchewan.

Monique Giroux: Were there other Métis families in Giscome, or "half-breed" families, that you were aware of?

Roderick McLeod: There were, and the strange thing about it is that the superintendent, the owner of the mill was Métis. The whole town was owned by the company. The superintendent lived in a house on a hill, and it looked right over Giscome. He could see what was going on, of course, and had all kinds of power. Everyone was in awe or fear of him. He could hire and fire and help set wages. He had people go up to him and ask for wood, time off, whatever it was, and he was a prominent person in the town. And the two men who were in charge of the bush, the bush bosses, were Métis. Everyone knew they were

9 Wiisakaychak is a trickster. The Métis/Michifs also refer to Wiisakaychak as Nanabush (from the Ojibwe), Chakapesh, and Chi-Jean (see Gabriel Dumont Institute's [2015] book *Chi-Jean and the Red Willows: Based on a Story by Gilbert Pelletier and Norman Fleury*).

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Métis, but no one said anything, at least to their faces. They had a lot of power because it was a huge, big lumber area, and they would ship out forty boxcars of lumber a month, so that's a lot. And so they had all this power. But no one mentioned that they were Métis. And then a friend of ours was Métis, and when the Second World War started, he left. He never came back for five years. There were a couple of Métis like that, and then there were some other families there who were Métis but just called themselves French. And anyone who was kind of dark in those days, they were always called French, and everyone accepted it. And then, at school, every student was required to fill out a school form with information like age, home address, grade, and racial extraction.

Monique Giroux: And did you?

Roderick McLeod: Oh yes.

Monique Giroux: What did you put down?

Roderick McLeod: I just put down part Cree because I didn't know what I was. I didn't even mention it at home, I don't think. I was scared stiff about it, but I just did it.

Monique Giroux: What made you decide to put it down if you felt like that?

Roderick McLeod: Well you had to.

Monique Giroux: I know, but you could've lied.

Roderick McLeod: Yeah, I guess I could have, but I didn't, and so we never really talked about that sort of thing. People were very, very racist at that particular time. There was a railroad going right through, and the men who worked on the railroad were usually Slavic; they'd be Ukrainians and Poles and Bulgarians. And they were really looked down on. Really, really looked down on, and they were called terrible names. But it was terrible for Indigenous people. First Nations were looked down on, and Métis were looked down, or half-breeds, as they were called. They were really looked down on as being inferior in every way, shape, and form. And stereotyped as lazy. I learned early that it was not wise to say you were Métis because you would be picked on or marginalized. It was really, really bad, so you just didn't mention (being Métis), both then and

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when I was in the air force. You didn't know what type of harm it would do you; that's all.

Monique Giroux: Right.

Roderick McLeod: And then of course they found out later. If you got drunk, then it wasn't because you got drunk like the rest of them; it was drunk because you were a half-breed or an Indian, as they called us.

Monique Giroux: You were seen as representing all your kin regardless of the situation.

Roderick McLeod: Yeah, oh yeah, and when people got angry. As long as you were on the good side of people, you didn't seem to have much problem. When I worked at the camp in Atlin (British Columbia), it was very prejudiced too, and they would talk about First Nations. They would call them very bad names. And right in front of me.

Monique Giroux: Did they realize at that point that you were Métis?

Roderick McLeod: Oh yeah.

Monique Giroux: They didn't care that they were saying offensive things right in front of you?

Roderick McLeod: No. They just sort of put you in the same bracket. Métis were all just the same (as other Indigenous people).

Monique Giroux: Can we talk about your life in Lethbridge? When and why did you move here?

Roderick McLeod: I had been divorced for some years and was living in Vernon, British Columbia, working in a placer gold mine in Atlin in the summer. This was a few miles south of Yukon. It was an old mining town started in about 1898. It's still being heavily mined. I received a phone call from my daughter, my youngest daughter, Una. She was living in Diamond City, just outside of Lethbridge. She said, "Dad, you're working up in a mine, and you're working up there for six or seven months of the year. Why don't you move out here so you'll be close to the grandchildren?" So I did. Una got the house. She picked it out and I did everything by phone. Got the house and moved out. It was an old house.

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Monique Giroux: Where was it?

Roderick McLeod: In Diamond City. And if it wasn't for the termites holding hands, it would've fallen over, but it was cozy. Then at that particular time, I was off in the winter; I did different jobs around. But in the winter, I happened to read the paper, and a notice said that a Professor Russel Barsh was doing research on Métis in the area.[10] He had a student by the name of Ellen Gibbs who was going to assist him, and it was going to be held at the Lethbridge Public Library. I went to the library, met him and Miss Gibbs, and then I met some Métis. I didn't even know there was such a thing as a Métis Local here.[11]

Monique Giroux: What year was that?

Roderick McLeod: It'd be 1997. Probably that winter after I'd moved out to Diamond City. So I went down to the Local to do research on my family because I hadn't done it. They had some great books there, like Gail Morin's books. I did the research there, and then I got my Métis card. When I was down there doing the research, I also sent for my own books. Then in the winter, I'd go down there and volunteer. I became heavily involved in the Local and then became an elder. We had barbecues sponsored by Sobeys or Save-On-Foods. We'd do stuff like that, as well as meetings and outings. I just gradually got in and started attending the (Métis Nation of Alberta's) Annual General Assembly. I also began building a display of Métis artifacts. I took my display around to schools and such and slowly built it up.

Monique Giroux: So the Métis Local (in Lethbridge) was important for you in terms of connecting and finding that aspect of your identity.

10 See Barsh, Gibbs, and Turner (2000).

11 Métis Locals are branches of the larger Métis Regions, which in turn are branches of the Métis provincial organization (in this case, the Métis Nation of Alberta). There are six Regions in Alberta and many Locals. The term *Local* is used during our conversation to refer to both the community and the physical building that acts as an administrative centre.

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Roderick McLeod: Yeah it was, and you know, for the first time, I sort of felt like, it really made me feel really proud and good—once I started doing research on the family, what they'd done and then just being proud of who I was and knowing about the history and being able to answer questions about my family and history.

Monique Giroux: Did you try to connect with or learn more about your Métis history before you came here?

Roderick McLeod: I've always been proud of it, but it was difficult because other people were reluctant when I would meet them years before in British Columbia to show it. It was always sort of a hidden thing. When I worked up in a camp (in Atlin, British Columbia), they were very prejudiced too. I worked there, but all the crew, they were very prejudiced. And my own family as well. They didn't want to have anything to do with Métis culture and history. I brought up books and documents, and they weren't interested at all. But now, of course, I'm really, really proud of it, and it's slowly opening up a bit.

Monique Giroux: You've also been involved in many other Indigenous organizations in Lethbridge.

Roderick McLeod: Yeah. While volunteering with the Local, I happened to meet the executive director of Aboriginal Employment, an organization that funds schooling and helps Aboriginal people find jobs. With their support, I was able to go to Lethbridge College to take a child and youth care course and then a night school course on fetal alcohol syndrome. I then worked for Family Ties Association for many years and took on a youth full time (in my care). This youth has been with me for over fourteen years. And then I belong to the Aboriginal Council of Lethbridge, and I was instrumental in starting this housing right here (the Aboriginal Housing Society). Although a lot of other people did the big heavy work, I was always great at coming out with bright ideas. They would come out by doing the hard work. I also served on several boards—Métis Local 2003 as an elder, the Friendship Centre, Opokaa'sin, and the Aboriginal Housing Association. And I do volunteer work as a recruiter for the Bold Eagle program

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and go to Canadian Forces Base Wainwright to speak about Métis history and culture for about 150 Indigenous youth army recruits. Then I worked at the university for quite a few years.

Monique Giroux: What kind of work were you doing there?

Roderick McLeod: At the university? I was doing Métis history and culture, that type of thing. I would put up my display on different days, and then I would go in and invite students. It was just volunteer work. Then later they hired me at the college. And then, I did a bit of work at the university, got called in every once in a while. Martha Many Grey Horses, she used to call me up quite a bit, and Elizabeth Ferguson, who worked there before her at the Gathering Space. I would go to different functions and openings.

Monique Giroux: What kinds of challenges have you faced as a Métis person in Lethbridge?

Roderick McLeod: The main difficulty is that people at all levels of society don't have a very good understanding of who the Métis are. I spend a lot of time explaining who the Métis are. I think we don't have enough Métis working with the Local. We've had very few Métis in that there were a lot of people who were interested, did a lot of really good work, but we didn't have that, we don't have that many that it's got that sense of history or sense of feeling and stuff. They're kind of looking at it more like a club. It's called an association, which is going to be changed fairly soon. We're going to be just a Métis nation. But they don't have that same deep feeling that we are a nation of ourselves and whatnot. They don't seem to have that.

Monique Giroux: Why do you think that is?

Roderick McLeod: Well, they just don't know. They don't look it up; they don't study it. They don't know any of the stories, or none of them have been handed down. I had quite a few handed down to me in a quiet sort of way. But many don't have that kind of thing.

Monique Giroux: There's been a disconnection with the culture for a long time.

Roderick McLeod: Yeah, there has; there really has for a long time. And then, like you were saying, some of the challenges,

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you know, I talked to a young person, and he said, "It's kind of hard going into a Métis meeting because of so many old people there." And I said, "You know, I really agree with you." I've always been a great believer because the Indigenous way is a circle, a balance of young and old, with everyone included. I told him, I said, "I don't blame you at all. You go in there and look at all the people and see liver spots through their gloves, and you want to have more young people there and that balance." And it is the youth who will carry on the traditions of the Métis people. So we're really lacking in the youth, and we're lacking in the culture and everything that we should be having. It's hard to get the right people to teach the right things. For example, they said they had someone to teach Michif years ago, and we were all excited about it and whatnot. And the person would come down. I got a hold of the person who spoke Michif, and he said, "No, everyone's got this wrong; all I do is teach the children a few words like 'Hello' and 'Goodbye.'" And that's all he did. People also don't understand Métis culture. They're trying to use First Nations things. There is certainly nothing wrong with First Nations things, but we are not First Nations. So there's a real lack of feeling for what it is.

Monique Giroux: Having lived in Lethbridge for a couple of years, I sense that Métis are often not recognized and not acknowledged here. Have you gotten that sense?

Roderick McLeod: Oh gee, really a lot. You go to places, and it'll say that it's for Indigenous people, or they would say Aboriginal people. And you'd go there, and there isn't one word mentioned about Métis. As a Métis person, you don't know if you are eligible for something or if you can participate. And this happens over and over again. One time, our president had to send a letter to the mayor of Lethbridge saying that we are a part of the Indigenous community. Of course, she used Aboriginal at that particular time. So this would happen, and then we ran into the same thing when we were dealing with social services. I made a complaint, and they invited me up to speak to the board. And I told them, I said, "You have things out here. Are they for Métis?" And they say, "No, they're for

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Aboriginals"—because they don't, they couldn't understand, and it's always confused me because people, especially with their education, they don't understand. I don't expect them to know all the history of the Blackfoot people. I don't expect them to know everything about the Métis. But you should know the difference anyway if you live in the area especially and if you are educated. I was in a school with my display, and one of the teachers came over and asked me what country I came from. And I had one instructor from the college, when he heard Michif, he said, "Oh, that's slang French." It kind of hurts a person's feelings, you know, all these different things.

Monique Giroux: That's something that people one hundred years ago in Manitoba talked about. This idea that they had to have their "French fixed" when they were speaking Michif. So it's continuing.

Roderick McLeod: Yeah, oh yeah.

Monique Giroux: That seems to me to be a pretty big challenge, and it's something that Métis people have said for so long, that they don't "fit" in First Nations spaces and don't "fit" in white space. So what you're saying here is that this has continued in Lethbridge, in terms of people not knowing, Métis people not knowing whether they are included in spaces that are intended for Indigenous people.

Roderick McLeod: And then I had a person, she meant really well, but she was on the stage, and it was at a big function. And she stood up there all the time with her hand like this, which is a sign for "thank you," but you don't hold it there for forty days and forty nights. She did this all the way through, and it's not our tradition to do that. And they think that, you know, sweats and smudging is part of our culture, and it's not, although sometimes people still use it. It's hard to define a lot of things about Métis because of the huge area we cover. We've developed different ways of doing things in different areas. Sometimes if we're close to a reserve, we could be following a lot of their ways. Same with religion. People say, "Well, what religion do we have?" And I say, "Well, it depends on the area

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because we've got everything from Jehovah's Witness to Anglican and Roman Catholic, Methodist."

Monique Giroux: Which is a really important point if you understand that the Métis are a nation, right? There is variation within a nation. It's not just cultural; it's also political.

Roderick McLeod: Well, yes. And many times, we're left right out, not invited to things at the college and university and at public meetings. In many public meetings, officials, when speaking about Indigenous people, do not mention Métis. It's not people going out and saying, "We're going to get those, we're going to cut people out or do something [or band against them]." They just don't know. A lot of times, we have to sort of go in there to say who we are. And then it makes us look, it's hard to do some of these things without looking confrontational over it. It's been a bit of a fine line. A while back, I was consulting at the college. They had four of the movers and shakers there. They said that Métis shouldn't be included. And they were all what I thought were lifelong friends. That's when I stepped down and was badly hurt over that.

Monique Giroux: Yeah, for sure.

Roderick McLeod: But we received a lot of good; we've really done a lot individually in the city over the years, you know, on different boards and doing different things, you know, with the early agency and interagencies. We've done work at the Friendship Centre too. It was a Métis and a First Nations lady that started the Friendship Centre. We've done a lot like that. And again, like I said with housing. And one of our past presidents received the Distinguished Alumni Award at the college. We've done quite a bit.

Monique Giroux: You've made an impact on the community for sure.

Roderick McLeod: And we've had at least two bank managers who were Métis in town. So that was kind of a good thing. We've had teachers, professors. But I think what we have to do is show ourselves more in the community. If someone does something within the community, get their name in the paper, you know, if they've done something. Or the group itself. So

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we're acknowledged more out in the community. So we're seen more. A lot of people, we just, I don't think we're understood. People don't know who we are, and it causes us problems. But it is difficult to sort out or try to correct without, you know, it soon becomes argumentative.

Monique Giroux: What would you like to see moving forward? What is your vision for Métis in Lethbridge in the years to come?

Roderick McLeod: Well one thing that I've seen over the years is that the Alberta Métis Association receives funding, and each region, they get funding. But none of the Locals get any kind of funding, whereas the Genealogical Society has its headquarters in the same city of Edmonton as we do. Each one of their branches receives money, but we don't receive funding.

Monique Giroux: So you'd like financial support for the Local.

Roderick McLeod: Yeah, we really need that. The Friendship Centre, for years it received $170,000 a year. It doesn't cover everything, but it gives you that core funding.

Monique Giroux: What do you think the Local would be able to or want to do with that funding?

Roderick McLeod: Well, you know, the thing is, it'd be cultural things. The Local would (be able to) hold more events that they could invite the public to, and they could bring in, say, fiddlers. They could have fiddle lessons, jigging, beading, storytelling, history and culture, and Michif language lessons. We do have some of these activities, but it needs to be done on a larger scale. We've got to bring out people who really know what they're doing. We also need more youth. Right now, we have a lot of funding in the office, but it's for "capacity building," so we can't spend a penny on cultural things. It's just for capacity. We have $400,000, $100,000 a year. We're grateful for it. It doesn't sound like we are or at least like I am, but we are. But what I would've thought, if we could've gotten at least $20,000 of that for events, then we could've carried on cultural activities. You need money to do these things, to get equipment, and leather, and beads, and all these different things. And the

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same with fiddle playing; as you well know, you need strings and all the other things.

Monique Giroux: My understanding, then, is that you want to see both education for the larger non-Métis community and also community building within the Métis nation.

Roderick McLeod: Yeah, and I think maybe this new funding that we do have will help. Because what's really helped a lot is, we have a website, and we have two people in the office every day, which we haven't had for years. That's really something. That was one of the big complaints in the community because we didn't have anyone (in the Local's office). As thankful as we are for volunteers, volunteers aren't the best at running an office. Because they work two days, then they're away for six months and someone takes over and changes all the filing system and no one knows where stuff is.

Monique Giroux: Right, so you don't get consistency.

Roderick McLeod: Yeah, and we have to get more local funding and whatnot.

Monique Giroux: Is there anything else that you'd like to add before we end?

Roderick McLeod: I think for us to go forward, like I mentioned before, we have to get out there and do better public relations. And we must, must receive more support from the region and from the headquarters. You know, we're the farthest away from everything; right down at the bottom of the province. For someone to come from Edmonton, it takes a full day more or less to get here and a day back. It's quite a bit (of time). We've done some wonderful things over the years, and I know we can do more. We've got nowhere to go but straight up.

* * *

While this interview ended with hope for the future, Métis in Lethbridge face considerable challenges, including lack of visibility, inadequate awareness of Métis culture and history among the general public and even among some Métis, and inconsistent and insufficient funding for cultural and training activities. For Giroux, a settler scholar working with Métis music, these

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challenges highlight the importance of community-engaged work—research *with* community and research that matters to Métis—including using academic privilege and access to resources in support of revitalization and resurgence within and outside of the university. These issues have been addressed by Indigenous scholars for decades (see, e.g., Ball and Janyst 2008; Battiste and Henderson 2000) but remain significant today.

McLeod's story of connecting to the Métis Local in Lethbridge points to the importance of Métis (urban) cultural and political centres. As McLeod notes, becoming involved in the Local after moving to Lethbridge gave him the opportunity to do research on his family and to "feel really proud and good" about his family history and culture. From there, he became engaged in the broader Lethbridge community as a Métis citizen. Support for Locals and other urban community centres is crucial because Métis, with the exception of some Métis in Alberta, are largely landless peoples and therefore do not have a land base that serves as a centre for renewing culture and kinship relations; furthermore, Métis are rooted across a vast homeland, often making everyday, ongoing connections difficult. Locals such as the one in Lethbridge therefore serve as key sites for Métis cultural and political revitalization in the twenty-first century.

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6 Distance, Desire, and Diaspora

Using Ephemeral Trans Territories to Rethink Belonging and Place

Migueltzinta Solís

This chapter tells a story of unbelonging in Treaty 7 territory and of, in a fugue of lust and homesickness, manufacturing ephemeral territories out of movement and desire. I will not *tell you about* this place called Lethbridge, because this is not my *here*, and it isn't for me to tell you about. Instead, I'll tell a story about the territories I carry inside myself and the story of their unfolding in this place where I stay named Sik-Ooh-Kotok. I'll tell you of the strange experience of being and loving in many places at one time.

In the first section, I'll explain how I'm a stranger, guest, settler, and newcomer here in the traditional territory of the Blackfoot Confederacy, the Siksika, Piikani, Stoney Nakoda, Tsuut'ina, and Kainai First Nations. I'll tell you about the perverse queer art I have made in response to being this stranger, of how in order to connect with the land, I had to enter into a BDSM relationship with it.

The second part is about how my being in Lethbridge is really part of a self-imposed exile from lands that cannot be mapped. I will attempt to account for my not belonging anywhere, account for my hybridity of gender, race, and culture. I will explain briefly the notion of Aztlán, a political, diasporic territory theorized by Mexicans living in the US during the Chicano/a Movement of the '70s–'90s. And then I will tell you about how I have escaped that place and now hide as though it has demanded my extradition.

The third part is high gay drama, and we will ricochet through time in order to understand the story of what happened when two trans men mistook

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the other for a place. I will tell you what happens when you hope to include correspondence in a paper between yourself and a colleague with whom you have fallen in love. But for reasons of your own making and reasons not, for all your talk of relational this and that, you find yourself, a queer academic, writing that paper all the fuck alone.

In the conclusion, I'll try to knit all these things together. I'll try to make the reading of this essay a productive linear experience between the introduction and the conclusion. I will fail.

Unbelonging and Belonging

Had you walked in the coulees around Lethbridge, Alberta, between May 2018 and May 2019, you might have chanced upon an ethnically ambiguous bearded man in black leather fetish gear flogging the air with a pink leather flogger. Or he may have been thrusting his knee into a hole in the ground, tying himself to tree trunks, rolling down hills in handcuffs, or whipping a stack of vintage books—colonial travelogues depicting the expansion of the West and old-school textbooks glorifying Alberta's industrial histories—with his black leather gloves. You may have heard him talking smut to the beavers, the deer, and the geese and calling the Old Man River "Daddy." This strange apparition was named Chico California, a performance persona I created as part of my thesis project, a body of work called "Landscape Is My Sir" (Solís 2019a). Incorporating video, textile, installation, and performance art, the project revolved around a leather daddy who pursues erotic relationships to land, place, and all the entities that are part of these: the flora, the fauna, the rocks, the dirt, the wind. Asking the question of how non-human subjectivities might be pleasured—and failing to find an answer—Chico California stages attempts at having BDSM relationships to landscape, inhabiting the roles of both submissive and dominant.

My partner, Luke, and I came to Canada in mid-2017, our years of lazy dreaming of a life outside the US suddenly made urgent by a predictably destabilizing American election season the year prior. I accepted an offer to complete an MFA in art at the University of Lethbridge, stating in my application an interest in site-specific performance work, having been compelled by the coulees, river valley, and complex local history. This compulsion was puzzling and a little fraught. We had been living in Michigan, Luke's home state. I grew up in rural Northern California, so to come to the Canadian west

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was strange in that it was unfamiliar in many ways yet also felt like a kind of return. Lethbridge is not unlike the town of Chico, California, a town near which I was raised located at the base of the Sierra Nevada, traditional territory of the Konkow Maidu and the namesake of my performance persona.

My intent to create site-specific works in Lethbridge was a challenge: site-specific work asks of the artist to have a unique understanding of the site. I found myself confronted with the challenge of wanting a relationship to a place while having little knowledge of it at all. How would I express an understanding of, or relationship to, a place I didn't know? How should a Chicanx person inhabit Blackfoot land?

The Indigenous metaphysical concept of *all my relations* becomes relevant here. I recognize the phrase from my childhood as something said after prayers, songs, or ceremonies and always interpreted it as an acknowledgement of human ancestors. But Blackfoot scholar of Native philosophy and science Dr. Leroy Little Bear (2019) offered, during a lecture I attended, a more complex understanding of *all my relations*. Little Bear pointed out that *all my relations* honour the relational ties we share with all beings and entities, not simply our human ancestors. This acknowledgement of relational ties rather than individual humans does two things: First, it recognizes that our kin, our ancestors, are not limited to human descendants. Second, it is an acknowledgement of relations across past *and* present and future. In a way this allows time to be untethered from notions of being linear. In a sense, it is impossible to rethink how we relate to the non-human without entirely rethinking how we relate to core metaphysical concepts like time.

In my artistic process, I began spending a lot of time in the coulees and river valley. But it did not feel like enough to get to know the place on just a surface level. The connections felt incomplete, forced, and impersonal. I wanted to queer *all my relations*: Why not acknowledge all those relations by sexing the land? Being transgender and also a homosexual, the role of desire in getting to know someone is important, and fucking by way of introduction or as the reason to meet someone feels very natural. Why not acknowledge the desire to get to know better, to relate to, as an erotic attraction, a sexual relationship? A queer longing, a *~~b~~elonging*?

Why *~~b~~elonging*? Obviously, *unbelonging* designates a state of not being a part of a whole, of being outside of it. But to say the opposite of *unbelonging* is to belong creates a binary that implies there is no in-between, parallel, or complex alternative to these states of being. I think of *~~b~~elonging* as giving

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movement or animation to *unbelonging*. ~~*B*~~*belonging* is about being driven by desire, not necessarily a desire to belong, but just being driven, being in motion. Unsettled. Furthermore, to ~~*be*~~*long* to or toward something, someone or someplace resists the possessiveness of belonging *to*. This is not entirely *good*: to ~~*be*~~*long*, as the story of this paper will reveal, is a lonely endeavor. But it is not entirely *bad* either. It's complex.

This process of finding and naming alternatives to binary logics is important to keep in mind throughout this paper, which concerns itself with hybridity in many forms. Thinkers like Sara Ahmed (2006), who has discussed gender and sexual orientation spatially, argue beyond the female/male, gay/straight binaries to point out that to separate gender and sexual orientation in itself is binary thinking. Homi K. Bhabha (1994) names this non-binaryness spatially as a *third space* in a discussion of racial, ethnic, and cultural mixing, *hybridity*. Mary Louise Pratt (1991) talks about *contact zones*, naming the site of Indigenous and colonial presences intermingling and commingling as a place not only where genetic and cultural hybridity is happening but also where philosophies,[1] aesthetics, and modes of language production come together and mutate.

Because of the prevalence of binary logic, I am cautious about introducing new structures of this-or-that thinking, such as the idea that I can only belong or *not* belong in a place. In this way, *unbelonging* and ~~*be*~~*longing* resist the idea that there is no value in being an outsider or that one should rush to become an insider. These terms ask the question *What can I learn from being a stranger? A guest?*

Bearing all this in mind, I began "cruising" on Grindr in Lethbridge. Grindr, whose geolocation function serves to mark the distance between yourself and potential hookups, served as a tool for mapping—possibly *unmapping*—desire. I thought of this process as part of my research, both a collecting of data and a part of an embodied education, a way to understand this place with my body and desire. What parts of town did the gays and MSMs[2] live in? Were they interested in a transgender man looking for both cisgender and trans men? What kind of encounters were they looking for?

1 Philosophies are things as fundamental as how a society understands time.

2 *MSM* denotes a sexual culture of men who seek men purely for sexual encounters regardless of their own sexual identities. Many MSMs would consider themselves to be heterosexual.

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This act of using Grindr as a kind of horny echolocation was an example of *belonging*, of using desire to (un)map territory. I was using sex to weave myself into the relational fabric of the area. I was getting to know a place by fucking it.

Distance played into "Landscape Is My Sir" (Solís 2019a) in other ways. Performances were typically viewable only from a distance, the audience watching me perform as one might a wild animal, through binoculars or with eyes shaded by a hand. Distance and landscape have a complex relationship. Landscape as an aestheticization and commodification of land, a framing of the land, often requires a distancing *from* place. The desire to encapsulate a whole place, site, or landmass also requires the assumption of knowing where a place begins and where it ends. This framing of landscape creates relational distance, and it must be underscored that there is something deeply sadomasochistic at work here, a bondage, a restriction, an order. In this way to put a frame around a place is to be not so much in relationship to place as to be in relationship to the distance *between* oneself and that place.

To this effect, Chico California's affections extend beyond land, place, and all its parts to depictions of these, particularly depictions presented in a romanticized way. In "Landscape Is My Sir" (Solís 2019a), this idea of fetishized landscape and nature included vintage plaques and other wall decorations depicting pheasants, deer, lakes, and mountains, which had been altered in perverse ways. A mounted buck's head wearing a black leather garrison cap and leather muzzle, a resin lacquered photograph from the 1970s of a pretty mountain scene turned into a glory hole, a decorative platter with a painted pheasant ornately bound in black rope. In a sense, it is *the* fetishization of Nature and Landscape that Chico California himself is fetishizing. The intent was to bring together various imaginaries that corresponded with aestheticized and eroticized power: colonial aestheticization of the West and glorification of westward expansion, the eroticization of hypermasculinity in the gay leather cultures of the 1970s–'80s and contemporary nostalgification of foliage mimicking camouflage and hunting paraphernalia. Critiques of these imaginaries as commodification of body and land exist across multiple fields of study, and the question has been taken up by artists, writers, and scholars including Adrian Stimson, Rebecca Solnit, Dayna Danger, Kent Monkman, and Kyle Terrence, just to name a few whose work I've engaged with. This is especially relevant in regard to the imaginary of the West as a project to excite and entice the eastern colonial settler westward as well as the imaginary of

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recreational hunting, which entices the consumer to put money toward an idealized relationship to land that may never be realized beyond Cabela's[3] gloriously themed interiors.

But I, the perverted artist, am more interested in understanding these interpolations of power as the *fetish* that *precedes* fetishization. The thing that happens in between knowing of a place and being there, the impulse to stop at a vista point to photograph a particular landscape from far away, between imagining a dead goose across one's shoulder and parking one's car beside the field in which it will be hunted. It is that fetish, that ephemeral state of desire, that I ask you to hold in your mind as we move through the next sections.

An Exican Hiding from Aztlán

My mother and father, if asked, would assert that they are Indigenous and that I, by proxy, am too—that I am not a colonizer. My parent's analysis is based in Chicano/a scholarship, cultural practice, and thought that developed during the 1970s and '80s. My father, the son of a Baptist preacher, was a psychiatrist, one of the few Mexicans in his field at the time. My mother, daughter of Mexican farmworkers who immigrated to Southern California, was an academic and community organizer who worked with migrant families and did AIDS education during the height of the epidemic. Both were living in Los Angeles during the Chicano/a Movement and met through cultural gatherings and lectures that discussed and experimented with a process of reclamation of pre-Hispanic spiritual and cultural practices. This cultural-political context in which my parents met and came to know each other represented a longing toward a new cultural paradigm for being a decolonized Mexican living outside of national Mexico. This is the world and process that Gloria Anzaldúa ([1987] 2012) wrote about in *Borderlands / La Frontera*, a manifesto for a borderless, feminist, post-colonial nationhood for Mexicans as a race of culturally and racially hybrid entities. Based in the Nahuatl name for a promised

3 Cabela's is an outdoor sporting goods megastore that is as much a theme park as it is a place to buy camouflage apparel and camping supplies. Larger stores are usually outfitted with taxidermal animals staged in naturalistic tableaus, sometimes including water features.

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land in Aztec mythology, Aztlán has come to represent diasporic[4] sovereignty to an amorphous place, a roving metaterritory for the landless.

But Aztlán is often framed as a political territory and not one that provides tools for creating a relationship with ambivalent territory that is yours and yet not at all yours. Aztlán as a mytho-political territory is justified by Anzaldúa and other Chicano/a and Chicanx[5] thinkers with the historical fact of Mexico's annexation by the US in 1848. But that land was already the sovereign territory of a multitude of Aboriginal nations. Mestizxs like myself are quick to claim Indigenous belonging using Aztlán as justifying rhetoric. While this is a powerful political gesture of reclamation, it has the potential to overlook nuances of power and privilege as well as a diversity of Mexican Indigenous communities that are currently in high stakes political battles over land rights, survivance of Aboriginal languages, citizenship and protection from persecution, and access to essential resources. This political reality is radically different from the reality of the Mexican American millennial—my reality—who is sussing out what it means to have Indigenous heritage within the context of their academic pursuits. This flattening of identity narratives, along with pervasive homophobia, was why I felt I had to leave Aztlán and its attending discourse in order to seek out a more nuanced understanding of Mexicanness as a diaspora.

I grew up primarily in California with some lengths of time spent in Southern Mexico and, as an adult, have not lived in the same place for longer than four years. I spent the first twenty-five years of my life as a butch dyke and then transitioned into a gay transman. I pass as a man with my clothes on but am visibly not cisgender without them. While the land I was raised on was Konkow Maidu, and later, when I moved to California's central coast, Ohlone territory, I was simultaneously growing up in Gloria Anzaldúa's Aztlán. I am racially Mestizx, the visible manifestation of what happened when the Indigenous body and the Colonial body came together repeatedly

4 *Diaspora* is a term most commonly applied to African and Jewish diasporas and is not commonly applied to Latinx cultural populations or, for that matter, Indigenous ones. Diaspora is defined in terms of the way hybridity unfolds over time as well as histories of displacement and their bio/geopolitical outworkings.

5 The switch from *Chicano/a* to *Chicanx* marks a political shift in Mexican American discourse where Chicanx studies begin to engage with more contemporary notions of gender, the *x* intended as a gender-neutral reworking of the word *Chicano*.

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for generations, a mixing of already mixed people over time, a hybrid of hybrids. You can see why it's far more comfortable for me, and in many ways more interesting, to be in a perpetual state of unbelonging. But instead of unpacking the overlooking of privilege or other reasons for my dissatisfaction with Aztlán, I packed up and ended up a very safe distance from the major centres of Chicanx scholarship. I became an Exican.

Aztlán was not the only placeless place that Anzaldúa wrote about:

> Nepantla is the place where at once we are detached (separated) and attached (connected) to each of our several cultures. Here the watcher on the bridge (Nepantla) can "see through" the larger symbolic process that's trying to become conscious through a particular life situation or event. Nepantla is the midway point between the conscious and the unconscious, the place where transformations are enacted. Nepantla is a place where we can accept contradiction and paradox. (Anzaldúa and Keating 2015, 56)

Anzaldúa's Nepantla brings together notions I'm trying to describe as unbelonging and *ephemeral trans territories* (ETTs). I have created a Nepantla for myself wherein I ask myself what I'm doing in Blackfoot territory every day. This process has been fruitful, but I have to wonder, Am I hiding from the excruciating spectre of California, a place whose own imaginary is entirely about the chaos of colonization? And what do I—one of Anzaldúa's ([1987] 2012) "half-breeds"—have to contribute to this conversation? Can't I just hide here in Canada from Aztlán's knowing eye, make my own corn tortillas and fill them with mushrooms, steak, and No Frills kimchi in peace? No. Aztlán demands my extradition from my northern Nepantla. It has ways of calling you back to the original site of its placelessness.

Ephemeral Trans Territories

In order to understand what an ETT is, we must time travel. I've included months, years, and a few dates of the Gregorian calendar to guide us. Pay careful attention and try very hard to follow the timeline, lest time should reveal itself to be non-linear.

It is November 5, 2018. A friend has flown me down from Alberta to San Diego, California, to perform as Chico California at an art party they have curated. It is here that I meet Simon. He and I stand close to hear each other

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over the music, and I notice immediately that our laughter sounds the same. He's handsome, young in trans years, just filling out of his medically induced boyhood. He is eager and smart, a flirt. *This is one of those good-smelling hipster motherfuckers*, I think to myself, recognizing the essential-oiled musk of a particular kind of white trans guy I love to hate and hate that I love. I don't remember how we start talking about it, but we find out immediately that we are both trans intellectual interlopers crashing Grindr to overthink male intimacies. I perform my set, Chico California stripteasing and fellating an inflatable deer hunting decoy. I feel disoriented. The performance isn't very good: Chico flounders in the eucalyptus duff outside the venue. Why is this? Hasn't Chico California come home?

It's a good question, but I don't think much of it. Simon is distracting me. Texting me over Grindr—although we are standing a few metres from each other—he invites me to look at his art. He shows me, pinned to the venue wall, a storyboard for the film he is making. His film is a discussion of power and landscape (which interests me) but seems to revolve around grassroots activism (which bores me) in a particular rural town near the US/Mexico border. Text wraps around diagrams and grainy archival stills: a group of people walking down a desert road holding signs, a blueprint for a private military training facility that was never built because those same protesters shut it down. Simon's writing is interesting, and he is clearly obsessed with his work, which I find hot. *This wordy motherfucker*, I think, our racialized dynamic predetermined in my mind. I'm just starting to glaze over—there is quite a bit of text—when a cluster of italics catches my eye, and I find that it's a sex fantasy, a little corner of dirty talk, hard, masculine, and gay, inserted at the end of the theoretical discussion, the film notes, the historical context. It changes everything for me, because a real discussion of power and land must absolutely include sex. When I pull away from that wall of history and theory, I know we will fuck. I won't realize he's Jewish until after I've learned his last name. He won't get a good look at the Virgin de Guadalupe tattoo on my chest till after I have undressed in his bedroom and he is taking in my chest hair and scars. I am four years older than him, but his diaspora is two thousand years older than mine.

It is December 29, 2019, and I am editing another draft of this chapter, which is due in two days. Outside, Alberta is winter blue. Funny how very much stock we place in time, as if it were linear, a solid, when it is in fact a fluid, an ocean, a series of tides. Two thousand years? When exactly did the

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Mexican diaspora begin? I look over at Luke, my partner of nine years, who, like Simon, is Jewish and trans. "Baby," I ask, "how long ago did the Jewish diaspora begin?" They laugh and roll their eyes. "I don't know *historic* facts," they drawl, "just biblical ones. It began with the fall of the second temple? I'm sure you can find it on Wikipedia." When does a diaspora begin? Do we become a diaspora when we *become* a *we* or when we become a *them*? Does it begin in the moment a *we* is severed from their land, their sites of knowledge and traditional food sources? Or is it the effects of this severance across movement and time? It is critical that we talk about time, for it is time that shapes diaspora, it is time that carves hybrid bodies out of the polymorphous block of composite origins.

It is mid-February 2020. I am completing yet another draft of this chapter. I have a dream that I'm stuck in a time loop where I must walk into a gay bar at exactly the right moment so that I might catch a glimpse of myself, and through seeing myself, I am able to keep on living. It is late February 2019, and Simon explains time to me. It is dreamlike, but it's not a dream. I'm visiting him in California. We lie side by side, him drifting off, me lying there knowing something unarticulated is going horribly wrong between us. He explains time to me by way of a poem he has composed for someone else, which begins with the line *time is water*. The poem is a list of all the fluid things that time is, the only one of which I remember being a dog's water bowl. His mouth softens around the words, and he is asleep. I stare at the concrete ceiling, listening to the rain outside. If water is time, within a week of this moment, our brief, intense relationship will have fucking drowned. I will have held it underwater until it has stilled.

It is November 7, 2018, and I have flown home after the art party, after sleeping twice with Simon. When my plane lands in Calgary, I text Luke the word *here*, as we all do these days when announcing the arrival of our corporeal bodies. When we arrive in Lethbridge, I am taken aback when the words *I'm so happy to be home* come out of my mouth. It isn't untrue. A feeling of relief at being immersed in the familiar, or, an experience of familiarity, is flooding my body.

But over the next few days, it becomes clear that I am not entirely *here* and that this is not entirely *home*. And if it is home, it is an uncomfortable home, an uncanny one. Nael Bhanji discusses Anne-Marie Fortier and Avtar Brah's understandings of *queered* home. Brah's (1996) *homing desires* speak to longing as a moving toward, and Fortier (2003) asks for a complication and

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desentimentalization of home as an experience of comfortable belonging. Bhanji considers these from a context mapping migrational desires and the uncanny, or *unheimlich*, potentials of home. Bhanji points to "the (un)heimlich specters that continue to haunt the oft-cited metaphorical borderlands of corporeo-psychic uninhabitability" (2012, 159).

Given that Luke and I are in a non-monogamous relationship, I don't think much of what I perceive to have been a two-night stand with Simon. Yet in the days and weeks that follow, I realize that a part of me has remained in transit, has remained in California. A part of me is still sitting on the front seat of Simon's Toyota Corolla, left there after he dropped me off at the San Diego airport. A part of me is not present in Treaty 7 territory as I begin a manic pattern of waking up too early, reading the messages Simon has sent me in the middle of the night, then leaving the house to run compulsively through the coulees in minus ten degree weather, as if through speed I could collapse the distance between my *here* and Simon's. Is it possible that this is not the first time I have left a part of myself behind? And if this is the case, is it possible that every settler, every newcomer arrives in Indigenous territory incomplete? Is this why non-Indigenous people are sometimes called ghosts?

Simon and I continue texting. We send each other photos and voice recordings. Time warps. We cram so much into each interaction that a week of fantasizing and promise making feels like months of knowing. The correspondence between Simon and I speaks constantly about distance. How could it not? It's so palpable given that we are still messaging over Grindr, which displays the distance between us over the chat box: 1,917 kilometres. He tells me he's falling for me, that he loves me. *Same*, I say.

Simon writes me into his film as a leather daddy, his fantasy, our shared imaginary, of '70s pre-AIDS gay cruising culture. It is an act of love that unfixes me from time, bifurcates my storyline, me. Simon is also a character in his own screenplay, and these projected selves of ours take on a new *here* that exists only on the page and in our minds. In his screenplay, film-me emerges from the dark, from the desert, appears in film-Simon's Corolla to tease him, elucidate him in space, and force fingers into his mouth. Dominant, anachronistic, and feral, I recognize film-me as the parts of myself I fear the most yet long to know better. This hyperreal version of me, of us, fills me with the hope that Simon's ability to inhabit California, to be an outsider to it looking in, somehow means he can inhabit me too. In our sexts, I tell him I want to bury him in the desert, put dirt in his mouth. *I want to eat you*, he says.

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It is December 2018. Luke's father offers to gift us his like-new Honda Accord, and we decided it's worth it to take the train to Michigan and drive the car to Washington State to give it to my mother, whose car has been in a dangerous state of disrepair for years. By way of maintaining connection, Simon and I have begun a shared Google doc with the intent of writing together what you are reading now. During the train ride between Montana and Michigan, I write,

> Living in Canada where discourses of territory, Indigeneity, and settlement are alive and tense, I find myself wondering what trans territory looks like, what its range is, what its borders are. I find myself wanting to test these bodies of imagined space, taste them, fuck them experimentally. I have moved so many times, have travelled so much, have compulsively built then destroyed relationships with place. My territory is ephemeral and is not made up of a place, a here. If a trans territory exists for me it is made of in-betweenness. Of course it is. But it's not a female to male distance. It is the distance between my body and my desire. The distance between location and relocation.
>
> Having made a habit of renunciation (of home, of genders), I own nothing. And yet I feel compelled to control my body distance, to ribbon its boundaries and militarize its borders. This is a resistance of intimacy born out of an urgent need to both run *to* and run away *from*. I am writing this on a train. It doesn't matter where the train is going. I will get there and the betweenness will be over.

Because the ETT has closed, I cannot include Simon's writing, but I will mention some things. He writes in the shared document about driving and being a driver. He writes about how before he learned to drive, he was sure he'd die driving. He tells about how his dad told him, when he came out, that he had always thought of Simon as existing in-between.

Luke and I begin the drive back west toward Washington State. A novelist, Luke is fun to travel with, witty, an excellent planner, and full of what writer Patricia Lockwood (2017) calls *gleeful noticing*. Eating salami and grapes, Luke and I essay out loud about how the South Dakotan tourist trap, Wall Drug,[6] is weirdly a queer fixture. As we approach from the east, we begin seeing the

6 Echoing Cabela's attention to thematizing, Wall Drug uses Wild West tropes to paint a picture of Western ethos. Animatronic cowboys sing tunes and dodge rattlers. Taxidermal jackalopes (stuffed bunnies with antlers affixed to their heads) line the

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signs for Wall Drug spaced miles apart, each with a unique hand-painted style, each with a clever slogan promising novelty and refreshment. *Free Ice Water, Wall Drug*: a painting of a cartoon donkey drinking from a trough where a cartoon man lies cooling. *Something to Crow About, Wall Drug*: a painting of a cartoon rooster calling into the dawn. The space between the signs *is* an ETT, a fleeting moment between a here and a there, the literal manifestation of the urgent distance between desire and the realization of a promise.

Queer theorist Aren Aizura's important work on trans movement, migration, and mobility unfolds within a context of gender reassignment surgery and other transition related motivators. Aizura, building on the work of Jay Prosser (1998), points productively toward the flattened narratives of arrival in a "new" gender and the way in which travelogues use the movement from a here to a there as an oversimplified metaphorical device for transition (Aizura 2018). But I am a basic bitch, and my focus is far less productive and far hornier. My focus is on the erotics that must be (un)mapped as its own temporal territory when a trans body spreads itself lustily across landmasses. It is less about travellers and travelogues, non-arrival, and metaphor and much, much more about the pictures of my transsexual junk I took in the cramped train toilet to send to another transsexual thousands of kilometres away.

I write to Simon in our shared doc,

> ETTs must be moved through, felt through. I am a Californian and driving comes as naturally as breathing, as eating, as fucking does to me. I'm not giving a car to my mother. She is paying me for my time and expenses after all. But perhaps I am gifting her the trans ephemeral space that opens up and stays open between us for hours and hours and hours. Hours during which I think about what my mother will do with the car. Will she care for it? Or wreck it? Will she allow herself to be helped by me? Loved?
>
> What a useless gift, this ephemeral trans territory: as soon as I arrive at her house, the trans territory will close and the gift will mean nothing, will not exist. "He is on his way here" is so different, so much more poignant than "He drove from Michigan to Washington." When I started growing a beard years after going on testosterone, I was on the way somewhere again, after having already arrived in "being a

walls, and an indoor courtyard is done up in raw wood panelling to make you feel like you're walking down a Western film set.

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man" and being sad that wherever I'd arrived, it was now a here and no longer my beautiful there.

He writes about driving around the deserts of southern California in his Corolla, about all the things one can do in a car when in motion and when not. He says driving makes him feel powerful. In a sentence, he lists fear, desire, and driving, in that order. Writing this, I wish desperately that I could quote him for this paper, but it just isn't possible at this very moment.

It is early June 2019, and I am faced with the task of writing a chapter about an ETT that has closed, has ended, has been erased from the map. I have just finished my MFA thesis show—the Chico California work—and I am exhausted, empty, and suicidally depressed. I think daily about throwing myself from the High Level Bridge or hanging myself from the river valley cottonwoods or even just walking into the prairie with a bottle of whisky on a very cold night. *What better way to know a place than to know all the ways you can die in it?* But I don't do any of these things. Instead, I task myself with writing about someone who spoke to me every day for three months and then spoke to me not at all. I seal a rent in trans time, an escape hatch in the geography of ~~be~~longing, and in doing so, acknowledge that when I chose the word *ephemeral*, I meant it.

It is late 2018, early 2019. What I do not realize is that my emotional state is being chemically affected by my acne medication and a too high dose of testosterone. The feelings are real, but they are being amplified to an almost intolerable degree, both the good and the bad. As I have become less present, less *here*, with Luke, Simon in turn becomes less present with me. He visits his own place of fromness, New York, and there falls for another tran[7] he meets on Grindr. Her thereness supplants my hereness, but I won't know this until it's too late. Perhaps in that moment Simon doesn't know it either. I buy tickets to visit him in San Diego when he goes back, reading his reserve as doubt in my affection. It is this attempt to close the distance that ends our shared ETT. It is late February 2019, a few days before Simon explains time. He rents us a cabin in the mountains above the Inland Empire, east of San Diego. He is sweet but also irritable and painfully distant. The cabin is tiny, yet I feel I am the farthest from him I have ever been. We kiss but don't fuck.

7 I, traitor to my kind, have been asked to explain *tran*—meaning one tran—in unqueer terms.

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West Texas–based essayist Ray Gonzalez describes the experience of being drawn in by the southwestern landscape across a distance:

> Image. Distance. Color. Height. Deepness. They work together to get us there, and we know that landscape way over there will not be there when we get to it. It is gone, and the earth is in our face, surrounding us with a magnetism that drew us to it, but that is now transformed into a living, breathing environment that has taken us into itself. (Gonzalez 2008)

What an idiot I was to think the place I saw from a distance was also the place I'd arrive in once I'd satisfied my perverse desire to get there. When Simon excuses himself to make a phone call, I cry inconsolably on the desert's shoulder, a living, breathing thing that has taken me into itself. Kneeling in the mud, a hole opens in the clouds above me, the opalescent stars a *there* I would only die trying to make into a *here*.

At the end of my trip, Simon makes a final attempt to get me to express appropriately politicized excitement about the photograph on his storyboard, the grainy archival still of protesters walking down the desert road. He talks about power and learning to beat the system, but I'm tired of discussing power. I tell him, you know what, people suck, but when people really love a place, they can transcend themselves. To physically traverse a territory, protesting its weaponization, is to collapse the heartbreaking distance between human and non-human. I tell him what I see is a photo of a people's love for a place. Does he realize the power that lies in relation? Does he hear that I am not just talking about a stupid picture? Does he know he is the place that I love? You must long before you can *be*long. He hugs me and tells me I smell like the incense he burns in his car while driving. *You've marked me*, I tell him. He is either a cartographer or a dog.

It is March 4, 2019. The ETT collapses when I look at the Twitter account belonging to the other tran and find out that her and Simon's relationship is far deeper than I had understood it to be, that she has been referring to him as her boyfriend even after he had told me he was incapable of being anyone's boyfriend. I realize that she, the other Grindr tran, is also Mexican, and somehow it is this fact that undoes me. Like Ray Gonzalez, the other Mexican Grindr tran is from West Texas, and I hear her speak beautifully of the Texan desert in an interview I find online. Never mind that Luke is also trans and Jewish, I'm too jealous, too insecure, too angry and hurt to handle Simon's

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omission of facts. I leave him a series of voice messages, twenty minutes of cruel, cutting rage. Time is water, and did you know, blasted at high pressure, water can slice through steel. Time is water, and did you know, it only takes about sixty seconds for an adult to drown. I tell Simon his project makes me uncomfortable, that I quit. I tell him, *You can fuck the entire Mexican diaspora, but you will never, ever meet anyone like me*.

Conclusion

Viewable from a hunting blind set up in the middle of the gallery for "Landscape Is My Sir" (Solís 2019a) were three videos[8] showing various performances of Chico California. One of these shows slow-motion footage of Chico California in a leather jacket, chest harness, knee-high leather boots, and Levi's rolling in mud, washing his leather jacket, walking into the river, and floating away. These visuals are accompanied by the sound of birds, water, and Chico California addressing the Old Man River. Chico California's voice is lusty and begging, somewhere between a whisper and a moan, about to cum, about to cry:

> Please Old Man Daddy River take me come on come on you know you want a piece of your boy come take him he wants you he wants you inside come on come on take your Chico California take him take him home [. . .] please take this boy please take him take your boy take your little California boy take me just fucking take me take me take me [. . .]

After filming this performance, the clouds are heavy over the Old Man River, and I feel I have created relation with this *here*, a love between one human and a place. The wind blows mosquitos against my skin like many small kisses. I may never belong here, but when insects take my blood, I like to think that I am being loved back.

At the newly opened YMCA in West Lethbridge, there are video simulations of bicycle paths for stationary bikes, where the rider can choose from ten or so landscapes to watch drift by while pedalling. Only after a couple minutes of biking through a California desert do I realize where I am: a semi-pixelated Joshua Tree National Park moves around me, soft and gold, the 3-D

8 See Solís 2019b for this segment.

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imaging an odd blend of photographs and digital construction, dreamlike, memory-like. I want to see if the simulation will let me ride across the Inland Empire, where my grandparents grew melons, down the mountainous spine of the Cleveland National Forest, into Kumeyaay territory, across eucalyptus groves to Simon's studio—and it is in this desperate whirling on this stupid bike that goes nowhere that I begin to understand what happened. Through Simon I was able to see my own homesickness as well as remember myself not as *a Californian* but as *a California*, a creature made of places and events, a dissident expatriate of Aztlán, a Nepantla, an Exican. Simon saw me as a California he could arrive in, and when I heard him articulate that California, I tried desperately to arrive in *him*. At the time we met, we had already formed our own temporal territories of longing, our homing desires. Simon had ached across the country for that ideal of grassroots organizing in a small town, for the desert that surrounded it. I had ached into western Canada to come home without the responsibility of *going* home. Too late I realized Simon was right—I *am* California. But he has already left me for Texas. And can I blame him? The rent is surely cheaper.

I am not a prairie queer,[9] but I deeply appreciate what scholar Jas Morgan says about the prairie wind:

> Me, an Indigenous / gender studies scholar: Don't gender and sexualize nature. The wind is a relation whose gender is fluid and unknown to us, and it still affects everyone and everything it touches. Also me: The prairie wind is gay af. The prairie wind propels the queer body forward in a way shared among queer kin who perpetually followed those sparkling lights on the landscape: that queer lust for the city, that home in the horizon, and that desire for queer possibility. (Morgan 2018, 46–47)

It is possible to be propelled in many directions at once. I know what Morgan means by "that home in the horizon." I, too, have intimacy issues. What is this ETT that I have built "here" in "Lethbridge, Alberta?" For I am never actually here, am I? Not entirely. Is this bad? Is it excellent?

Consider that this place named Aksiiksahko (Steep Banks), Asinaawa-iitomottsaawa (Where We Slaughtered the Crees), and Sik-Ooh-Kotok (Black Rocks) I have called *Lethbridge*, the surname of a British lawyer who never

9 I'm more of a mountain queer if pressed to topographize.

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bothered to traverse the distance between his colonial here and his colonial there. How can anyone be fully present in this town whose vertices of power are mapped on a racial x- and y-axis in which white bodies stand while not all but many Indigenous bodies lie horizontal? In a place like, this even those who don't unbelong find themselves having to retheorize and reassert belonging on their own territories.

I wanted to belong to something, said an ex–white supremacist on the radio last year, and I wonder very much if it is possible to be an ex–anything like that.[10] It is critical to consider how one relates to place and belonging as nationalist narratives gain momentum, heat. How do we metabolize time and space as treaty agreements continue to be ignored, as people tell one another to *go home*, as territories are staked out, borders are secured, cultures are defined, and DNA is copyrighted?

It is summer of 2019. The days are endless. Simon and I haven't spoken for months. If I am a California, my regret is an opened fault line that has split me in two. One half thinks I'm better off without my cartographer, while the other misses desperately that feeling of being seen, mapped, and known. I have apologized for my part in the destruction of our ETT, but Simon has only said he isn't ready to speak, that the time isn't right. So come, be with me in this meantime, this meanwhile. Visit me in my Nepantla, this haunted, timeless home. Behold my queer Exican failure: all I can do is theorize my own heartbreak, my own hard-on, my own homesickness, my own tragi-glorious self-dislocation. Come, ~~be~~long patiently with me.

Running with my dog through the coulees, I am overtaken by a memory of Southern California, my ~~be~~longing a hysteria: high-pitched tire songs on the I5, crystalline qualities of the desert, the smell of wet sand. I take a moment to reorient myself to the cottonwoods fluttering in the river valley, old clothes rotting pleasantly among thick prairie grass, the thunder of grain and oil cars on the High Level Bridge. Compulsively, I check my phone for new messages. I don't know who I want to hear from most, Simon, California,

10 When asked by the Fresh Air host if he was aware of what he was participating in when he saluted Hitler, Christian Picciolini responded, "At that time, I really didn't. I knew it was a subculture. I knew that I believed that they had some sort of a truth that the rest of the world didn't understand, and I knew that I wanted to belong to something" (Davies 2018).

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Sik-Ooh-Kotok, or Aztlán. I just want to slide the notification open and find a message that says, *Here*.

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7 Of Ice Cream, Potatoes, and Kimono-Clad Japanese Women

Forgetting and Remembering the Japanese Racialization of Lethbridge's Sensuous Geographies

Darren J. Aoki and Carly Adams

> *Back [in 1951] ice cream was only, what, five cents? I can still remember being in a line-up that, I never got served, everybody else got served. I had my nickel in my hand and never got served, and I can still remember dad coming up to me and says, "Didn't you get served?" I said, "No," he said, "Well, let's go," and we walked out.*
>
> —Pete, personal interview, November 17, 2017, 0:13:49

> *No, we didn't have any discrimination. [. . .] We're all Canadians and that's it.*
>
> —Pete, personal interview, November 17, 2017, 1:04:00

Strategizing "Crap Happens"

On March 21, 1951, a gala banquet was held to celebrate Japanese Canadian / City of Lethbridge co-operation. To the "delightful" spectacle of Japanese

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dancers in "colorful native costume," the city fathers waxed lyrical (*Lethbridge Herald* 1951, 6). Mayor Turcotte observed how far Japanese families had progressed, while Alderman Virtue declared Canada to be "a Land of New Hope." Indeed, since the "dark days of 1942" and especially since their full release into the Canadian civic sphere in 1949, these erstwhile "enemy aliens" had emerged so fully and quickly from their wartime ordeal as new model citizens that Alderman Huckvale opined, "Your Evacuation may prove a blessing in disguise" (*Lethbridge Herald* 1951, 6).

In retrospect, it is a remarkable statement. To be certain, the patronizing judgment implied in the phrase *blessing in disguise* was in keeping with the conceit of contemporary British white Dominion authority. Yet the blithe erasure of Japanese Canadian suffering was powerful in its exonerating effects. It turned a deaf ear to Lethbridge City Council's vitriolic opposition just a few years earlier to "having the Japanese established as a permanent resident" (*Lethbridge Herald* 1944, 7). It ignored the City's resolution that, in keeping with restrictions against Japanese entering and residing in the city, "they be removed" from the province (*Lethbridge Herald* 1944, 7). More broadly, it perfunctorily wiped the slate clean of the City's facilitating role in the "Evacuation," as this "politics of racism" (Sunahara 1981) later came euphemistically to be known. In 1942, some 21,500 individuals, or 95 percent of Canada's Japanese, most of whom were born or naturalized Canadian citizens, were systematically removed from British Columbia's west coast and displaced into a variety of policed surveillance settings. One of these was the sugar beet farms of southern Alberta. These became a destination for thousands of Japanese who supplied industry-saving cheap labour and a transit point in subsequent waves of forced migration (see, e.g., Kobayashi 1989; Adachi 1976).

The compelling nature of this will to forget should not be underestimated. Indeed, the spirit of reconciliation that seemed to pervade the banquet was neither unique in the apparent sea change it marked in the welcome of the Japanese (e.g., see Roy 1990, 38) nor exceptional in a wider national trend. In public discourse and media, "yellow peril" wartime stereotypes of the Japanese as "mysterious" and perfidious—"they 'sneak' into City" and "Grin About it," declared the *Lethbridge Herald* (*Lethbridge Herald* 1945, 7)—were abruptly replaced by portrayals emphasizing Canada's Japanese as "unthreatening" and "victims" (Hawkins 2009). Some of this is explained by an emerging new social ethos—as epitomized by the 1945 United Nations Charter—that cast the "Evacuation" as morally dubious and potentially classed aspects of

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the federal government's eugenically informed assimilationist program to scatter the Japanese as a "crime against humanity" (Sunahara 1981, 138; see also Bangarth 2008). It certainly helped that, in their "industry and thrift," the Japanese were "being successfully re-established, largely through their own efforts" (*Lethbridge Herald* 1949, 4): they were proving themselves to be good neighbours and citizens. Crucially, too, the Japanese themselves seemed to couple forgetting with moving on. "Crap happens and [you] gotta get on in your life, keep working and you'll make it back," explained Dick (personal interview, March 11, 2011) of *shō ga nai*, a phrase his father had used to describe his "Evacuation" experience.

Japanese Canadian forgetting and the silence that attends it have acted as narrative cues that stimulated the discursive emergence of this history from the late 1960s onward: Adachi (1976) attributes Japanese middle-class mediocrity to it (358–59); Sunahara (1981) likens the mute Nisei (second generation) to a rape victim (166–67); Kogawa's ([1981] 1994) canon-setting *Obasan* paints a portrait of individual becoming as a moral-historical emergence into the cacophony of words, a narrative trajectory that finds its conclusion in the historic achievement in 1988 of a formal textual and material apology to the Japanese—the Redress Movement—as memorialized by Miki (2005); Sugiman (2013, 2009) amplifies in her oral historical explorations the trauma especially of women and the complexity of the "Evacuation" experience; and Oikawa (2012) seeks to flesh out the carceral sites of the "Evacuation" through spoken testimony. This list is not representative of Japanese Canadian historical production. But it does illustrate the overwhelming propensity to characterize forgetting in terms, understandably, of reaction to the war and its aftermath, whose effects are loss—of property, community, rights, and the future—and the violation of one's human dignity. There are other ways, however, to approach forgetting and silence, ones to which this chapter will now turn its attention.

First, let's return to *shō ga nai*, less in terms of its meaning and more in the way Dick said it: plainly, gruffly, "crap happens." It is hardly a helpless response betraying the crushing of one's spirit. Nor is it tactically defensive, for instance, "*kodomo no tame*," as Kogawa's obasan whispers, almost inaudibly—"for the sake of the children" ([1981] 1994, 26). Instead, his approach and the deployment it describes are almost celebratory, an assertion of indefatigability whose credence is his success as the owner of one of the region's most successfully enduring potato-farming enterprises. In this light, it is a performative

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moment in our oral history encounter as he narrates himself through—in Josselson's (2009) conception of the relationship between memory and history—an "autobiographical" appeal in the present to the authority of his own history. Nevertheless, this rendering of *shō ga nai* also speaks his truth about the navigation of racist discrimination and state violence. In a number of portraits, we'll explore a selection of similar strategies, negotiations, and appeals: historical forgetting through heritage, imaginations of microstrategic confrontation, and the narrative assertion of Canadianness.

Second, take a moment to consider Pete's childhood memory of his visit to a Lethbridge ice cream parlour presented epigraphically at the outset of this chapter. In privileging this voice, we specifically situate a history of Japanese Canadians—personal and collectively—in the latter half of the twentieth century. This is a critical intervention. Although every Japanese Canadian introduced in this chapter can trace the "Evacuation" as part of their pasts, we nevertheless step out of the overdetermining shadow of the Japanese Canadians' Second World War, which is not to ignore its influence. We seek instead to amplify the complexity of their human experience: the (re)building everyday of family, livelihood, affiliations, and community; the nurturing of ambition through success and the suffering of hardship in failures; and above all, the resilience to which the portraits presented here all give witness. In paying respect to the integrity of Pete's and many others' lives that cannot and should not be explained always, already, and only as an effect of the war, we actively engage Eve Tuck's (2009) critical response to "damage-centred" research to enact, in her words, "an axiological intervention that is intent on depathologising the experience of dispossessed and disenfranchized communities so that people are seen as more than broken or conquered" (416). This is of historical importance because when we interrupt the teleologies of the mid-century rupture, we can begin to understand the situated complexity of belonging and unbelonging, the contingency of racism even as racist practices are perpetual, and the inherent contradictions of race and nation as they intersect.

And then there is Lethbridge. We define it as the city, which includes, in our conception, its surrounding agricultural environs. Lethbridge is not simply a physical setting, a backdrop to the scenes of one's life or just the stage with its props through which historical actors move. Rather, Lethbridge is an "experience of the senses," a "sensuous geography" (Rodaway 1994, 3). According to Rodaway, the senses "are not merely passive receptors of particular

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kinds of environmental stimuli but are actively involved in the structuring of that information"; the senses are "significant in the overall sense of a [. . .] living world of everyday life as a multisensual and multidimensional situatedness in space and in relationship to places" (3–5). In this light, the racial environment that painfully scripted an interracial non-encounter for Pete was played out as the denial of the senses, and especially of taste. Unlike all the others in that shop, Pete would not get to eat ice cream that day: the discrimination he experienced in Purity Dairy would map an emotional geography that linked his father and their exclusion from a taste, temperature, texture, and story of ice cream that forever after could only be narrated as rejection. Taste "has been described as an intimate sense [. . .] structurally—it generates an immediate or local geography—and emotionally—it establishes a strong bond between person and environment," writes Rodaway (67). Perhaps reflective of this memory that is stained by racist exclusion, Pete struggled to remember the address of Purity Dairy, and in describing how his father and he simply walked away, this story poignantly froze one moment in Pete's Lethbridge, where space is generated into a meaningful—racialized—place (see Relph 1976). Through the focus that sensescapes sharpen on the embodied raced experience and interaction of racial identities, we can begin to map Lethbridge as a postwar history of Japanese race.[1]

Re-visualizing the City to Forget History

That the 1950s has come to be remembered as a period of progress not just by the city fathers but by Japanese themselves is suggested in this next memory

1 Research for this chapter is derived from the Nikkei Memory Capture Project (NMCP), an innovative community-based oral history research initiative that explores the cultural and social history of Canadian Nikkei (people of Japanese descent) in southern Alberta, Canada, in the latter half of the twentieth century. Built upon a pilot project focusing on the Nisei ("second-generation" Japanese Canadian) experience initiated by Aoki in 2011, it was transformed in 2017 into a transnational collaboration bringing together the University of Plymouth, the United Kingdom (Aoki), and the University of Lethbridge (Adams) with key Lethbridge stakeholder partnerships: the Nikkei Cultural Society of Lethbridge and Area, the Nikka Yūkō Japanese Garden, and the Galt Museum and Archives. Since 2017, the NMCP team, which includes our student researchers, has opened questions on a range of topics—for example, interracial intimacy, sports, assimilation, and racial discrimination.

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anecdote. "It was a beautiful float, Mt. Fuji, [. . .] that's a cherry blossom tree," said Helen (personal interview, February 30, 2018; see figure 7.1), describing her photograph of the very first Japanese Canadian Citizens Association (JCCA) entry into Lethbridge's annual summer exhibition parade. As she tabulated the facts of its conception—it was the inspiration of Hideo Nagata, the flowers were handmade by the church ladies, it won first prize—her tone softened when she came across the image from a few years later of another float since, looking out as if directly at us from the monochrome matte was her younger sister in a kimono. "That's Amy [pseudonym]," she said. It was difficult to pin down the year. Similar photographs held in the Galt Museum Archive date JCCA participation to as early as 1949, but for Helen, who bedecked one of these annually appearing floats in 1953 or 1954, this collection of snapshots captured a distinctive historical moment. "Wow"—half whispered, this was no exclamation of surprise. Rather, as Helen's position to try to recount objectively what had transpired six decades ago blurred into a subjective inhabitation of these moments, she marvelled in contemplation at the achievement of what the float represented: "It was a moment of pride for the Japanese, 'cause here we've been evacuated in, we're all trying to rebuild lives, and we've gotten comfortable." As one of the collective "we," she seemed in wonder at from where Helen herself had come to where she had arrived.

In both the example of the float and of the 1951 banquet, a recurring motif is suggested. Note how each premises civic participation and ethnic projection on cultural display, which are evocatively dynamic: dancing, a procession through the streets. From the perspective of both the city officials then and one person sixty years on, these furthermore emphasize transformation. To be certain, long before the Multiculturalism Act was enacted in 1988 to redefine Canadian identity away from Dominion-era Anglo-assimilationism (see, e.g., Hopkins 2008 on Dominion decolonization), ethnic diversity with an emphasis on (cosmopolitan) sensory stimulation for mainstream white society—the sight of foreign dress, the sounds of unfamiliar words and song, strange food textures and tastes—had long scripted civic celebration. The inauguration of Alberta's Heritage Day bank holiday in August 1975, for example, invited Lethbridge residents to encounter Italian, Irish, Japanese, Lithuanian, First Nations, Scottish, and Ukrainian performances and displays (*Lethbridge Herald* 1975, 16). While scholars like John Price have critically argued that cultural heritage was easily reduced to "remnants"—and that the only forms

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Figure 7.1. The JCCA float at Lethbridge's annual summer exhibition parade in 1949. Photographer unknown. Darren J. Aoki personal collection.

and customs "that survive are usually these innocuous ones that escape the conforming crush of law" (quoted in James 2003, 209)—this is to misunderstand the foundational role that heritage could and did play, at least for the Japanese. From the very year of their release into the civic sphere, Japanese Canadians selected and coordinated images that in their deployment tactically reimagined space and time as Japanese: those few minutes when the parade float passed by inscribed into the Lethbridge mise-en-scène a landscape of Mount Fuji and cherry blossoms; through rhythmic gestures, the gaze of the white authorities was beckoned and held by Oriental women's bodies draped in silks. This cultural projection was not simply an act of intercultural sharing. Nor was it to expand the local iterations of official multiculturalism, though such displays may have helped cultivate the discursive ground for this eventual development in civic identity. Instead, it was creatively compelling: iconic images of the Far East evoked distance traversed (a Japanese landscape brought to Lethbridge) and closeness embraced (Japanese Canadian families animating this fleeting landscape who might also actually live next door). It was intentionally gendered too: traditional dress that fixed a lens of Far

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Eastern exoticism focused on women only, an Orientalist fantasy of unthreatening feminine softness to replace dangerous feminine mystique.

Critically, as Aoki deals with elsewhere (e.g., Aoki 2019), this appeal to the homeland and its heritage was highly ahistorical. In ways reminiscent of Japan's postwar attempts to rebrand itself as a "nation of culture" and pacifist partner in America's trans-Pacific security order, the appeal of Lethbridge's Japanese in civic celebrations to images and icons redolent of their premodern world enabled them to skirt the messiness of the recent past. Whites were confronted with neither feelings of guilt nor tricky questions of complicity in anti-Japanese racism; Japanese, for their part, could reassert a certain pride in the defused cultural provenance of their displays. That is not all, since the scopic remapping of Lethbridge as Japanese in the early 1950s became a longer-term trajectory of sustained cultural and ethnic projection. In 1957, the JCCA gifted the city imported cherry blossom trees (*Lethbridge Herald* 1957, 4); in 1961, the Civic Sports Centre was host to a "Japanese Variety Night," the first of similar cultural events over the next three decades like the *Bunka no hi* (culture day) that attracted thousands to the El Rancho Hotel Convention Room in 1986 (Horvat 1986, A5). The Galt Museum commemorated its relationship with southern Alberta's Japanese Canadians by opening its dedicated exhibit in 1980.

Finally, there was the construction of the Nikka Yūkō Japanese Garden. In its aim to be "as authentic as possible," it was importantly not religious in denominational affiliation or funerary in practice. It was specifically not a cultural centre to facilitate a diasporic transmission of knowledge and skill nor was it a museum that curated heritage. The expertise that was imported from Japan to architect its traditional tea house and to design a garden based largely on classical forms and principles (Van Luven [1980] 2000, 4) was less an exercise in mimetic foreign transplantation than animated by a desire to grow a transforming Japaneseness into the longer-term civic identity (and tourism-based revenue sources) of Lethbridge. The genesis of what continues to be one of Lethbridge's most iconic attractions reads as a trans-Pacific story of community co-operation in a surprising alignment of eclectic interests and idiosyncratic personalities (Hiro, personal interview, April 17, 2019). But what we'd like to emphasize here is this. If at one time the imaginations of Japaneseness were limited to transitory projections into borrowed civic space, a part of the city—actual land in one of its most important public-use parklands—was now claimed and materially transformed to create new

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sightlines and vistas: the white panels of its boundary walls demarcating this space; glimpses through manicured vegetation of the greying cypress-wood teahouse made with no nails; its moon bridges, stone pagodas, and its giant bell visible from the opposite shore of Henderson Lake. As an immersive sensual experience, the garden is crafted to provoke stillness, yet its apparent timelessness is illusory, not least because as the city's representative big-budget project to commemorate Canada's centenary in 1967, this space was built as a civic place of declarative celebration, where dignitaries could be conspicuously welcomed. It was opened officially by members of Japan's imperial family, whose next generations would visit to reaffirm this link at the garden's twenty-fifth (1992) and fiftieth anniversaries (2017). At each of these events, at least two elements of the scopic genealogy that had been set in the trajectory of Japanese progress would be extended. The first was kimono-clad women dancing and adorning. The second was, in their active display of tradition, the effacement of history. The appearance in the middle of the Alberta prairies of a Japanese garden is, doubtless, explained in part by the existence of what was Canada's third-largest postwar concentration of Japanese. Yet its authenticity, until very recently, was not made through appeals to Japanese Canadian history and, specifically, the very reason why southern Alberta was home to so many Japanese: the "Evacuation." This erasure was not accidental. Not only were proposals to memorialize this history rejected—for example, the erection of a statue (Hiro, personal interview, March 18, 2011)—rather, the garden divided the Japanese Canadian equation to highlight the former. When Aoki pressed Robert Hironaka (personal interview, March 13, 2011), one of the original members of the Japanese Garden Committee about this, he responded, "We felt this should be a Japanese garden." He asked for further clarification: "As opposed to a Japanese Canadian enterprise or [. . .] endeavour?" He nodded and said firmly, "Yeah, yeah."

Lest the impression be given of a precisely choreographed ethnic presentation to which all Japanese subscribed, it should be remembered how diverse the Japanese were. The "Evacuation," in fact, served to augment already existing divisions between small Japanese settlements dating back to the beginning of the twentieth century: ethnically distinct Okinawans from the Japanese Empire's colonial periphery worked coal mines north of the city; main-island Japanese were farmers to the south. To this, the "Evacuation" brought differences in religion, generational authority, regional dialect, occupational background, educational attainment, and a range of west-coast

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experiences. That the Japanese appeared as a cohesive group was due in part to their efforts to present a united front, especially in the face of white hostility. Indeed, destructive internecine conflict that erupted in the 1960s, for instance, remained largely unknown in the wider community. Apparent Japanese cohesiveness is also explained by the geographical configuration of their postwar urban residence that, to apply Oiwa's observations of Japanese in postwar Montréal, was characterized by "dispersion" as a "style of collective thought" (Oiwa 1986, 34). Although the northern half of Lethbridge, for example, was a residential destination for many incoming Japanese (Kamitakahara [1975?]), no concentration of Japanese ever emerged. But in contrast to new communities emerging "east of the Rockies"—for example, Montréal (Oiwa 1986), Toronto (Makabe 1998), Winnipeg, and Edmonton (Loewen and Friesen 2009)—longer-term "self marginalization" (Oiwa 1986, 20) was not tantamount to complete invisibility.

In her critical exploration of the multicultural polity, Sarah Ahmed describes the constitutionally inscribed legal imperative to welcome "the stranger." Although her example is Australia, this phenomenon is also germane to Canada. Yet the "ontology" of the stranger is not only often maintained; it is to conceal social relationships within a "fetishism" of the embodied other that constitute "processes of inclusion and exclusion, of incorporation and expulsion [. . .] the boundaries of bodies and communities." Through these, "the prior histories of encounter that might violate and fix others in regimes of difference" are reopened (Ahmed 2000, 4–8). Yet for the Japanese, perhaps we might see how in their emergence from colonial violation and survival of state violence, the fetish of the stranger might be selectively self-embraced and powerfully deployed. Such projections not only reflected the post-colonial wobble of white Dominion power in the postwar retreat of imperial Britain but sought to charm an emerging post-Dominion/post-colonial sensibility, stroked its ego, decorated its banality with a touch of exotic beauty, and in the process, transformed a once hostile space into a relatively safe place called home. This is not to misrecognize public conventions of polite interracial tolerance as the end of Anglo-conformist racial regimes. As the next section makes clear, so powerful were these that they could provoke crises in self-certainty. However, a distinctive moment mid-century is illuminated in which an ahistorical Japanese visual imaginary of the city infused foundational historical racialized narratives.

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Imagining Confrontation: Haptic Significance

Introducing his contribution to the *Nikkei Tapestry*, a local history project celebrating southern Alberta's Japanese Canadian community, Saburo "Sab" Nishi (1926–2015) described an encounter: "I was accosted by a '*hakujin*' [Caucasian] acquaintance on the street and asked a rather accusatory and pointed question: 'Why do the Japanese grow potatoes?'" He continued,

> As I did not have a ready answer, I shrugged my shoulders and walked away from him. But, in mulling over the question, my wits and stubborn pride came to the fore, and my answer would have been something like this: "Why you stupid fella, it is the white man's staple. If we did not grow them, you could be in the same situation as the Irish were during their great famine. We have you by the—and don't you forget it!" (LDJCA History Book Committee 2001, 49)

The passage is certainly colourful, and it reflects this man who was known as a "character," a "happy go lucky guy" (Dick, personal interview, March 11, 2011). Nonetheless, there is a sting in Nishi's humour because it exposes as dissonant the racial harmonies amplifying Lethbridge's postwar multicultural settlement. Here, we can see the specific forms discrimination might take and begin to appreciate why it was powerfully felt. In Nishi's umbrage, we become witness to what can be understood as a "racial microaggression," which Sue et al. (2007) define in their study of the Asian American experience as

> brief and commonplace daily verbal, behavioral and environmental indignities, whether intentional or unintentional, that communicate hostile, derogatory or negative racial slights and insults. [. . .] Simply stated, microaggressions are brief, everyday exchanges that send denigrating messages to people of color because they belong to a racial minority group. These exchanges are so pervasive and automatic in daily interactions that they are often dismissed and glossed over as being innocuous. (72)

According to their typology of "microaggressions," Nishi was the target of a "microinsult"—that is, "a behavioural action or verbal remark that conveys rudeness, insensitivity, or demeans a person's racial identity or heritage," and we might add to this, an individual's community and its history (Sue et al. 2007, 73). Indeed, foregrounding the engagement is the conspicuous postwar

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record of the Japanese Canadians in the region's potato-growing industry. Starting from modest beginnings at the end of the war—growing "a few spuds [on] a few acres" all by hand on flood plains (Dick, personal interview, March 11, 2011)—"Evacuee" families like the Nishi's joined established farmers from the pre-war period like the Hironaka's (LDJCA History Book Committee 2001, 48) to define southern Alberta as one of the continent's premier potato-farming areas. Producers like Tona Ohama, who worked the province's largest potato farm at 850 acres, and Min Fujimoto—Canada's biggest grower of elite seed potatoes in 1965—were celebrated for the records they set (Ohama and Ohama 1973; United Farmers of Alberta Co-operative 1965, 2–3). They also pioneered crop innovation, mechanization, and storage to transform the industry while also leading it: chairmanships and directorships of the Alberta Potato Growers' Association (LDJCA History Book Committee 2001, 48). Along with other Japanese producers of vegetables, they owned vast tracts of farmland stretching across the southwest region of the province. Far from being "innocuous," then, the question asked by Nishi's accuser was a critical interrogation and, in turn, an implied invalidation.

Nishi's delayed response further complicates the scenario. On the one hand, his *l'esprit de l'escalier* moment—the frustration of the perfect comeback come too late—invites the reader's sympathy if only because it is all too familiar. On the other hand, for the Japanese Canadian target audience of the *Nikkei Tapestry*, it perhaps gives voice to another shared experience. Far removed from the "old-fashioned" type of racism where "racial hatred was overt, direct, and often intentional"—to this we must add systemic, systematic, and eugenic—the "power of implicit racist attitudes and beliefs" is nevertheless exerted, and it is all the more injurious because of the "contemporary" microaggressive form it takes, "subtle, indirect, and [. . .] disguised" (Sue et al. 2007, 72, 73). "Was it really intended this way?" "Am I being too sensitive?": calling into doubt one's own perception and judgment, these are the everyday "dilemmas" experienced each day that sociologists of microaggression like Sue et al. describe. As such, they result in "severe conflict about whether to respond [. . .] given that most [perceived microaggressions are] unintentional and outside the level of awareness of the perpetrator" (78). Even so and even as Nishi imagines his retort, to have confronted the insult might have been ineffective, since it might have "only [made] the victim appear 'paranoid'" (78).

I'd like to draw attention to one other implication of Nishi's anecdote. Punctuating the biographical account of his and his family's past, which forms

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his other contribution to the *Nikkei Tapestry*, is the formative, central role of the land itself: on their forced arrival in Alberta as part of the "Evacuation" as sugar beet labourers having been dispossessed of their berry farm in British Columbia, "it was an inauspicious beginning where they had to start with few possessions and a little money" and in which "despite the gruelling 'widow maker' work [. . .] they managed to survive the harsh conditions" (LDJCA History Book Committee 2001, 314). A decade and a bit later, moving to Bow Island, a new chapter began: "They raised potatoes, sugar beets, and wheat" and "in the beginning, farming life was hard"—"the young bride from Tokyo [. . .] had to deal with the hardships of life in rural Alberta and raising 6 kids" (313). With its repeated emphasis on overcoming adversity and privation, this is a sensuous (or more specifically, haptic [Rodaway 1994, 41]) moral tale whose value is generated and measured through the acts of touching the soil itself, space—the land planted by hand and working the landscape. This is invested with profound meaning not simply because it provided the basis of a productive and eventually successful livelihood; rather, it is of life: "I have a tremendous affinity for the land, which is ultimately what sustains life," read the closing lines of the Nishi reflection, reiterated in his obituary (LDJCA History Book Committee 2001, 315; Southland Obituaries, n.d.). The body and the land merge where skin touches the soil so that place is integral to one's own sense of self, and within that identity are inscribed race and racism as the traces of history.

In highlighting Nishi's words, it becomes easier to understand why the white man's question about Japanese and potatoes came as such an affront. In the moment of its utterance, the ground on which Nishi stood was transformed from being just a bit of material space into the core of an environmentally embodied historical tale that was his and his community's past, present, and future. His farm, his family's home, this area of southern Alberta—they were shaped by other Japanese like him whose lives and memories bear witness to two lifetimes of graft and integrity. In one, racist state violence scripted a history of dispossession and dislocation; in the other, resilience, aspiration, ownership, and authority narrated a new journey of personal affirmation. The challenge of discrimination—the microaggression—was not simply that of a personal insult. Rather, it put at stake the land itself that Nishi shaped and made productive, that guaranteed in Nishi's imagined silent retort the moral worth of himself and the Japanese more widely. In other words, discrimination was about whose place southern Alberta was.

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Narrativizing Race in the Sensual Geographies of Lethbridge

In our various encounters with the postwar Japanese Canadian experience, there is an ironic twist that perhaps helps explain the efficacy of individuals' responses and memories. In Dick's citation of ethnic value (*shō ga nai*) and Helen's appeal to cultural tradition, remembering (of heritage) is in order to "forget" history—the "Evacuation." In Nishi's imagined confrontation, his provocative retort was a silent microstrategic response to deflect microaggression. What then of Pete? When we spoke with our two student researchers to review their oral history encounter with him, they reflected on how—occurring so early on in their engagement—his recollection about being excluded had the effect of fixing a narrative premise. Generalized as one instance of discrimination to which he was subjected, it was returned to and grappled with till effectively, as the second epigraph doggedly asserts, it was worked through with Pete appearing to have erased it and any experience of discrimination from his entire life story. For our students and indeed us, this was an inexplicable conundrum that we put down to the vagaries of memory and a retreat into a discourse of national belonging, one whose avowal of multicultural Canadian equality is a an easy if morally powerful patriotic expression: "We're all Canadians and that's it." Yet according to Ahmed,

> The construction of the nation space takes place alongside the production of national character as instance in which "the nation" itself is fleshed out [. . .] *as place and person*. The nation becomes imagined as a body in which personhood and place are precariously collapsed. Through a metonymic elision, the individual can claim to embody a nation, or the nation can take the shape of the body of an individual ("bodyscape"). (Ahmed 2000, 99)

Ahmed is certainly correct to warn us that the multicultural imaginary of the nation can have the effect of concealing difference, and in this light, we might interpret Pete's assertion as the internalization of this ethos of "repressive tolerance": despite (acceptable) cultural differences, we—in mantra-like fashion—"*are in fact the same underneath*" (106; emphasis in original).

But that's not quite right. "Easy going" and by his own admission someone who likes "to kid around," Pete (personal interview, November 17, 2017) is "serious" when it "comes to [. . .] history." Fully aware of the vulnerability of the

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survival of Japanese culture, language, and tradition, he explained why he joined the JCCA and other Japanese groups like the Lethbridge *Chōjūkai* ("seniors' association"), even taking a leading role in the Kagoshima Kenjinkai ("hometown" association to maintain immigrant prefectural affiliation): "It's something that, I won't give it up; it's something that I like to see my generation, my kids, my grandkids continue with." Importantly, Japaneseness as described in his everyday relationships is not that of a purist so that when he conceptualizes history as a "continuation with the present, the past, and the future [. . .] with the cultural system in the future," the intimate experiences he shares epitomize diversity: his marriage to a woman of eastern European descent and the identification of his children and relations in terms less of Japanese Canadian than of Japanese Hungarian, Japanese French, Japanese English, Japanese Métis. In practice, the JCCA New Years party, which he used to organize, was aimed at celebrating and nurturing Japanese camaraderie from the past into the future, all of it facilitated by liquor and Chinese food. And then there is Lethbridge, which his network of family, friends, colleagues, and acquaintances map in a geography of all his senses, of which perhaps sound—specifically every time his name is heard—is particularly potent: "Yes, at St. Michael's [Hospital; that's] where I got my name. 'Pete,' was from [. . .] the doctor that delivered me, it was Dr. [Pete—changed to protect pseudonymization], and that's where I got my name." Just as "St. Mike's," as this institution was popularly known, inscribed Lethbridge into his very identity, so too did Purity Dairy. In the painful episode for which it came forever after, Purity Dairy is also nevertheless central to a narrative of transformation. In this—as with Dick, Helen, Nishi, and indeed, Lethbridge itself—it gave Pete historical and moral impetus to affirm this space, this city, as his place in a will to "forget" ("we didn't have any discrimination") in order to remember from where it is he came to where it is he has arrived.

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8 Beneath the Olive Tree

Deema Abushaban

Beneath the Olive Tree

It is not the moon that lights our city tonight,
nor is it the sunset that lights our horizon,
it is the rocket that took away our rights,
causing our skyline to brighten.
I sit here beneath the olive tree,
as I listen for any one voice,
On this land, the birds are free,
but the people have no choice.
I heed my people cry for a helping hand
as the world turns a blind eye,
sitting on a fraction of the holy land
watching the war planes fly.
I sit here alone
because the rest of me is dead.
my brother threw a stone
so, they shot him in the head.
My father was a good man
who fought for our right to live free,
I was his number one fan
even after finding him dead and lying in debris.
My mother and sister were two innocent souls killed with no warning to flee.
That is why I'm alone

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sitting beneath an olive tree.
Today, I am the target to kill.
It is now my time to die.
Today, my killer's heart fills with thrill,
as I say my final goodbye.
As my life is taken away from me
I plant a smile on my face.
Sitting beneath the olive tree,
Allah wraps me in his grace.
My body is now lifted, wrapped in white
They say this is divine destiny, this is fate.
Walking through the streets in the middle of the night chanting and repeating
God is great, God is great, God is great.
Today, I was killed, but millions of I still exist.
I am a Palestinian who was born to resist,
and I say exist because I am allowed to do nothing more.
I am meant to silence myself,
as my heart roars.
I am every Palestinian living on a land that is
no longer mine.
Under your occupation I cannot shine.
My kite flies in the air that you occupy,
my peace lies in the oceans that you navigate,
and my heart beats on the land that you call
your own.

I am a refugee on my own land,
and you are my oppressor.
Not my father, not my brothers, not my uncles.
You.
You stripped every I of their home.
But lucky for us, home is not a place,
it is a feeling.
Killing innocent people is what you call salvation,
when really now these innocents are in a
position better than yours:

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They are up in heaven looking down at your
situation, and they wait to greet their friends
as you kill more and more and more.
Every woman and man a martyr,
and every child a bird of heaven.
Resting in peace, up in sky number seven.
Today there are thousands of I's
sitting alone beneath an olive tree.
And we are here with friends and family,
running water, and electricity.
We must open our eyes to injustice
and speak on behalf of those who do not have
a voice
For what is humanity if it is not humane?
Humanity is a given, but humane is a choice.
We should do what is humane for we are
human,
and aid those who are not free.

No more sitting alone beneath an olive tree.

Palestine

I have never lived in Palestine, but I will always identify as Palestinian, because to me, you're not from the place you live or have lived; you're from the place you feel most at home. For me, that place is Palestine. I have only had the opportunity to visit my family in Gaza about five times in over twenty years, and there's no better transition than a lack of opportunity to begin to talk about the occupation of Palestine by the illegal state of Israel. Before I go on, it is important to clarify that this is not a fight against Jewish people; it is a fight against the Zionists, those in support of the state of Israel, and the ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people. Said states that "there is no getting past the fact that for all Palestinians the processes of Zionism have dispossessed them" (Said 1986, 31). Said also states that "the Zionist movement is unique in the history of such pioneering settlement movements from Europe in that it not only took over territory, but it excluded—as opposed to simply exploiting—the natives" (32).

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The physical occupation of Palestine began in 1948, and ever since then, Palestine has become a giant prison for the Palestinian people who managed to remain in Palestine, avoiding being killed, and/or forced out of their homes by the Israelis. Prisons also rarely allow visitors, which is why I've only been there five times in over twenty years. When I go to Palestine, I go to Gaza, the only city in Palestine with no Israeli settlements, as they were kicked out in 2005. In 2007, Israel placed a siege on Gaza, restricting access to essential resources for human survival and restricting movement of resources and people in and out of Gaza while continuing to wage wars against Gaza. It is an ethnic cleansing of the Palestinian people.

Palestine is an apartheid state ruled by an apartheid system: the state of Israel. We tend to think of institutionalized racial segregation when we hear the word *apartheid* because of apartheid South Africa. However, apartheid Palestine takes on the form of institutionalized ethnic apartheid. It cannot be racial because this apartheid oppresses the whitest-passing Palestinian and the Black Palestinian just the same. It is a fight against our shared culture, traditions, and language. Palestinians survive under an oppressive system that serves and benefits Zionists while simultaneously oppressing and erasing Palestinians.

So there are different forms of apartheid, and Palestinians are living one of those forms: ethnic apartheid. This ethnic apartheid can be felt by every one of our senses. It is one that travels through time and generations. It is one that segregates and isolates on the physical level and the societal one and one that kills on the physical level and the emotional one. It's a system that threw my father into a cell because he fought for his and his family's right to exist. It is a system that took millions of trees from the hands that planted them, millions of children from the hands that fed them. It is the system that moved our *Kufiya* from our shoulders to our eyes. It is a system that sees education for Palestinians as one of the biggest threats to its terrorism, so it restricts it. It is a system that claims the land's trees, the air's birds, and the sea's fish. Seven hundred and eight kilometres of apartheid wall, checkpoints, and borders segregate me from the rest of my Palestine.

Racialized

I moved to Lethbridge in 2015 from Dubai, one of the most diverse cities in the entire world. Saying that I experienced culture shock when I first moved would be an understatement. The moment I landed in Canada, I was

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racialized. Living in Dubai, I had the privilege of not feeling racialized within that community as an Arab. Unfortunately, just as there is white privilege everywhere in the world, even in the Middle East, there is Arab privilege within countries like the United Arab Emirates because of a very apparent societal caste system. Migrants from South and Southeast Asia, several countries in Africa, and so on are always assumed to be members of the labour force, even if they aren't, and if they are, they are treated as lesser than. As an Arab, I could climb the social ladder much more easily than a member of other cultural groups. However, even within the Arab community, there is a caste. Locals of the country were higher on the social ladder than expat Arabs and so on, but this did not lead to feelings of racialization, because in all actuality, the colour of my skin alone did not distinguish me from other Arabs. There was no indication that I was Palestinian unless I was asked, but even then, I was not treated poorly. So when I say I was not racialized in Dubai, I am not saying that racism does not exist among members of the community there; I am just saying that I was not a victim of that racism. Therefore, I consider Canada to be the first place I have ever felt racialized.

I am not only an Arab but a Muslim female wearing hijab. So it was never an option to fall under the radar. I started my first semester at the University of Lethbridge less than a month after moving. At the time, I was one of two women wearing the hijab. I stuck out like a sore thumb. I remember walking into one of my first classes and sitting by someone in the third row. Immediately after sitting down, the guy stood up and changed his spot. That is something I will never forget. I constantly felt unwanted, secluded, and judged. Whenever people asked me where I am from, they never accepted Canada as an answer, because I was never "white" enough. When I would say Palestine, they would have no idea where that was. They'd ask me where it is on the map, and when I'd point, they would ask me why I don't just say I'm Israeli, because that's what it clearly says on the map. So I was constantly having to have political, religious, and racial conversations with people I barely knew. Constant self-advocacy is exhausting.

During my first two years in Lethbridge, while I was at school, I worked retail at the mall. That is where I experienced the most discrimination, and where I felt most racialized. Some customers would ignore me when I greeted them, and others would make unnecessary hateful comments. Staring was also very popular. After the Paris attacks in 2015, for example, I stopped wanting to go to work. People automatically assumed I somehow had

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something to do with it, despite the fact that I lived across an ocean from Paris and had never even been there. That's what hurt and continues to hurt me the most: people assume they know everything about me before ever meeting me. Before I have the chance to even say hello, I am a non-English-speaking terrorist with no business being in the West.

Very few people have had the courage to say these things to my face; instead, they flip me off from behind their car windows, or tell me to f*** off when I'm crossing the street. In none of these examples am I anyone but a human being, with eyes that see, ears that hear, hands that touch, a tongue that tastes, a nose that smells, and a heart that feels and beats like everyone else's. Many people here in Lethbridge are unable to strip me down to my humanity, but they are also unable to accept and love the parts of my identity I wear with pride. I can never be Canadian enough because of the absence of white in my skin and blue in my eyes.

Racism

I have never experienced as much racism as I have living in Lethbridge. Yes, Palestinians are living under an apartheid system, but not one rooted in institutionalized racial segregation. The Palestinian struggle is often described not as one of the racialization of the Palestinian people but as a problem of displacement, of betrayal, and of stolen land. So when I am in Palestine, racialization is the last thing I think about. I am a victim of racial discrimination, and if I wanted to, I could easily resent being born into a Palestinian family, because it gave me my olive skin. I could resent my faith, because it requires me to outwardly express my religious identity through wearing the hijab. However, I pride myself on my identity. My olive skin is proof that my parents survived the oppressive occupation of the state of Israel and raised me to speak on and fight against the injustices committed against my people. The hijab I wear on my head is a constant reminder that there is something beyond this world that I can count on for justice. I am one of millions of displaced Palestinian people around the world, and at times I think that if we were never displaced, we would have never been victims of racial discrimination. However, that is not the case.

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What It Means to Be Palestinian

Most of my father's side of the family lives in Gaza, a small city in Palestine on the shore of the Mediterranean. The first time I visited was in 1998, when I was only three years old. When I talk to people about this visit, they always ask me how I remember, given how young I was. And my answer is that a human being, no matter how young, is incapable of forgetting injustice. It is also important to note that one must recognize injustice first in order to be incapable of forgetting it. Every year we would visit, we were greeted at the Egyptian-Palestinian border with guns and hate; funny how well those two words complement each other. While on the Egyptian side of the border, you see cardboard boxes flattened and used as something to sleep on; cardboard flooded the floors. Some sleep on the border for weeks, not allowed to cross the border to Gaza or return to Egypt. There is no reason for this other than a want to torture the innocent, the powerless, the voiceless. Some slept long enough to have the border be the last place they were unfortunate enough to sleep. Children, mothers, fathers, the elderly, the ill—it doesn't matter who you are; there is no hierarchy among the powerless.

On the Palestinian side of the border, there are no Palestinians. You walk into a room full of Israeli soldiers, armed and ready. Ready for what, I could not tell you. Guns were lifted higher on this side. The soldiers would always threaten to send us back to Egypt. Sometimes they would say it is because my mother is a Terrorist: Zeina—beautiful and radiant. Other times they would put our bags in the bus and send them back to Egypt without us, forcing us to go back. These actions and threats were always met with tears. My father, a man who had dealt with the Israeli Defense Forces soldiers before, did not like seeing our tears. He always told us that this is what they wanted to see and insisted that we, his children, never give them what they wanted. So we would wipe our tears . . . This is not just my family's story. This is the story of anyone who has ever tried entering or leaving Gaza.

Edward Said (1986) summarizes the Palestinian situation:

> The first dispossession bred a whole series of sustained exclusions, by which not only were Palestinians denied their primordial rights in fact: they were also denied those rights in history, in rhetoric, in information, and in institutions. So, we have the case today, unique in history, by which the state of Israel maintains a population of over

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> two million Palestinians in inferior status, and another two-plus million as exiles, while at the same time it says that it does not do so, and wars against the Palestinians on every conceivable level. It brands Palestinian organizations as terrorist, it claims that its own actions are just and democratic, it congratulates itself constantly on its soul and its anguish, even after it is manifestly responsible for massacres, wars, deportations, torture, collective punishment, and expropriations against the Palestinians. (32)

I will never forget walking into the guest room on the top floor of my grandfather's house, opening the closet door, and seeing a hole. I immediately asked my cousins about it, and they said it was a bullet hole. I was outside one day, my eyes tracing the outline of our home. My eyes stopped at a missing chunk of cement. Again, I asked my cousins, and they said it happened during the civil war. My point is, everywhere you look, you are reminded of war. And I was only visiting.

My family and I were fortunate enough to enter Gaza more times than we were sent back. The reason why I am mentioning my experience is because it adds validity to what I am about to state next. I have never lived there. But as I said, I have visited. I have had guns pointed at my head. I have had a tank cannon pointed at my family and me. I have experienced rockets, surveillance by land, sky, and sea. And I was only a visitor . . . So no matter how much I tell you about their situation there, I can never paint you a full picture of what the Palestinians go through on a daily basis. But I am privileged, because I have a voice, and I have been fortunate enough to encounter people in my life who are willing to make my voice heard.

My voice is mine, and it is based on my experiences as a Palestinian who has visited Palestine and who has family there until this day. Palestinians are human, which means they have rights. Humans have rights. Period. They also live on this earth with us. They know winter and summer, they know night and day, they live twenty-four-hour days, and minutes are sixty seconds. Palestinians are humans living on this earth. This may seem like common sense, but take a moment to think about how many times you have heard about the struggle of the Palestinian people in your life. Not many.

If I was a Palestinian living in Gaza, this would be my situation; remember, I am human. Just like everyone else in the world, I would require light to attend to the activities of my life; I have eight to twelve hours of electricity

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a day; remember, just like you I experience day, night, summer, and winter; my days are twenty-four hours long, and my minutes are sixty seconds. Just as I need electricity, I also need water—to survive. I have access to ground water wells, the same wells almost two million other people also rely on for survival. Ninety-five percent of the water I do have access to, for a maximum of six hours a day, is not drinkable. I have / am supposed to have a right to an education, inside or outside of the city. However, because of the siege and the occupation of Gaza by the terrorist state of Israel, educational opportunities available to people in other parts of the world are not available to me. They invite me to a conference, but I can never make it. I am offered a scholarship, but I am unable to obtain it. I and/or my father, my mother, my grandfather/mother, my sister or brother have cancer; my medication and treatment are restricted. Lucky enough to not have cancer, my disease cannot be cured because the machine that could possibly cure me relies on electricity. I lost my home to war. Materials I would need to rebuild my home are not allowed in by those who destroyed it. There goes my right to shelter.

I am now sitting alone beneath an olive tree. Hot and thirsty. In dirty clothes. I have lost members of my family to disease and others to war and I am homeless, dreaming of the education to which I know I have no access. And just like that, I am stripped of my right to live. It seems the world has forgotten that I am also human . . .

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Part III

Policing and Carceral Logics

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9 The Colour of Policing in Lethbridge

Gülden Özcan

The aim of this chapter is to explore the ways in which racism operates in police practices with a particular attention to Lethbridge. The chapter is designed to provide a historical trajectory for the relationship between policing, racism, and colonialism and is composed of two parts. First, I introduce readers with a brief history of modern policing and its nation-state building capacity. This part takes issue with the conditions that created modern police forces in Europe in the early nineteenth century as well as with the colonial roots of policing. Then, I focus on the coming of the North West Mounted Police (NWMP) and its significance in Canada's nation-building process. This is exemplified in the NWMP's first assignment to Fort Whoop-Up in 1874 in what we now know as Lethbridge. Second, I explore racialized policing in modern Lethbridge through the concept of "racial profiling." I focus on the most obvious case to demonstrate the racial profiling done by police officers in the city of Lethbridge: the carding practice, where the police randomly stop and ask "suspicious" subjects for identification. In this part, I also look at police practices in the name of the "war on drugs" and demonstrate how the war on drugs has increased police surveillance and criminalization of racialized bodies in Lethbridge.

While tackling these issues, I rely on and make use of certain premises. First, I prefer to use the term *white supremacy* rather than racism wherever possible in order to emphasize the structural causes behind racialized policing and stress the fact that white supremacy is not only the ideology of marginalized, racialized groups; it lies in the very foundation of our societies.

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White supremacy refers to a "political, economic and cultural system in which Whites overwhelmingly control power and material resources, conscious and unconscious ideas of White superiority and entitlement are widespread, and relations of White dominance and non-White subordination are daily re-enacted across a broad array of institutions and social settings" (Ansley 1989, 1024). Second, I try to explore the advantages of white privilege rather than the disadvantages of racial discrimination—precisely because we have been taught about racism for so long as something that puts "others" (read as non-white) at a disadvantage and not to see its opposite: white privilege that puts white people at an advantage (McIntosh 1989). As Dyer (1997) has shown, whiteness has been exnominated, or made invisible, in Western culture so that it becomes simply the norm. Dominant groups still frequently present themselves as beyond naming in relation to aspects of identity. In many contexts, white, male, and heterosexual "go without saying." It is therefore important to recognize and acknowledge that whiteness needs to be named. Third, my preference for the terms *racialized people* and *racialized practices* over *race(s)* is an intentional one. The term *racialization* "reflects that race is a social construction and not a biological identifier," and it also connotes a process "in which race is constructed by the dominant groups and institutions in our society" (Tanovich 2006, 5). However, the fact that race is a social construction does not mean that racism's impacts are not real. Race is a social construct, but racism continues to reinvent its power over, discriminate against, and kill people in the name of race. The chapter follows "racial literacy pedagogy" in order to unsettle individualized, moral accounts of racism that see it as out of the ordinary (Lentin 2020, 11). Fourth, I try not to take the police's own vocabulary (like homelessness, drug crisis, "a few bad apples") at face value and question this vocabulary and the processes through which it is created, in line with what Correia and Wall (2018, 2) call "copspeak"—"a language that limits our ability to understand police as anything other than essential, anything other than the guarantor of civilization and the last line of defense against what police call savagery."

A Brief History of the Police: Modern Nation-State, Capitalism, and Colonialism

Today, the police seem inevitable in modern societies. When we ask the question "Why do we need the police?" or "What do the police do?" we often hear

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people talk about their role in fighting crime or providing security. However, historically speaking, the role of the police is much more complex and to a great extent different from fighting crime. In contrast to popular belief, research shows that majority of police work is not fighting crime (Ericson 1982). Rather, a huge chunk of police work is patrol work; whether on foot, in cars, on horses or bicycles, police officers patrol various urban places. Bayley (2005) contends that 64 percent of officers in Canada are assigned patrol work. A very small portion of this patrol work involves dealing with crime. John Sewel (cited in Comack 2012, 58) reveals "the average Canadian police officer can expect to make seven or eight criminal arrests a year, or one arrest every six or seven weeks. The majority of these crimes involve property, not violence to a person." Comack argues that "police are more likely to be engaged in 'social work' than in crime-fighting or law enforcement activities" (59). How then should we understand the police presence on our streets? The history of the modern police may help answer these questions. In the next section, I elaborate these histories by focusing on first the European roots of the police, then the police in Canada.

The Arrival of the Modern Police

The term *police* first emerged from the French-Burgundian *policie* in the fifteenth century and referred to "a condition of order in the community" or "statute aimed at the institution and/or maintenance of order in the community" (Neocleous 2000, 1). With the emergence of the "science of police" (*Polizeiwissenchaft*) in the seventeenth century, the content of the order as well as the ways to achieve this order were related to the *raison d'état* (reason of the state) and the new mode of production it perpetuates. Thus, the science of police in the seventeenth century linked the state to the economy. The main interest of those writing on the police in the eighteenth century was the development of commerce and the production of wealth. According to Adam Smith (1763), one of the tasks of the police was to maintain plenty and cheapness—a task of establishing and maintaining exchange and property relations on the national level where civil society (the market), families, and individuals are not reliable. They designed policing mechanisms to facilitate the growth of the money supply, population, foreign trade, and mining.

The source of wealth was, as police scientists defined it, labour. This "precious commodity," Patrick Colquhoun (1795, 366) has suggested, "could only

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be appropriated from the poor." In order to get more from the poor, the states had to take good care of the poor. In England, Colquhoun played the most important role as the "architect" or "inventor" of modern police (Linebaugh 2003, 426). He was the London agent for the planters of St Vincent, Nevis, Dominica, and the Virgin Islands and worked for the West India Merchants' Committee in London. He worked on police schemes and the reformation of the London dockyards. He initiated the Thames River Police in 1800 to regulate the work conducted at the dockyards. The aim was to end customary takings and subject the dock workers to wages, and wages only. The products brought to London shores from the colonies, specifically those from what they then called West Indies—that is, North America—were of utmost importance to Colquhoun and his fellow merchants to build up their capital. We can say that the notion of police connects the state, wage labour, capital holders, and colonialism. Colquhoun's plans were put into practice with the *Metropolitan Police Act* of 1829, and a centralized and unified system of police, or a "police force," was established in London. The aim was to create a professional, bureaucratically organized lever of urban discipline, to permanently introduce the police into the hearth of working-class communities, and to create a bureaucracy of official morality (Storch 1976).

From the very beginning, the aim of the police has rarely been to protect citizens. The coming of the modern police force was not a response to the increase in crime rates in the nineteenth century either. We do not know the crime statistics of the nineteenth century in comparison to the previous centuries, which could prove this argument. However, what we do know is that in the nineteenth century, crime was being redefined with the new mode of production, and the police had become the active agents of this redefinition. For example, as Emsley (1999, 8) describes, "Business fraud, for which the economic changes of the nineteenth century provided massive new opportunities, and various forms of corruption by members of the respectable classes, did not figure among the 'crimes'" the new police were concerned about. The crimes the police dealt with were related to "disorder" (also newly defined) among lower classes—that is, "plebeians, particularly those who were thought to prefer idleness and an easy life to honest labour" (Emsley 1999, 8). The police function is then inherent in class structure; the state "employed the police methods to accelerate the accumulation of capital by increasing the degree of exploitation of labor" (Marx [1867] 1990, 905). The exploitation of labour is only possible through wage labour. As Foucault (1965, 46) clarifies,

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police can be defined as "the totality of measures which make work possible and necessary for all those who could not live without it." In this sense, the aim of the police has been to establish a new order (Ericson 1982; Neocleous 2000) and to make those lower classes fit into that order serving in the best interest of the state and the capital holders. The ongoing dispossession on which capitalism relies heavily cannot exist without a combination of benevolent and violent police powers.

Similarly, the role of police in creating societies built on the premises of white supremacy is crucial. Policing is "modelled on existing racial hierarchies" (Crosby and Monaghan 2018, 193). As Comack (2012, 57) clarifies, "The 'order' that the police are charged with reproducing is decidedly 'raced' (as well as gendered and classed)." Racialized frames of reference, or stocks of knowledge, inform police work. Thinking about policing in Canada in this sense requires attention to settler colonialism. Settler colonialism as a structure (Wolfe 2006) enables us to see colonialism as an ongoing process penetrating social as well as state formations. Settler colonialism is not about replacing, or substituting, a society but about the construction of a new one. It is instead about establishing a new society on expropriated land and thereby brought forth the need for policing (Dafnos 2013). Policing in settler-colonial societies was built on existing structural inequalities and survives by constantly reproducing them. The issue of racism in policing is institutional and systemic. This is why Comack (2012, 15) calls this "racialized policing." All policing has been racialized since the inception of the idea of the police, and Canadian society is no exception. As Jiwani (2002, 69) describes, "The emphasis on policing certain groups of people and certain types of crimes is reflective of the social stratification system underpinning Canadian society. Those at the bottom are considered to be the most prone to crime, are seen as less credible and deserving, and are often perceived by the dominant society as dispossessed and disposable." In Canada, this is also achieved based on settler-colonial motives. In a sense, "it is law and the police powers that made and makes settler colonialism possible" (Patricia Monture-Angus cited in Correia and Wall 2018, 6). Nowhere is this more evident than in the arrival of the police in Canada.

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The Police in Canada: North West Mounted Police and Treaty 7

Needless to say, the First Nations living on the territories we now call Canada had a systematic, organized, complex, and sustained use of their resources learned from generations of living in these territories. They each had successful economic strategies, reliable political structures, legitimate leadership and authority, protected borders, legal systems, and controlled access to resources. Police as producers of order in the colonies had the missionary task of imposing European values and norms on Indigenous populations (Emsley 2014). In this sense, the emergence of the NWMP was crucial for Canada's nation-building process, part of which included asserting claims to the newly acquired western territories between Manitoba and the Rocky Mountains, keeping the borders between Canada the US in order, and extracting capital on newly expropriated land.

Before the arrival of the NWMP, Sir John A. Macdonald, the first prime minister of the Dominion of Canada, contacted London for information about the Royal Irish Constabulary (RIC; Emsley 2014). His explanation for requiring this information was rooted in creating a police force: "I propose to organize a Mounted Police Force, under the Command of Captain Cameron, for Red River purpose" (Horrall 1972, 182). In December 1869, Macdonald wrote in a letter to Captain Cameron, an officer of the Royal Artillery,

> It seems to me that the best Force would be Mounted Rifflemen, trained to act as cavalry, but also instructed in the Rifle exercises. They should also be instructed, as certain of the Line are, in the use of artillery, this body should not be expressly Military but should be styled Police, and have the military bearing of the Irish Constabulary. (Macdonald cited in Horrall 1972, 181)

In England, police forces often followed the model of the London Metropolitan Police that was established through Colquhoun's initiatives in 1829. The London Metropolitan Police were unarmed and non-military in character whereas the RIC, founded in 1822 to control social unrest in Ireland, resembled a semi-military force. Its members were armed and under the central control of the Irish authorities in Dublin (Horrall 1972). When their mission of acquiring political control in the West and disciplining Indigenous populations is considered, it becomes clear why the more militarized RIC was

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Macdonald's preferred model (Brown and Brown 1973). The NWMP were an essential part of Macdonald's national policies.

While the substantive reason for initiating the NWMP was to build a white settler order in the newly acquired land, sending armed forces northwest at the time was justified with the intention to intervene and stop the whisky trade (Brown and Brown 1973). Settlers from the US had established this trade in Native communities, causing significant chaos at a number of trading forts. In 1874, the NWMP arrived after a long march west under Colonel James Macleod and tried to put an end to the whisky trade. Their first target was Fort Whoop-Up in today's Lethbridge. Nevertheless, when they arrived at Fort Whoop-Up, the traders they were looking for had already left—most likely because of fears that the police were coming (Longstreth 1927, 48; Luckhurst 1974, 19). One of the earliest members of the force explains their intent in his memoirs:

> In 1874, three hundred green men, some very young without any experience of prairie life and few with the experience of discipline, were launched into this unknown country, told to put an end to the sale of whiskey to the Indians and to instill in the latter, some of the most savage tribes [*sic*] in North America, respect for law and order. This they accomplished well. (Kelly 1996, 24)

Smith (2009, 59) argues that "the primary role of the Mounted police was to facilitate the peaceful occupation of the west by Anglo-Canadians and to allay their fears of Indigenous people once they arrived." Macdonald also confirmed that "the business of the Mounted Police is principally to keep peace between White men and Indians" (cited in Smith 2009, 59). Peace here should be read as "pacification" (see Özcan and Rigakos 2014). In his critical reading of contemporary security studies, Neocleous (2010) refers to security and police jobs as a way of making war through peace. Peace in colonial contexts almost always connotes war. In this sense, the role of the NWMP was expanded at times, contested, and negotiated, as is the case in each project. But this main function has never changed: encouraging future white settlement in the region while keeping Indigenous populations under control and making the land conducive to capitalist exploitation. As Smith (2009, 145) concludes, the aim was to "reconstruct the prairie west from a domain of fur traders to a space in which other economic potential, more hospitable to colonial expansion, might be exploited."

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Accordingly, the NWMP became essential to controlling, eliminating, dispossessing, and displacing First Nations to construct the transcontinental railway. The First Nations' title to the land had to be extinguished to rapidly build the railway that was promised to British Columbia as a condition of their joining the Canadian Confederacy in 1871 (Tesar 2016). This required acquisition of the land from the First Nations with as little resistance as possible—that is, through a treaty making—which would also be in line with the 1876 Indian Act. The NWMP became "a major force in laying the ground work for the acceptance of Treaty 7 and were a presence, along with their cannon, at the negotiations for the treaty" (Smith 2009, 59). Treaty 7 was signed in 1877 by five First Nations: the Siksika (Blackfoot), Kainai (Blood), Piikani (Peigan), Stoney Nakoda, and Tsuut'ina (Sarcee). Negotiations lasted only three days, with significant cultural and linguistic barriers present and most likely deliberate attempts of government representatives to mislead the Nations' perception of the deal. The First Nations may not have dealt with the government of Canada before, but they were used to treaties, as they constantly made peace treaties among themselves. They wanted, and understood, how to make peace between themselves, the government, and incoming settlers, while the government needed to extinguish Aboriginal title to the land (Tesar 2016). Treaty 7 confined each nation on their assigned reserved lands. Only two years after signing the treaty, a local Catholic priest described the First Nations' extreme poverty: "I have never seen them so depressed as they are now; I have never seen them before in want of food. [. . .] They have suffered fearfully from hunger" (cited in Tesar 2016).

After the signing of the treaty and the First Nations' move onto their respective reserves, the task of the NWMP was to keep track of Indigenous people that left their reserves for certain periods of time. Large gatherings of Indigenous people practicing their customs and traditions were threatening to white settlers. Although the NWMP used vagrancy laws to keep Indigenous people away from the white settlers, they were not satisfied with the existing measures and asked for more authorities. In addition to the North-West Resistance, the Pass System established in 1885 was part of a response to the constant requests of the NWMP. The NWMP had already been asking for such measures describing the details of such a system to restrict Indigenous people to their reserves. They were particularly concerned about the Kainai. According to Superintendent Deane, "The Bloods think that they are the cream of creation, and it is time for them to begin to imbibe some modification of the

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idea" (cited in Smith 2009, 65). As such, the Pass System was part of coercive colonial practice in the interest of white settlers. The system itself and comments like Superintendent Deane's also demonstrate how racial hierarchies are shaped by settler colonialism. The NWMP in this sense not only aimed to wean Indigenous people from their customs and beliefs by enforcing laws but was also a mechanism through which to teach them their place in newly fabricated social order and hierarchy—namely, their inferiority to the white settlers. Crosby and Monaghan (2018, 193) argue that "most explicit in the policing of Indigenous movements are the normative beliefs that Canadian authorities have a duty to develop resources on Indigenous land, and that Indigenous Peoples are incapable of or hostile to economic development." The so-called superiority of the new order was described by one of the first members of the NWMP, ex–sub constable Maunsell on the fiftieth anniversary of the NWMP:

> Few people have seen our vast country change from a wilderness into what it is now. When I visit Calgary and stay at the Palliser Hotel I feel like a second Rip Van Winkle. To one who has not had my experience, it would require a vivid imagination to see Indian tepees on the ground now occupied by the hotel and envisage large herds of buffalo grazing on the town site of Calgary. This vast change could never have taken place if the Mounted Police, or some similar force, had not first established law and order. (Kelly 1996, 11)

Policing in Modern Lethbridge

Understood against this historical background, policing in modern-day Lethbridge deliberately targets bodies of the poor, Indigenous, non-white populations. This is not necessarily because the individual police officers are biased but mainly because the aforementioned continuities in policy preferences regarding policing resulted in structural inequalities that have been working to the disadvantage of these populations. Poverty disproportionately impacts certain populations because of pre-existing structural inequity. For example, non-European, non-white immigrant communities are more susceptible to poverty in Canada for various reasons, including second-language barriers, no or only partial recognition of their credentials, and financial responsibilities toward their families back home. Impoverished Black populations are also relentlessly targeted by police (Maynard 2017; Cole

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2020). Political, social, and economic institutions in Canadian society are built on settler colonialism and white supremacy, meaning that the structures of power governing these institutions are shaped by presumptions about the inferiority of Indigenous and non-white populations. Institutional racism is structured by the laws and practices that institutions create in order to benefit white people at the expense of people of colour.

The flipside of institutional racism is white supremacy, the fact that white people have social advantages in things like getting jobs, getting into university, and running government and businesses. Whiteness in this way has been continuously produced and reproduced, refined and protected in diverse ways allowing for the persistence of disproportionate incarceration, poverty, unemployment, deportation, and shooting of Black, Indigenous peoples, and people of colour (Kitossa 2020). This partly explains how the discursive preferences in security policies such as "tough on crime," "war on drugs," and "war on terror" increase police surveillance and the criminalization of racialized populations.

In Canada, "images and ideas embedded in political, legal, judicial, educational, and cultural discourses are still contributing to common sense understandings of what constitutes 'difference,' 'deviance,' and 'danger' to White society" (Tator and Henry 2006, 54). It is this "white gaze" that acts as a filter through which non-white populations are constructed and differentiated from whiteness (Tator and Henry 2006). As Smith (2009, 18) describes, "Knowing colonized peoples in this way allowed the construction of new oppositions between 'the savage and the civilized' or between progressive modern Euro-Canadians and stubbornly retrograde and tradition-bound colonized peoples. If Indigenous people were dishonest, simple, lazy, prone to violence, promiscuous, and self-indulgent, then non-Indigenous Canadians were honest, intelligent, hard-working, reserved, morally upright, and generous." When whiteness is normalized, non-whiteness is "abnormalized" (Tator and Henry 2006, 27). It is somewhat easier to detect those abnormals through their skin colour, other physical attributes, and cultural behaviours. The history of anti-Blackness, for example, "attaches Blackness to criminality and danger, rationalizes state violence against Black communities because Black people are presumed to be 'guilty in advance'" (Maynard 2017, 10). "Dangerous classes" rhetoric has historically functioned well as a justification for policing (Storch 1976). Rose (2002, 185) calls this "the politicization of danger." Through the discourse of dangerous groups, not individual offenders but portions

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of the population are identified as the risk factor, and "they" are disproportionately surveilled, disciplined, and punished. This is carried out in overt and more covert forms. In what follows, I will try to demonstrate overt racism in policing practices in modern-day Lethbridge by showing how the racial profiling used by the police materializes through carding practices. For a more covert example, I also explore the discourses around the "war on drugs" and how this discourse serves to further the criminalization and policing of racialized subjects.

Racial Profiling in Lethbridge: Carding Practices

The concept of "racial profiling" was not regarded as a problem in Canada until a public inquiry into the Toronto Police's biased treatment toward racialized populations was initiated through findings outlined in the *Toronto Star* that found that Black people across Toronto are three times more likely to be stopped and documented by police than white people (Rankin 2010; Meng, Giwa, and Anucha 2015). The Ontario Human Rights Commission (OHRC 2003, 6) defines racial profiling as "any action undertaken for reasons of safety, security, or public protection that relies on stereotypes about race, colour, ethnicity, ancestry, religion, or place of origin, or a combination of these, rather than on a reasonable suspicion, to single out an individual for greater scrutiny or different treatment." Racial profiling is a system of control and surveillance, and more importantly, it denies racialized people privacy, identity, place, security, and control over their daily life (OHRC 2019). In that sense, it is similar to other systems of control like slavery and segregation that made capitalist accumulation and colonialism possible. In Canada, studies focusing on racial profiling are increasing and expanding beyond Ontario (see chapter 10 in this book). Canada's first policy on racial profiling was released on September 20, 2019, by the OHRC. Until this detailed and extensive policy following on the preceding reports on racial profiling in Ontario (OHRC 2003), the issue was denied or attributed to the actions of "a few bad apples" employed in the police force. However, as Tator and Henry (2006, 17) argue, inscribed in the "a few bad apples" thesis is "the denial of racism as a set of institutional practices and patterned cultural behaviours that collectively support and reinforce racially different systemic outcomes." It is also important to note Comack's (2012, 57) warning that "the use of the term [racial profiling] has a decidedly individualized focus;

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specifically, on the exercise of discretion by individual police officers. [. . .] 'Racialized policing' implicates broader context."

The "a few bad apples" approach leaves the very structure and the core ideology of policing unchanged while trying to solve the problem by offering officers more training in race relations. Training is of course important and necessary, but not enough to address the issue of racism in any police force. More structural and substantial work needed to be done to eliminate institutional, systemic, and official racism inherent in criminalization practices. For instance, the Criminal Intelligence Service Alberta (CISA) facilitates the exchange of criminal intelligence between intelligence units, enforcement units, and the Criminal Intelligence Service Canada Provincial Bureau. CISA and its Alberta regular member police agencies (including the Lethbridge Police Service [LPS]) are also responsible for implementing the Provincial Organized and Serious Crime strategy (CISA, n.d.). Yet as Tanovich (2006, 16) observes, the official racialization of street crime takes place in the 2004/5 report itself. This is done through the naming of criminal groups like "Jamaican Organized Crime" and "Asian Criminal Groups" and the lists it provides under headings such as "Self-Identified Criminal Groups" and "Aboriginal Males Carrying Out Criminal Activities Relating to Drug Trafficking and Violence at the Street Level." The report also links poverty among Indigenous populations to the listed organized crime groups by emphasizing how "Aboriginal youth are feeding organized crime groups in Alberta." These stereotypes impact the way individual officers interpret their environment and how they conclude that there is objectively suspicious behaviour to suspect racialized individuals.

The practice of racial profiling by the Lethbridge Police is most manifest in the technology of carding. Carding refers to a police practice in which the police stop and ask "suspicious" subjects for identification and record their personal information in a database. It enables the police to "catalogue, commodify, discipline, imprison, manage, surveil and, ultimately kill disvalued populations" (Kitossa 2020, 7). The Supreme Court has found that carding is in violation of the *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms* in multiple cases (Progress Alberta 2018); nevertheless, it is still practiced widely and makes all citizens "legible" for social control (Kitossa 2020). Lethbridge lawyer Miranda Hlady filed a freedom of information request with the LPS after a University of Lethbridge student complained that they had been stopped by local police and questioned for no apparent reason (Battochio 2017). The data Hlady obtained

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shows that Black people are nine times more likely to be stopped and asked by the police to provide identification and other personal information. It also shows that Indigenous people are five times more likely to be carded. In his response to Lethbridge Police Chief Davis, who was discouraging public scrutiny into police work after Hlady's inquiry, Laurendeau (2018) emphasizes histories behind current racial profiling practices in Lethbridge, pointing to the hundreds of years of violent systems of colonization that resulted and continue to result in the dispossession, marginalization, and impoverishment of Indigenous peoples, mostly Blackfoot people in Treaty 7 territory.

Police work involves the policing of spaces as much as the policing of individuals. The policing of Treaty 7 territory, in conjunction with the history provided in the first section, reveals that what constitute "problem" spaces are those spaces occupied by Indigenous bodies in the city's downtown core. As Comack (2012, 64) argues,

> Inner-city communities populated by impoverished Aboriginal people and new immigrants are more likely to be seen as "disordered" and "dangerous" places, whereas suburban White middle-class neighborhoods—with their tree-lined streets, manicured lawns, and spacious homes—become spaces of "civility" and "respectability." In carrying out their task as reproducers of order, then, police concentrate their attention and activity on the former and not on the latter racialized spaces. In the process, they help to constitute and normalize particular spaces—and the people found within them—as "disorderly" and "dangerous."

This is also true for Lethbridge. When one wants to see the police in action, one should look at downtown Lethbridge, in particular Galt Gardens and vicinities of surrounding businesses. In her analysis of homelessness in Lethbridge, Kingfisher (2007, 95) reveals that the problem with Indigenous street people in Lethbridge was construed as "a failure on the part of the Native community to practice *kimmapiiyipitssini* (habitual kindness, taking care of oneself and one's family)." Blaming Indigenous people for their own impoverishment is also reflected in explanations of homelessness "focused on the structure of Native culture in isolation from the wider context of European colonialization and racism to invoke an essentialized Aboriginal culture that produces inherently lazy, addicted, parasitic, violent men" (102).

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War on Drugs and Supervised Consumption Site in Lethbridge

Less obvious policing that directly targets Black, Indigenous peoples and people of colour is the so-called war on drugs—"an established international legal norm, backed by a global system of militarized enforcement, at the centre of a worldwide network of police power and prison systems" (Koram 2019, 2). The concept of "drugs" cannot be separated from the historical law-making processes that first name and categorize certain substances as "drugs" and then prohibit them. When it comes to defining harms caused by drugs, the health impacts versus criminalization divide is a false one (Wohlbold and Moore 2019). Substances are not prohibited based on their physical or mental harms—nicotine, as Gordon (2006, 129) reminds us, is perfectly legal. What is considered a drug and what is not, or what is considered a less harmful drug, depends on white elite biases. The drug laws attempt to protect whiteness by regulating threats to the ongoing colonial project. Therefore, Wohlbold and Moore (2019, 24) argue that the war on drugs is "a response to particular and repeated crises of Whiteness." Considering the NWMP marching to Fort Whoop-Up in 1874 with the motivation to end the whisky trade among Indigenous people and the 1886 Indian Act banning Indigenous people from buying and selling alcohol, it is safe to say that Canada's first attempt into criminalizing substance use was clearly linked to colonial tensions. Although there were more substantial reasons for the coming of the NWMP, the aim of regulating alcohol consumption provided colonial government with "an additional opportunity to exercise sovereign control over Indigenous bodies" (Wohlbold and Moore 2019, 27).

In terms of the more recent bans on drugs and police enforcement of these bans, one can observe that the government prohibits drugs selectively based on the substances' association with immigrant communities (Gordon 2006). As Wohlbold and Moore (2019, 26) explain, "Substances are signifiers and their cultural personas (drugalities) dictate their relative level of danger based not on pharmacological knowledge but rather on the populations with whom they are affiliated." The criminalization of opium in 1908 was a response to its use by Chinese immigrants, while cocaine, banned in 1911, and cannabis, banned in 1923, were controlled because they were identified with Black immigrants (Gordon 2006, 130–31). The prohibition of "khat" took place in 1997 as a response to increased Somalian migration (primarily as refugees from the civil war) in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Somalians brought with

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them a new language, culture, and customs alien to most Canadians, and furthermore, they were identified with Islam. The prohibition of khat gave the police a "convenient pretext for stopping people and removing them from public spaces, and for entering Somalian homes, restaurants and coffee shops" (Gordon 2006, 142).

Like the examples above, the problematization of drug use in contemporary Lethbridge is a result of moral panic among white settlers. Hall et al. (1978) document how a particular moral panic constructing the Black youth as muggers emerged in the 1970s in England. In much the same way, a particular moral panic is emerging in Lethbridge concerning Indigenous bodies and drug use in public spaces. The discussion around the supervised consumption sites continues in a concerted way including the mainstream media, the police, politicians, and shop owners in downtown Lethbridge to develop the image of "dangerous" drug users, who emerge as a symbol of property crime and other undesired disorders. In their four-year business plan for 2019–22, LPS identifies their policing priorities. Their first five priorities are drug-related issues (LPS 2018b, 10–11). They identify the "social disorder" that they intend to address as "disturbances, panhandling, vagrancy, public intoxication and drug addiction" that are said to "continue to plague primarily the downtown core." In referring to drug users, a dominant discourse about addicts is prevalent, bringing forward other assumptions about drug users. The safety of "drug users," for example, does not seem to be an issue for the police. Again, nowhere do these documents mention issues of racism and/or hate crimes despite the fact that, as Granzow (2017, 347) confirms, "Lethbridge has a long history of racism." Everyday acts of racism such as "the posting of a 'No Indians Allowed' sign on the drive-through window of a local Tim Hortons" and many other anecdotal (unreported) cases of racial discrimination that the racialized settlers and their allies are well aware of are absent in the discussion of substance use in Lethbridge.

What is described as an "ongoing drug crisis that leads to an increase in spin-off property crime and social disorder" continues to keep the Lethbridge Police busy according to their annual report (LPS 2018a, 3). In annual reports and Lethbridge Police Council meeting minutes, it is clearly indicated that the areas of focus for the Lethbridge Police are the Public Library, Lethbridge Centre Mall, Park Place Mall, and Centre Village Mall. It is not unusual to read analyses in council meeting minutes that reckon "nicer weather will bring more people into the parks and issues in the malls will likely be reduced" (see

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LPC 2017). This language indicates that to them, the homeless or the poor translates mostly to mean Indigenous people. And their job is not to find a solution for the "problem bodies" but to push them around—preferably from profit-making places to non-profitable spaces. Despite the fact that borders between the reserves and the city of Lethbridge were opened up in the 1960s, the city of white settlement still clearly remains segregated (Kingfisher 2007). Therefore, the Indigenous bodies occupying public or semi-public spaces in downtown Lethbridge are deemed as not belonging to the city, and the war on drugs works well as a justification that mobilizes settler residents of the city around attempts to push Indigenous populations out.

Conclusion

Policing is fuelled by the racist tendencies of settler-colonial policy agendas in Canada, and particularly in Lethbridge, because of the role the police played in the early days of white settlement in the city, the signing of Treaty 7, and the historic significance of Fort Whoop-Up. Racism in policing therefore cannot be blamed on "a few bad apples"; it is structural. Racialized policing in Lethbridge and elsewhere results in the disproportionate representation of racialized populations in the criminal justice system. For example, the police focus on Black communities under the fringe of the "war on drugs" has resulted in the mass incarceration of Black people. In 2010–11, "Black inmates accounted for 9% of the federal prison population although Black Canadians only comprised 2.5% of the overall population" (Khenti 2014, 190). The "war on terror" has similarly accelerated the policing of Indigenous communities (Crosby and Monaghan 2018). The flip side of this is white supremacy, as clearly laid out in the case of the acquitted murderer of Colten Bushie among many others (Friesen 2018). A vivid case of what the police (don't) do in Canada is demonstrated in the cases of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (National Inquiry into MMIWG 2019).

There is no doubt that policing means control over bodies and space. However, it is a contested practice, meaning it never goes without resistance. Since the early days of the London Metropolitan Police, officers encountered protests. In fact, they were seen as "unproductive parasites." People wanted to drive the police out, preserve popular recreations, prevent interference in strikes and political activities, protect wanted individuals, protest instances of police brutality, and rescue arrested persons (Storch 1981). Similarly, one

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of the intents of the North-West Resistance that shaped the fate of the region for many years to come was the struggle against the NWMP's control over the First Nations and Métis, and their anti-Indigenous agenda in general (Smith 2009). Years of resistance against the police, as an embodied form of settler-colonial agendas, is evident in the fact that the First Nations in the region could, and to a certain extent did, preserve their customs and identity and that the police had to change their tactics and strategies over the years, alternating between violent and more benevolent forms of control. From vagrancy laws to the Pass System, from the "war on drugs" (targeting Indigenous populations occupying the inner city) to the "war on terror" (targeting various Indigenous resistances), the police had to respond to crises because of this contestation.

There are recent social movements that built on the experiences of past movements against racialized policing and the criminal justice system in Canada: Black Lives Matter, Idle No More, and Sisters in Spirit, to name a few. Indigenous resistance against police violence takes many forms, as does the increase in resistance of other racialized and marginalized groups in Lethbridge. SAGE Clan is one community organization that aims to provide food and connection to those who are on the streets and using substances. In their mission statement, they emphasize that they "are not a policing force, nor are [they] addiction experts, [they] seek to provide a sense of community and support to those who feel neither" (SAGE Clan, n.d.). Another community organization is Lethbridge Diversity and Inclusion Alliance (LDIA), "a community-based network addressing racism and discrimination to help make Lethbridge more welcoming and inclusive," which unfortunately has recently dissolved (LDIA, n.d.). The AIDS Outreach Community Harm Reduction Education Support Society (ARCHES, n.d.), a community organization formed in 1986 focusing on harm reduction, is another hub of resistance. Their supervised consumption services once provided a hygienic environment for people to consume pre-obtained drugs under the supervision of a nurse but have since been closed. Going forward, these and other emerging community organizations and forms of resistance against racialized police practices in Lethbridge will contribute to social change.

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10 A Discourse-Historical Analysis of Racial Profiling in Lethbridge News Media

Ibrahim Turay

Canada's supposed history of hospitality to Black peoples dates back to 1776. This period marked the arrival of three thousand Black loyalists—including freedmen, women, and slaves—who fled the oppression of the American Revolution and sought refuge in Canada (Cole 2020a; Thornhill 2007). However, the presence of Black peoples on this land dates back to the 1600s (Williams 2020; Statistic Canada 2019). These first groups of Black peoples saw Canada as a "promised land" where they and their descendants could live out their lives as free citizens (Thornhill 2007, 323). Unfortunately, notwithstanding the presence of many Black Canadians, this freedom is yet to come as the legacy of Black enslavement, also practiced in Canada, continues to impact members of Black communities (Aylward 1999; Cole 2020a, 2020b; Deliovsky and Kitossa 2020; Maynard 2017). This legacy is often evident in the ongoing state-sanctioned violence directed toward Black peoples and the constant police surveillance of Black youth through carding[1] practices, also known as street checks, amounting to racial profiling (Maynard 2017). Evidence suggests

1 The Honourable Justice Michael Tulloch (2018) defines carding as "situations in which a police officer randomly asks an individual to provide identifying information when there is no objectively suspicious activity, the individual is not suspected of any offence and there is no reason to believe that the individual has any information on any offence. That information is then recorded and stored in a police intelligence database" (xi).

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that Canadians continue to associate Blackness with criminality, often with the help of the mass media (Maynard 2017).

In this chapter, I first provide a brief discussion of anti-Black racism, including carding, and an example of racial profiling and public safety discourse to build the foundation of the project. Then, I outline the method of analysis and the *discourse-historical approach* that I used to generate my findings, followed by an analysis of five prominent discursive strategies used across news sources to generate opposition to, denial of, or justification for carding and racial profiling practice in Alberta. Finally, I conclude that both the headlines and argumentation strategies create two dominant positions on carding associated with racial profiling across news sources: denial and justification.

Background: Racism

Research continues to demonstrate the overrepresentation of Black peoples in the correctional systems of both the US and Canada (Alexander 2012; Davis 2003; Maynard 2017; Sapers 2013; Wacquant 2001, 2010). Today, while Black peoples represent about 3.4 percent of the general Canadian population, they made up 7.3 percent of all federally incarcerated offenders in 2018 (Public Safety Canada 2019). Provincially, criminologists Owusu-Bempah and Wortley demonstrated that while Black peoples made up 3.9 percent of Ontario's population, they represented almost 18 percent of admissions into provincial correctional facilities in 2010–11 (as cited in Maynard 2017, 110).

A recent CBC project, "Black on the Prairies," has also shown that Alberta holds the second-largest Black population in Canada (Fundira 2021). Overall, Black people represent 3.3 percent of Alberta's total population, with a median age of 27.7 in 2016 (Statistics Canada 2019, 18). However, Wortley and Owusu-Bempah's study revealed that Black peoples represented 5 percent of admissions to the province's correctional facilities in 2010–11 while they made up only 1.4 percent of the Alberta population during those years (Maynard 2017, 110). Maynard (2017) points out that Black peoples are overpoliced, meaning that they are subjected to frequent and often unnecessary police stops and questioning (carding / street checks), and they are more likely to be charged. When convicted, Black peoples are also more likely to be "severely sentenced and incarcerated" (83). This harsher approach to sentencing Black

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people is evidenced by their disproportionate representation in Canada's federal prison population.

Racism is the myth of racial superiority found within European ideology. It has been used to motivate, explain, or legitimize the exploitation, oppression, and extermination of non-European people, including Black peoples. While racial inferiority has been convincingly debunked, Van Dijk (1991) points out that this does not negate the ongoing existence of racism. Denying that racism exists ignores the evidence that racism continues to impact the daily lives of Black and other racialized groups. Indeed, the ideology of racial inferiority has been used to justify the colonization and enslavement of Black peoples (Fanon 1968; Loomba 2015; Van Dijk 1991) and is still marshalled to justify the subjection of Black peoples to hyperpolice surveillance, often under the semblance of a "law and order" rhetoric associated with the "war on drugs" policies of the 1980s (Alexander 2012; Davis 2003; Maynard 2017). Alexander (2012) indicates that the beginning of the war on drugs in the US in the early 1980s coincided with the collapse of blue-collar factory jobs, which severely impacted Blacks in inner-city communities (63–64). This decline in legitimate employment opportunities among inner-city residents, Alexander argues, "created economic desperation, leading some to sell drugs—most notably crack cocaine"—a drug that devastated inner-city Black communities (65). The crack cocaine "epidemic" served as an opportunity for law enforcement to "finally justify an all-out war on a racially defined 'enemy'" (65).

Similar developments "linking danger and drugs to the Black population" occurred in Canada in the 1980s, when then prime minister Brian Mulroney declared a war on drugs, which was invigorated once more by the election of Prime Minister Stephen Harper's government from 2006–15 (Maynard 2017, 92–97). This declaration, Maynard (2017) argues, allowed the Mulroney government to roll back on state-supported social-welfare programs. The Black federal prison population increased by approximately 70 percent during the Harper regime (Maynard 2017, 97). Maynard (2017) contends that the sharp increase in Black incarceration in Canada was a "direct result of successive, ideologically driven and racially enforced drug laws" (98). Racist attitudes are central in white support for "get tough on crime and antiwelfare measures" in the US (Alexander 2012, 68). Prison, then, is the new caste system, and the "war on drugs" policy is the primary channel that has contributed to the overrepresentation of Black peoples in prisons, in both the US and Canada (Alexander 2012; Davis 2003; Maynard 2017; Wacquant 2001).

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Racial Profiling: Carding

Carding is a law enforcement tactic that disproportionately targets Black peoples. This practice appears to be central in the early Canadian academic discourse and analysis of racial profiling, especially from the province of Ontario (Gunn 2019; Okeke 2012; Rankin 2010; Rankin et al. 2002; Wortley and Tanner 2003; Ray 2019). For instance, in 2002, the Toronto Police Service was on the defensive after crime reporters for the *Toronto Star* (*Star*) newspaper alleged that the police carded Black peoples more than any other group in that city (Rankin 2010; Rankin et al. 2002; Wortley and Tanner 2003). This practice is an example of racial profiling and has been of great concern to African Canadians long before the *Star*'s investigation (Henry, Hastings, and Freer 1996). The Alberta Human Rights Commission (2021) defines racial profiling as an individual's subjection to differential treatment or greater scrutiny because of negative stereotypes related to their race or skin colour, ancestry or place of origin, and/or religious affiliations, in conjunction with gender or sexual orientation.

There is considerable evidence that people of colour are subjected to differential treatment by police (Goff 2001; Weitzer, Tuch, and Skogan 2008; Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2009; Wortley and Tanner 2003). This targeting includes abusive treatment, misuse of police discretionary powers, and racial profiling related to carding practices (Goff 2001; Weitzer, Tuch, and Skogan 2008; Welch 2016; Wortley and Owusu-Bempah 2011). Police officers exercise discretion as to whether to arrest or warn a suspect when they believe the person has committed a crime, and the seriousness of the offence or prior criminal record is not a concern (Goff 2001). Discretion becomes problematic when the race/ethnicity of a suspect becomes a decisive factor in its application. Fairness in officers' use of discretion to stop and search is "one of the most controversial issues in policing, and maybe the most common form of abuse" that Black people often experience (Bowling and Phillips 2002, 138; Maynard 2017). Indeed, Goff (2001) points out, police discretion can "deteriorate into discrimination, violence, and other abusive practices" (178), especially if not carefully monitored.

Researchers and journalists with interests in police-racial-ethnic relations continue to link the police practices of carding / street checks to racial profiling in recent years (Gunn 2019; Okeke 2012; Rankin 2010; Wortley and Tanner 2003; Ray 2019). For instance, in October 2012, Montréal Police admitted

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to wrongfully tackling and arresting a young Black man perceived to be a suspect, sparking accusations of racial profiling by members of Montréal's Black communities (Okeke 2012). Nova Scotia's justice minister, Mark Furey, announced a permanent ban on street checks in Halifax because in October 2019, reports confirmed Black peoples were six times more likely to be street checked than their white counterparts (Ray 2019). This decision followed a careful review of the practice, concluding that "street checks are not reasonably necessary for police to execute their duties" (Ray 2019). Justice Michael Tulloch came to a similar conclusion in early 2019, following a review of the practice in Ontario (Gunn 2019). According to Justice Tulloch, random police street checks add little to no value as a law enforcement tool, and there are calls for the practice to be controlled (Gunn 2019).

In Alberta, concerns about racial profiling made news headlines in Lethbridge, Medicine Hat, Edmonton, and Calgary. Defence lawyer Miranda Hlady first raised the issue of racial profiling in Lethbridge following a review of the data by Lethbridge Police Service (LPS) on carding, obtained through a Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy request in 2016 (Labby 2017). News coverage of Hlady's review data revealed that the Lethbridge Police conducted 2,264 street checks in 2015 and 2016, 455 (20 percent) of which targeted individuals who were either Black or Indigenous persons and between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five (Labby 2017). Hlady's review further reveals Black people were nine times more likely to be street checked and asked to provide identification in the city of Lethbridge in 2015 and 2016 (Labby 2017). Jason Laurendeau (2018) argues Hlady's review provides "convincing evidence that Indigenous peoples, [B]lack people and people of colour are disproportionately the targets of unwanted police attention" in Lethbridge (1). The societal depiction of Black youth as thugs and gangsters (Maynard 2017), among other criminal labels, may explain their unwarranted police attention in Lethbridge.

Public Safety Discourse

Stuart Hall (1997a) points to the importance of language in his discussion of the relationship between representation and culture. He defines language as sounds, words, notes, gestures, expressions, clothes, signs, and images we use to communicate. Hall indicates that language is central to meaning and culture and is a key repository of cultural values. Hall further contends

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that language is the medium through which we express the "thoughts, ideas and feelings [that] are represented in a culture" (1). The cultural belief in the criminality of Black peoples is often expressed through terms such as *gangsters*, *thugs*, *criminals*, and *gang members*. Hall (1997a) argues that representation starts at the point of language because we use language to externalize the meanings we are making of others and the world as we know it. Van Dijk (1991) states that the choice of one word over another to convey a message sometimes indicates the "opinions, emotions, or social positions of a speaker" (53).

Therefore, when politicians, law enforcement officials, and cultural texts (e.g., news reports) use those words in association with Blackness, it creates a negative public depiction of Black peoples and perpetuates a general fear of Blackness—the skin colour that has come to signify peoples who self-identify as Black or have African ancestry (Hall 2021). The mass media, the majority of which is controlled by white elites (Hall 1997b; Kappeler and Potter 2017; Van Dijk 1991), has often been instrumental in propagating negative images of Black peoples. In most cases, the "media representation of crime contributes to racial stereotypes" where the perpetrators are people of colour, thereby promoting a misconception of crime and the creation of the fear of, for example, Black peoples, who are perceived to be prone to criminality and violence (Kappeler and Potter 2017, 31). The images that portray Black/African Americans as "looters" after Hurricane Katrina (CNN 2016) and, most recently, images of Black peoples from the protests after George Floyd's killing (Almaguer 2020) are some examples of how Blackness and criminality become metonymically related. Indeed, there is evidence to confirm the negative portrayal of Black peoples as prone to criminality and violence in the mass media, especially in the last two decades (Baden 2018; D'Angelo et al. 2018; Hall 1997b; Maynard 2017; Van Dijk 1991).

According to D'Angelo et al. (2018), this negative news media depiction of Black peoples is mostly because of biased news coverage and journalistic framing. Robert Entman's (1993) work on media framing of race and crime in the 1990s influenced D'Angelo et al.'s line of thinking. Entman's early work suggests that frames identify problems and outline causes equally. Entman argued that the framing of Blackness as criminality "was advanced specifically by news stories that increased the salience of race by focusing crime stories on blue collar offences committed by an overabundance of nameless, handcuffed Black suspects" (as cited in D'Angelo et al. 2018, 343).

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Hence, this project seeks to explore how carding is represented in the mass media in Alberta since 2015. One of my objectives is to identify the political actors as depicted in the media and the persons being quoted or named in the news articles analyzed. I also wanted to identify the discursive strategies used in the context of the literature selected for analysis. Hodes (2020a) defines discursive strategies as "linguistic practices that speakers and writers use to convey meaning and messages. Often, speakers revert to different discursive strategies to maximise the impact and effect of the message and to fulfil different interests" (1). Based on this definition, this project will facilitate the creation of a different discourse to enhance our understanding of the experiences of Black peoples, particularly with regard to carding—a common form of racial profiling in Alberta. Consequently, this analysis seeks to explore whether the discursive strategies used in mass media reporting on carding / racial profiling are furthering racist discourse, attempting to gain public support for the practice, or contributing to a critique.

Method

I employed a *discourse-historical approach* (DHA) for this project, drawing on critical race theory to provide a theoretical lens for understanding the historical and present events that continue to shape the relationship between the police and Black people. According to Wodak and Meyer (2015), "DHA attempts to integrate a large quantity of available knowledge about the historical sources and the background [like the legacy of slavery] of the social and political fields in which discursive 'events' are embedded" (3). DHA is interdisciplinary; it engages theory, research practices, and practical applications, like visualizing how the practice of racism continues to impact the lives of Black people in the present. DHA seeks to "deconstruct the hegemony of specific discourse by deciphering the ideologies that serve to establish and perpetuate" it (24–25).

Nonetheless, the challenge of using this approach is that "understanding and explaining the relationship between complex historical processes and hegemonic narratives" (Wodak and Meyer 2015, 13) requires the integration of Black people's experiences with bigotry, past and present, and reports, policy, and news reporting, among other sources. As a result, while this chapter incorporates snapshots of the broader history informing racial profiling through carding / street checks in Lethbridge, Alberta, and Canada

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more broadly, including governmental reports, the findings generated as a result of the news media analysis are preliminary to a larger project that will incorporate the voices of Black youth in Alberta. These preliminary findings are nevertheless revealing in terms of how media representations can shape popular understandings of racial profiling and how racial profiling is represented to the public in Lethbridge, Alberta. While carding / street checks that amount to racial profiling also affect other peoples of colour and Indigenous peoples, as research has shown, the focus on Black peoples is necessary as they are disproportionately impacted by these police practices.

Measures and Procedure

My sources for this analysis were located through a Google search, using "racial profiling" and "Alberta." This approach allowed me to obtain both province-wide and local online news articles related to racial profiling published between 2015 and 2020. I limited the search to between these years to correspond to the period when defence attorney Miranda Hlady first drew the public's attention to concerns about racial profiling. Hence, the corpus of data comprises sixteen articles, some of which were reprinted across the following news media sources: the *Lethbridge Herald*, CBC News Calgary and Edmonton, the *Globe and Mail*, Global News (Lethbridge), *Chronicle—Herald, Halifax*, *N. S.*, the *Toronto Star*, the *Star Edmonton*, and *Edmonton Journal*. The data also includes news articles obtained from the Canadian Newsstream database. However, as Hodes has outlined in her contribution to this volume, a significant limitation of the articles obtained from this database is that the articles tend to be extricated from larger sources. This process then omits surrounding stories and links that contribute to the intertextual nature of news reporting and visual representations, like pictures (see Hodes in this volume).

I also searched the following databases for peer-reviewed academic articles on racial profiling: SocINDEX with Full Text, JSTOR, Sociological Abstracts, and Academic Search Complete. However, these articles were not coded for analysis. Using NVivo, a qualitative data analysis software, I then coded each news source for five discursive strategies—argumentation, individualization, normalization, predication, and referential strategies—as they emerged in my data (Hodes 2020b). Coding "is an approach to organizing qualitative data by assigning short words or phrases to identify important features"; it is a cyclical and time-consuming process (see Hodes in this volume).

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Findings and Concluding Discussion

Five discursive strategies emerged as the prominent themes in the project.

The most prominent discursive strategy that appeared across news sources was argumentation. Argumentation refers to the lexical choices that social actors use to persuade readers (Reisigl 2017, 52). For instance, in the data collected here, arguments are used to justify why the practice of carding should continue or stop. The second most prominent was individualization. According to Hodes (2020a), "individualization" is a "referential strategy that refers to the social actors as individuals" (2). This strategy is often used to single people out in ways that can convey things like social class and authority in a community or, conversely, criminality, victimhood, or culpability. The third most common strategy was predication. This occurs when properties are linked to objects. When used to identify social actors, events, or actions, predication can create positive or negative characterizations and associations (Reisigl 2017, 52). For instance, when criminality is predicated on the properties of Blackness, Indigeneity, and other racialized or ethnic identities, reporting that disproportionately connects them with unsolicited police attention creates the perception that this attention is justified. This is connected to the strategy of normalization, whereby certain phenomena are naturalized or given a taken-for-granted or indisputable quality (Hodes 2020a).

For example, when carding is normalized as a necessary law enforcement approach, it becomes a desirable policing strategy instead of a racial profiling strategy that furthers systemic racism. Similar to predication and individualization, both of which are specific kinds of referential strategies, referential strategies can also more broadly "refer to ways of constructing of social actors" as part of in-groups and outgroups (Hodes 2020a, 1). Reporting on Black Lives Matter Edmonton and area chapter, Progress Alberta often relies on referential strategies that construct outgroups. My focus in this chapter will be on argumentation and normalization as it occurs in both articles and headlines to illustrate how they use these discursive strategies to support, criticize, or remain neutral in their assessments of racial profiling through police carding practices.

In analyzing argumentation strategies, I looked for the main arguments proffered by each article that either supported, critiqued, or remained neutral in its representation of racial profiling. For example, Rob Davis, former chief

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of police, LPS, made the following justificatory argument for why LPS could not be racist. He stated,

> The Lethbridge Police Service is accredited by the Commission on Accreditation for Law Enforcement Agencies [CALEA]. CALEA was born in the U.S. and brought together the International Association of Chiefs of Police, National Organization of Black Law Enforcement, the National Sheriffs Association and the Police Executive Research Forum. [. . .] Part of why it was formed was to address race-based issues that manifested in the late 1960s and the 1970s. (Yoos 2017, 2)

In essence, the argument goes like this: Premise 1: LPS is a member of CALEA. Premise 2: CALEA was born in the US in the 1960s and 1970s, together with the Black Law Enforcement organization, to address race-based policing issues. Premise 3: "Race-based" issues "manifested in the last 1960s and the 1970s" and are therefore a thing of the past. Conclusion: The LPS is not racist / does not practice racial profiling. According to this argument, the inclusion of the Black Law Enforcement organization in the process suggests that race-based policing issues have been solved; therefore, we should not be dealing with race-based policing problems in 2020. Yet race-based policing issues are decidedly a part of the fabric of policing today. A *Washington Post* (2020) report shows that police have killed 1,028 African Americans in the US in the past five years, 2015–20. These killings include Breonna Taylor and George Floyd. Five additional African Americans have since died in protests across US cities following Floyd's murder (Binder 2020). Canada's police brutality picture may be different, but it does not negate the fact police have been involved in the deaths of thirteen Black people within the same period (Cole 2020a). We live in a society where Blackness is equated with danger, and the outcomes for police-Black encounters have often been deadly, particularly when this perception intersects with an episode of mental health. Regis Korchinski-Paquet and D'Andre Campbell are among the most recent victims of fatal encounters while police were on wellness checks.

My query of the intersection between the dominant themes and selected attribute values revealed that argumentation was more substantial for articles published in Edmonton and Lethbridge between 2017 and 2020: 62 percent and 63 percent, respectively. Overall, argumentation appeared almost 56 percent of the time compared to the other dominant themes, shown in table 10.1. Note that the statistics derived from NVivo coding are meant for visualization

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Table 10.1. The intersection of dominant themes and attributes

	Edmonton (n = 6)	**Edmonton (n = 6)**	**Calgary (n = 3)**	**Lethbridge (n = 4)**	**Other—out of province (n = 3)**	
Codes	News Media Source Type = TV articles (n = 2)	News Media Source Type = Newspaper articles (n = 4)	News Media Source Type = TV articles (n = 3)	News Media Source Type = Newspaper articles (n = 4)	News Media Source Type = Newspaper articles (n = 3)	Total (n = 16)
Argumentation	66.07%	61.9%	40.68%	62.5%	50.65%	55.63%
Individualization	14.29%	23.81%	33.9%	8.75%	29.87%	21.5%
Normalization	7.14%	9.52%	6.78%	11.25%	3.9%	7.51%
Predication	3.57%	0%	15.25%	10%	11.69%	9.56%
Referential strategies	8.93%	4.76%	3.39%	7.5%	3.9%	5.8%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

purposes only and to show the dominant discursive strategies as coded by this writer for each of the articles analyzed for this project.

Furthermore, when coding for argumentation, I also compared arguments made in support of or against carding as a policing strategy. Results are shown in table 10.2.

Based on this query, online newspaper articles published in Lethbridge exhibited the most persuasive arguments in support of carding—54 percent—compared to those published in Edmonton: 50 percent. Here are examples of cases coded for and against carding. Chief Davis argues in support of carding in this manner: "[Carding] is a tool to gather information [. . . ; and the police officers have a] duty to public safety, crime prevention and addressing criminality and that duty does NOT see colour or race" (*Lethbridge Herald* 2017, A3). Defence lawyer Hlady argues against carding by stating, "The practice of stopping people and asking for information without advising them that they can refuse to answer without consequence is offensive. It's part of an on-going systematic racist practice and an example of discrimination in

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Table 10.2. Comparing arguments for and against carding

	Edmonton (n = 6)	Edmonton (n = 6)	Calgary (n = 3)	Lethbridge (n = 4)	Other—out of province (n = 3)	
Codes	News Media Source Type = TV articles (n = 2)	News Media Source Type = Newspaper articles (n = 4)	News Media Source Type = TV articles (n = 3)	News Media Source Type = Newspaper articles (n = 4)	News Media Source Type = Newspaper articles (n = 3)	Total (n = 16)
Against carding	64%	50%	50%	45.71%	80.95%	56.3%
For carding	36%	50%	50%	54.29%	19.05%	43.7%
Total	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%

our midst" (Labby 2018, 2). According to Bell (2008), race neutrality often makes it challenging to fight unconscious racism in all sectors in our society, including law enforcement. Therefore, to argue that officers do not see colour when enforcing the law idealizes a colour-blind approach to policing, thereby making it challenging to address the systemic racism that is prominent in policing and criminal justice systems more broadly. Racial profiling is one example of these practices. Racism is entrenched in our thought processes and institutions, the police included. Hence, colour-blindness does not equate to equal treatment for Black people, who are often perceived to be guilty without a charge (Delgado, Stefancic, and Harris 2017; Maynard 2017).

Additionally, presenting carding as a "tool to gather information" in the interest of a police crime prevention strategy seeks to normalize the practice by suggesting that not only is it capable of preventing crime but it is used indiscriminately. Figure 10.1 shows results from a text search query of the phrase *crime prevention*. Text search queries help researchers explore the use, context, and meaning of words within a corpus of data like the news sources analyzed here. For instance, the word "carding" was collocated with "play a key role in preventing and solving crimes," shown on the second line from the bottom left of figure 10.1.

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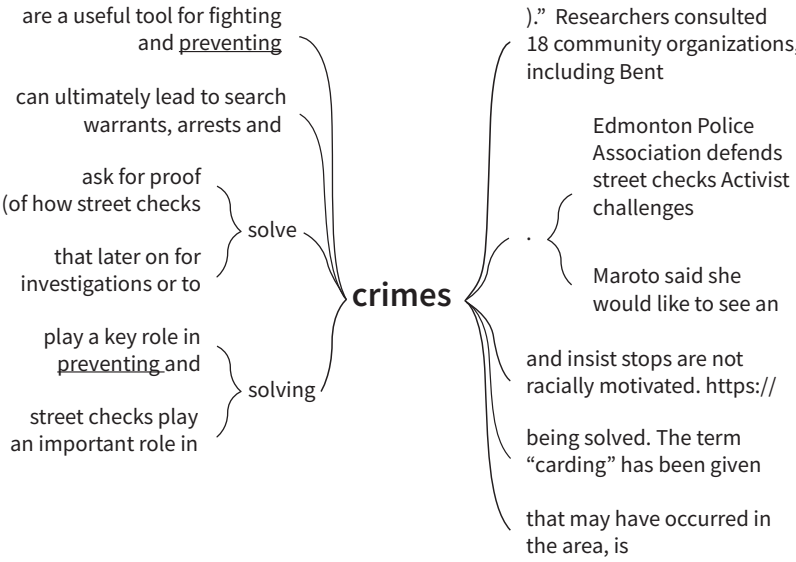

Figure 10.1. The association of street checks with crime fighting

This association of carding as a useful tool for crime suppression and prevention and maintenance of public peace would consequentially garner public support of the practice as a useful policing strategy. Politicians and law enforcement officials engage in "law and order" rhetoric to establish a symbiotic relationship between the two, where crime is considered an unacceptable pathology that needs to be eliminated at all costs (Mansell, Meteyard, and Thomson 1999). In a society where Blackness is the perceived source of this pathology, the demise of Black lives then becomes the price of maintaining a so-called ordered society. The media are often instrumental in promoting politicians and law enforcement's "law and order" rhetoric in society (Kappeler and Potter 2017).

Headlines play a critical role in news reporting, which necessitates, as Van Dijk (1991) indicates, paying attention to the interactions between words in the headlines of a project's dataset. Doing so aids in understanding the roles and relationships between the actors represented in news stories, specifically, the police, Blacks, Indigenous peoples, and other people of colour (Van Dijk 1991, 58).

The query revealed 63 percent of the articles' headlines represented carding negatively. The following are two examples:

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BLACK PEOPLE, ABORIGINAL WOMEN OVER-REPRESENTED IN "CARDING" POLICE STOPS (Wakefield 2017a)

SCRUTINISING THE CARDING PROCESS (Laurendeau 2018)

However, combining the neutral and positive representation of carding in the overall corpus of articles—50 percent and 18.75 percent, respectively—suggests carding is not necessarily depicted negatively in the headlines. Also worth noting is that the word "racist" was present in only one headline and in only three articles (n = 16). Here is one example:

LETHBRIDGE POLICE ACCUSED OF "RACIST" CARDING PRACTICES (Labby 2017)

This headline can also be interpreted in several ways. Because the word "racist" appears in scare quotes, it lends itself to a perspective that draws racism into question, and that presents the police as victims who are falsely accused of "racist" carding practices. Putting the word "racist" in quotation marks appearing directly after the word "accused" suggests that whether carding is racist is up for debate, thereby contradicting recent studies and judicial commentary indicating that carding constitutes racial profiling and is thereby inherently racist. Such depictions not only normalize but attempt to garner public support for the police practice of carding as a crime-fighting tool to ensure public safety.

My goal for this chapter was to provide an overview of a sample of media representations of carding, an example of racial profiling in Alberta. I wanted to identify the discursive strategies that are most prominent in the context of the articles chosen for the project with the intent to determine whether the news sources are (a) furthering racist discourse, (b) attempting to garner public support for racial profiling, or (c) contributing to a critique of racial profiling. A straightforward answer to these questions would be that yes, all these things were present in my dataset. For instance, Black people, Indigenous peoples, and allies, including Hlady, in particular, have explicitly labelled carding a racist practice. Yet my dataset contained only three articles where the word "racist" itself was mentioned. The argument that carding is a tool for preventing and solving crime, and not an example of racial profiling, serves as an example of an attempt to garner public support of racial profiling. Those who challenge the practice are thereby indirectly framed as being against public safety and supporting criminals. Finally, as the dataset clearly

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shows, Lethbridge news media were more likely to publish articles in support of carding / racial profiling than any of the other news sources analyzed for this chapter.

Despite the presence of media representations of carding as a detrimental practice to Black people and other racial-ethnic minorities, my headline analysis suggests that the neutral and positive portrayals of carding may have very well helped the police effort to normalize the practice. Police administrators in the Alberta cities mentioned here continue to deny that carding constitutes racial profiling. Police administrators in these cities have, however, acknowledged the need for more training in this area while waiting for direction from the government of Alberta. Nonetheless, one can only address an issue when one has acknowledged that the issue exists. Carding has also been an issue in Ontario and Nova Scotia, and unlike Alberta, governmental officials in both provinces have begun taking steps to address it. The New Democratic Party (NDP) government launched a six-week, province-wide consultation on carding in Alberta in August 2017, but nothing concrete came from it. Building on the NDP's consultation on police reform, Jason Kenney's government began a Police Act review stakeholder engagement in fall 2020. This process includes an attempt to better understand diverse communities' perspectives on their interactions and experiences with police and the impacts of these experiences in their daily lives (Government of Alberta, n.d.). However, results from this consultation are still under review (Government of Alberta, n.d.).

Promoting carding as an information-gathering crime prevention strategy is rooted in the historical impetus behind policing in England: to control unwanted populations. This is a model that informs the development of policing in both the US and Canada today (see Özcan in this volume). In the context of the news sources discussed here, the discursive strategies outlined in this chapter create a predominant perception of carding / racial profiling as a practice that is neutral, in the interests of crime prevention, and normalized, despite the media sources, both academic and non-academic studies, that clearly outline its disproportionate impact on Black peoples. Unfortunately, those sources that actively support the practice were predominantly found in local, Lethbridge media, signalling a need for greater attention to be paid to racism in policing in Sothern Alberta.

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11 "This Type of Thing Doesn't Happen in Small Cities"

The Discursive Framing Racism and Sexual Violence in Lethbridge

Caroline Hodes

Journalists typically rely on "shared beliefs about a society" that, despite their seemingly elusive nature, "are known to and accepted" by either a majority or dominant group "as common sense or conventional wisdom" (Pan and Kosicki 1993, 57). Feminist media researchers have long been concerned over the many ways that shared beliefs, common sense, and conventional wisdom reinforce both racist representations and "gender-based myths in [. . . ; the] reporting of events and issues" (Crenshaw 1991; Hardin and Whiteside 2010, 312). Unpacking key discursive strategies that go into creating frames can therefore reveal the ongoing importance of combining intersectional anti-racist feminist approaches to critical discourse analysis with media analysis as a means of outlining what frames are, their persistence over time, and their transnational reach.

This chapter analyzes a corpus of seventy-two media reports covering the case that became the *Lethbridge Herald*'s 2016 news story of the year (Villeneuve 2016, D3). These articles all describe how Denzel Dre Colton Bird sexually assaulted and nearly killed a woman as she was walking to work. To create out of this case a news story of the year, Melissa Villeneuve (2016) relied on a network of discursive strategies, concepts, symbolic devices, and myths to build two interdependent and dominant frames: victim and perpetrator. These frames are not unique to her story. They are also maintained

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in all seventy-two articles and have both national and transnational significance. The elements that went into constructing them are therefore central to understanding both what they are and how they work (Pan and Kosicki 1993; Gamson and Modigliani 1989).

Framing and Discourse Analysis

Frames articulate specific social meanings. They are often understood as both expressions and outcomes of power that not only produce diagnoses, cures, and moral judgments (Entman 1993, 52) but also reproduce and shape racist sexism in media. According to Reese (2010), most framing analysis maintains an exclusive focus on *how* frames work and is often criticized for taking *what* frames are for granted (17–43). Because "the what" of frames has been given short shrift, Reese proposes that "identifying the key organizing principles and most relevant values" that make up different frames can lead to a deeper understanding of their meanings in the social arena (20). Unpacking what goes into making them can thereby contribute to the broader literature that overemphasizes how they work. Therefore, discourse analysis can be a powerful tool for understanding "the what" of framing (Hall and White 2008, 33).

Discourse analysts often focus on language in use as part of social practice embedded in social contexts. Discourse, however, is not limited to textual or verbal interactions; it can encompass a wide variety of performative gestures, representations, and actions. Typically, discourse analysts are interested in language that is used in "'real world settings where the locus of inquiry is not an artifact of the research process" (Hall and White 2008, 34). Instead of relying on the transcripts and textual information produced, for example, in interviews or focus groups, discourse analysts instead look at how language is used in the context of different institutional and social processes. Looking at how language is used in social context therefore enables researchers to gain a deeper understanding of "the primacy of discourse in constructing and constituting social realities" (Ehrlich 2001, 1).

Ehrlich (2001) argues that while discourse is discussed in the context of many academic fields ranging from anthropology to sociology and women and gender studies, they "do not typically attend to the nitty-gritty linguistic details of actual verbal interaction" (1). Engaging with Foucault's (1972) well-known articulation of discourses as "practices that systematically form

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the objects of which they speak" (49), Ehrlich (2001) takes an approach to discourse that "locates its constitutive power [. . .] in the details of socially situated interactions" (2). For Ehrlich, "it is not free-floating discourse" that defines and constructs the events under investigation in discourse analysis; it is its embodiment in social and institutional settings (2). As such, discourse analysts are not outside the systems of enunciation that they investigate. On the contrary, because all researchers are embedded in systems of enunciation prior to their entry into the world, all discourse analysis is governed by the same rules that enable analysts to be able to speak, write, and be intelligible.

As I have articulated in previous work, discourse analysis is therefore a fragmentary process. Claims to scientific neutrality and objectivity have long been under scrutiny by feminist, critical race, post- and decolonial scholars for failing to acknowledge that all knowledge production is socially and historically situated in addition to being mediated by social values and presumptions (see Hodes 2018). To avoid the pitfalls of approaches that make these kinds of claims, critical discourse analysis instead provides a way of "opening up complexity, challenging reductionism, dogmatism and dichotomies [by] being self-reflective, and making opaque structures of power relations" visible (Kendall 2007). It is also about maintaining a critical distance from the data, contextualizing it in social action but nevertheless acknowledging one's own political positioning. This chapter does not therefore attempt to produce objective truths but instead takes an unapologetically feminist, anti-racist approach to discourse analysis that traces the truth status that accrues to particular representations through the frames that emerge via the use of discursive strategies.

Selection of News Sources for Analysis and Coding Strategy

The sources selected for this analysis were located using the following three databases: LexisNexis Academic Plus, PressReader/PressDisplay, and Canadian Newspaper Archive. All seventy-two articles were taken from the following sources: the *Lethbridge Herald*, Lethbridge News Now, *Calgary Herald*, *Arab Calgary News*, *Huffington Post Calgary*, CBC News Calgary, *Medicine Hat News*, *Pincher Creek Echo*, the Canadian Press, the *National Post*, and *Global, CTV and City News, Calgary*. Many of the articles were duplicated between databases and included reprinted articles taken from the *Lethbridge Herald*

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and the Canadian Press. These were also among the sources that contained the most coverage of the case with CBC News Calgary. LexisNexis Academic Plus produced a key limitation as individual articles were often extracted from the larger source, thereby omitting images, video, surrounding stories and hyperlinks. As a result, it was necessary to follow up with a basic Google search to obtain the original electronic versions of the articles to be able to examine links to other news sources, images, and videos. This process enabled a consideration of the intertextual and interdiscursive relationships that contribute to frame building and that shape how the stories are read.

Each article was then coded for discursive strategies including but not limited to implicature, othering, tabloidization, impersonalization, backgrounding, passive-agent deletion, and normalization. At its most basic, coding is an approach to organizing qualitative data by assigning short words or phrases to identify important features. Coding is therefore a cyclical and iterative part of the qualitative analysis. Upon completing the coding process, I then began to identify dominant frames, the broad organizing principles, that were common between news sources. While a number of dominant frames emerged, only two will be discussed in this chapter: "the good victim" frame characterized by "privileged (white) femininity" and "the guilty perpetrator" frame characterized through processes of othering and racialization. These frames are broad and generalizable across time and a range of different news sources and social contexts. Following Reese's (2010) approach that treats frames in a "holistic and integrated fashion" and rejects the idea that they are static and immutable or applicable only to individual articles, this analysis will therefore situate them in the broader social context using a qualitative, interpretive approach (24).

A Social Context of Racist Sexism and Intersectional Failure

Feminist, anti-racist scholars have long been attentive to the way that racist sexism informs crime reporting. Kimberlé Williams Crenshaw (1991) has examined how intersectional failures in both media analysis and political organizing around interracial sexual violence reproduce sexist and racist mythologies with material consequences. For Crenshaw, when feminists fail to acknowledge the role that race plays in public responses to interracial sexual violence, "feminism contributes to the forces that produce disproportionate

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punishment for Black men who rape white women, and when antiracists represent [these cases] solely in terms of racial domination, they belittle the fact that woman particularly, and all people generally, should be outraged by the gender violence" that cases such as these represent (1282).

With the exception of an article written by Monk (2016) for the *Pincher Creek Echo*, none of the media coverage under consideration here can be read as either feminist or anti-racist. These articles are generally invested in producing truths through constructed representations of reality that are understood by journalists to be objective reports of the facts and the perspectives of different actors. While Monk (2016) advances a political perspective, the truth status of the remaining articles is garnered through the presumption of journalistic ethics, balance, and political neutrality. Zeroing in on some of the linguistic details that Ehrlich (2001) writes about can, however, reveal the range of discursive strategies that go into making the frames that structure these representations and the type of "common sense," "conventional wisdom," and/or intersectional failure they are distributing. Despite differences in time and place, Crenshaw's (1991) concerns surrounding media reports of interracial violence in the 1980s are strikingly relevant to the way that the news reporting in southern Alberta framed both the woman who was sexually assaulted and Denzel Bird's arrest, trial, and sentencing. In contrast to Crenshaw's (1991) account of intersectional failure, however, this analysis will situate this case not only in terms of media representations and the broader judicial history that has shaped legal reasoning around sexual violence in Alberta but also in the structural violence and genocide endemic to Canada as a settler-colonial context.

Racism, Sexism, and the Canadian Legal System

The same year that Denzel Dre Colton Bird was arrested and charged, Alexander Wagar was acquitted on charges of sexual assault by Calgary judge Robin Camp, which earned him the dubious title of "The Knees Together Judge." Camp had asked the woman who had been assaulted why she "couldn't just keep her knees together" (Camp Inquiry 2016, 127) or "skew her pelvis slightly" to avoid penetration (394). Camp also gained notoriety for referring to the woman who had been assaulted as "the accused" (348, 360, 379, 380, 432, 437, 440, 443, 445, 446, 450, 451, 454) throughout the trial and for claiming that "sex and pain sometimes go together and that isn't a bad

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thing" (407). The woman was identified in the media as young, homeless, and Indigenous. Published court sketches of Wagar indicate that he is white, and the court transcripts identify him as also having been homeless at the time. Irrespective of the fact that sexual attraction has nothing to do with sexual assault, and in contravention of the rape shield law that is supposed to prevent the admissibility of prior sexual history in court, Wagar's lawyer questioned the complainant in a way that forced her to testify repeatedly that she was attracted to women. He also invented scenarios where she was forced to testify that she would fight off hypothetical attackers. The case was sent back for retrial, and Robin Camp was subject to a Canadian Judicial Council inquiry, during which three judges and two lawyers unanimously concluded that he was unfit to remain on the bench. He later resigned. Alexander Wagar, however, was acquitted a second time by the same judge who tried and sentenced Denzel Dre Colton Bird.

That same year, two more Alberta judges were brought under review for similar kinds of statements (*National Post* 2016). In another case that was heard almost twenty years earlier, John Wesley "Buzz" McClung earned himself the moniker of the "Bonnets and Crinolines Judge" for his acquittal of John Ewanchuk on the grounds that the woman he assaulted had provoked the attack both because of the way she dressed (McClung 1998, para. 4) and because she had failed to try hard enough to fight off her assailant (McClung 1998, para. 21). McClung's decision was later overturned at the Supreme Court of Canada where, in her reasons, Justice Claire L'Heureux-Dubé (1999) took it upon herself to debunk a series of rape myths. Judge McClung retaliated in a letter to the *National Post*, where he wrote, "The personal convictions of the judge, delivered again from her judicial chair, could provide a plausible explanation for the disparate (and growing) number of male suicides being reported in the province of Quebec" (Oler 1999). He later apologized when it was released that Justice L'Heureux-Dubé's husband had taken his own life in 1978.

These cases are situated in a representational context that supports differential public, police, and judicial responses to interracial sexual assault, including widespread violence against Indigenous women, girls, and 2SLGBTQQIA (two-spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer, questioning, intersex, and asexual) people; land dispossession; and the overincarceration of Indigenous people more broadly (TRC 2015; National Inquiry into MMIWG 2019). Acknowledging that Canada is a settler-colonial state, the National

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Inquiry into Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls (2019) highlights that policing and the criminal justice system exist in the lives of Indigenous people not as means of accessing justice, safety, or protection but instead as way to continue "to traumatize, abuse and control them" (38). In the cases described previously white assailants were acquitted at trial, while in Denzel Bird's case, he was given a sentence of fifteen years.

Five months before Denzel Bird was arrested, the Blood Tribe held the opening ceremony for the Big Claim, one of the largest and longest outstanding Indigenous land claims in Alberta (Oka-Wells 2016). It was heard in three phases over the same period that Denzel Bird was arrested, charged, and sentenced, speaking to a much larger challenge to settler colonialism in Treaty 7 territory and thereby also providing a broader context for the racist backlash against their members in response to Bird's arrest. In 2019, Federal Court Justice Russel Zinn found partially in their favour, ruling that they had been shortchanged when the boundaries of Treaty 7 were drawn in 1877, yet he excluded key areas such as Cardston and Waterton Lakes on the grounds that claims to these areas were time barred (Zinn 2019).

Within the broader context of Canadian settler colonialism, the racist backlash that often appears in public responses to Indigenous territorial claims to sovereignty, the number of MMIWG and 2SLGBTQQIA people, and the lack of access to justice or meaningful responses or remedies all work in conjunction with the disproportionate incarceration rates of Indigenous people across the country to further the settler-colonial project. Simpson (2017) has articulated settler colonialism as a gendered structure invested in controlling sexuality, gender performance, family forms, parenting, and self-care that has built within it "escalating magnitudes of structural and interpersonal discipline and violence" levelled at those who do not conform. As such, it works in service of the "perpetual disappearance of Indigenous bodies for perpetual territorial acquisition" (44, 45). It is thereby a structure, not an event, and "its history does not stop" (Wolfe 2006, 402).

Despite reports of falling crime rates in Canada, the Office of the Correctional Investigator's 2016–17 report revealed that the year Denzel Bird was arrested, although Indigenous people only represented 4 percent of the Canadian population, they represented 26.4 percent of the total federal prison population. Despite only a 5 percent increase in the total federal inmate population between 2007 and 2016, the Indigenous prison population increased by 39 percent, revealing higher conviction rates, longer sentences, and lower

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parole grant rates because of systemic racism (48). In this context, news reporting that focuses exclusively on the sexual violence meted out against the woman in Lethbridge, to the exclusion of the racist backlash faced by members of the Blood Tribe and a critical look at the broader context within which Denzel Bird was arrested and convicted, contributes to the forces that lead to the overincarceration of Indigenous men. Conversely, when reporters represent the case predominantly in terms of racist backlash, "they belittle the fact that woman particularly, and all people generally, should be outraged by the gender violence" (Crenshaw 1991, 1282) that the Bird case represents.

Analysis: Dominant Frames

Identifying and analyzing what makes up the dominant frames that are present in the media reports covering this case reveal the internal structure of both the frames themselves and their connections to the brief sketch of the social and historical context outlined earlier. Like the discursive strategies that help build them, these frames "are embedded across a body of discourse and speakers rather than clearly identified within a single article" (Reese 2010, 21, 29). The discursive strategies identified here are held together and given coherence by the frames that serve as ideological structures that advance particular moral judgments, narratives, and power relations, including dominant constructions of race, class, sexuality, and gender (Ehrlich 1998). Ideology can be understood as "pervasive and implicit interpretive perspectives that have naturalness, a taken-for-granted quality [. . .] and that provide the practical consciousness through which social action is experienced" (Ehrlich 1998, 150). While I acknowledge that the term is generally used to indicate the ways that dominant groups naturalize hierarchy in the social order, ideology can also be extended to include interpretive perspectives that challenge dominant accounts of events. The news reports analyzed here reveal that "the important aspect of frames arises from their cultural rootedness" (Reese 2010, 22). The good victim and the guilty perpetrator frames are long-standing and foundational in crime reporting. They are as pervasive between 2016 and 2018 in the representations of the Bird case in Lethbridge, Alberta, as they were across the border in the 1980s.

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The Good Victim: Privileged (White) Femininity

The 1980s and 1990s saw an upsurge in whiteness studies in both the US and Canada drawing attention to the emergence of whiteness as a social category and aesthetic ideal in different settler-colonial contexts. McIntosh's (2003) popular essay contributed to the discussion by outlining forty-six examples of gender and white privilege, referring to both as part of "an invisible weightless knapsack" that contains all the necessary capital to successfully compete within dominant US culture. Almost thirty years later, it has become standard curricula in universities, colleges, and high schools across the US and Canada as a means of introducing students to the concept of white privilege and the gendered nature of the symbolic, material, and cultural ramifications of white supremacy.

In response to more recent backlash against the Black Lives Matter movement and the concept of white privilege, Sehgal (2015) has articulated, "It's easier to find a word wanting than ourselves," concluding that the concept of white privilege is "still the most powerful shorthand we have to explain the gross societal contrast[s]" in wealth, survival, benefits, and burdens at the same time as it is "emblematic of the kinds of pressures we put on language, our stubborn belief that the right word can be both diagnosis and cure." Whiteness is not, therefore, static or fixed in its promise of privilege, nor does it exclude the penalties that make up the cost of living. Who can be white, or white enough, changes depending on location and historical moment (see López 1996), but it is nevertheless an important structural feature of social inequality. In Canada and the US, it works as an indicator of who is more likely to benefit from and who is more likely to bear the burden of penalty. Like the frames that support it, however, it does not stand alone. It works together with class, sexuality, gender identity, marital status, religion, and access to support systems and networks among many other things to maintain hierarchical social orders. As I have articulated elsewhere (Hodes 2017, 2018) and as Laura Mudde (2020) has since rearticulated, white supremacy and whiteness include public discourse that perpetuates "the oppressive systematic denial of colonialism within settler colonial society" (Mudde 2020, 51). This kind of denial, however, is not exclusively advanced by white people (Mudde 2020, 51; see also Hodes 2017, 2018). These insights highlight the need for critical discourse analyses that unpack both the frames and discursive strategies that go into reproducing white supremacy and its material consequences in the context

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of Canadian settler colonialism (Hodes 2017, 2018). As the Reconciliation Lethbridge Advisory Committee has articulated in this volume, it is, in fact, the responsibility of settler scholars such as myself to embark on these kinds of projects (see RLAC in this volume).

The words that come together to create the articles that tell the story of the Denzel Bird case are also bound by frames that promise both diagnoses and cures. The good victim frame is part of a racialized binary conception of gender that Frankenberg (1993) has articulated as "a location of structural advantage, of race privilege [. . .] a standpoint" through which people look at themselves and others. It is also an "unmarked and un-named set of cultural practices" that reinforces gross inequities in wealth, power, and penalty (1). She articulates that white people are "raced" the same way that men are "gendered" and white women's lives are no less shaped by whiteness as a racial structure than they are by gender. bell hooks (1993) has gone further to articulate how the privileged white femininity characteristic of the good victim frame is also structured through marital status and proximity to cisgendered, white men. This implies sexuality and access to social and cultural mobility through heteropatriarchal family forms, class, and the successful performance of gender norms related to work, pay, the public and private spheres, the nuclear family and its practices of relationship, consumption, and inheritance. De Welde's (2003) study of white femininity in the context of the "fear of crime," read rape, and self-defence classes also illustrates the myriad ways that white femininity is constructed and reproduced around conceptions of normalcy. Privileged white femininity is often used as the standard by which others are measured and found lacking (78). Maintaining a hierarchy between women who deserve to be protected and those who do not, fear of crime works together with whiteness as a means of social control to produce good victims, bad victims, and mixed messages. Representations of violence, innocence, and the distinction between public and private in popular media create moral panics that reinforce the idea that white women should stay in the home, "away from the dangers of the crime ridden streets" (De Welde 2003, 78).

In the articles surveyed here, the good victim is constructed through a series of discursive strategies that structure privileged (white) femininity as a precondition to the frame. The goodness and innocence that accompany whiteness in the context of these representations, however, are reinforced through a fear of crime discourse that is underwritten by the "stranger danger"

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rape myth. The good victim thereby implies the culpability of those who have been sexually assaulted but do not meet the criteria of white femininity reinforced through the frame. This frame, therefore, reveals the fragility of the good victim at the same time as it reinforces the carceral logic at the heart of the representations of Denzel Bird. The discursive strategies that produce this frame create narrative descriptions of the woman who was assaulted, including her everyday activities, her faith, age, character, marital and employment status, her physical mobility, and her connections to the Lethbridge community. Often this is accomplished through a series of statements given by the men who act as spokespersons for her family and broader social network.

Fifty-two of the articles surveyed for this chapter refer to her as a victim, with only seven that also include either headlines or internal references to her self-identifying as a survivor. This mode of self-identification, however, takes place primarily through intertextual references to her Victim Impact Statement (VIS). Throughout the corpus of articles, the privileged (white) femininity alluded to in these referential strategies structures events to simultaneously exceptionalize the assault yet imply the pervasiveness of "stranger danger." This is done at the same time that they paradoxically preserve the purity and innocence of the woman who becomes fixed as the good victim yet also implies the possibility of culpable others and a fall from grace. In contrast to a wide range of different articles that appear across news sources describing a court-ordered publication ban on her identity, two of them also explicitly identify her by name.

In an early article announcing Denzel Bird's arrest on the front page of the *Lethbridge Herald*, reporter Bill Schnarr (2016) names the woman who was attacked below a photograph of a police officer dusting the crime scene for fingerprints. In contrast, Calgary Journalist Michael Lumsden (2016) begins by anonymizing her but later references the family's Facebook page. This article is also accompanied by a photograph of the woman wearing what looks to be a white wedding dress. As a result, her whiteness need not be named; it is readily apparent through her image, and her marital status is implied before readers move through the text. Despite anonymizing her at the start of the article, Lumsden's intertextual citational strategy works in combination with the photograph to clearly identify her by both appearance and name. I have replaced her first name with "X" in the following excerpt:

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> The victim remains in critical condition, however, a Facebook page called "[X's] Journey" has been updating her progress from hospital. "[X's]" pressures continue to go up and down and through the medication, thankfully, they are able to continue to bring it down to safe levels. Physio is now in there working with her joints to keep mobility. Family is so overwhelmed by the amazing support of Lethbridge as well as people around the world. (Lumsden 2016)

The referential strategy of using visual representations to signify her whiteness and marital status reinforces her privilege by also including textual evidence of family support, both local and global networks, and her access to health care, including a range of different health care providers.

Lumsden (2016) shares this emphasis on family, community, and global supports with Villeneuve (2016) and a small subset of the corpus. Some of these articles rely on a range of statements provided by people who identify as having never met her. Villeneuve offers a brief sketch of Bill Fox, identified as a father and the person who organized the "Power of Love Candlelight Vigil" at Henderson Lake. Despite not knowing her, Fox is quoted as saying, "Hopefully when she wakes up, she can just see that she has a whole lot of love and support behind her" (Villeneuve 2016, D3). Villeneuve (2016) also covers the "Communities in Unity" round dances that were organized to share concerns and heal the rift that was the result of the racist backlash that emerged in Lethbridge after Denzel Bird was identified as being a member of the Blood Tribe. She then goes on to include a discussion of several community fundraisers that had raised over fifty thousand dollars to support the woman's recovery and the team of people who assembled to move the couple out of their rental home into a new place. Mikkelsen and Miller (2016) also cover fundraisers, describing a website that had been created to raise money for her husband, who is described in the article as remaining "at her side while she continues to fight for her life."

CBC News Calgary (2016a) covered one of the fundraisers in more detail, profiling event organizer Maggie Hall by publishing her picture and a personal account of her own abuse. Despite also not knowing the woman who was assaulted, Hall describes her decision to organize the fundraiser as part of her own healing. In the same article, the family's pastor, Daniel Zopoula, is also profiled through his image and a series of direct quotations. Emphasizing his broader connections to both community and country, he impersonalizes

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events through spatialization, claiming that Canada, Alberta, and Lethbridge come together when tragedy strikes: "When there is a tragedy . . . when there is a sadness, we all stand together. This has really allowed me to see the soul of our country and . . . the soul of our city and this province. People really care for one another, it's a big, big, fat, little village." The figurative language used in this passage emphasizes local and national support for the woman who had been assaulted but also engages in a discursive process of erasure through implicature and metaphor. Published one month after the Blood Tribe released its public statement condemning Denzel Bird's violence and all retaliatory racist violence against their members, the pastor's description emphasizes unity but simultaneously erases the anti-Indigenous racism that came with the support for her in this case. He also describes his close association with the family through his role in helping raise the woman's husband. Despite his more direct relationship to her husband, identifying the pastor as the man who married the couple also implies her faith primarily through her relationships to men.

Faith thereby becomes a part of what goes into building her privileged (white) femininity. Her faith and marriage presume her sexuality, thereby securing her place in a heteropatriarchal gender order. The figurative reference to miracles weaves together a set of articles that also emphasize both faith and what the woman's stepfather deems to be an appropriate emotional response to the violence. In an article headlined "Nothing but a Miracle: Lethbridge Woman Who Survived Brutal Assault Leaves Hospital," CBC News Calgary (2017b) published a photograph of the woman's father-in-law, who is identified across a range of articles as the spokesperson for the family. The image creates a scene where both he and the camera overlook a parking lot, the sun featured in the top left-hand corner casting down rays of golden light. The caption emphasizes that the "woman was hospitalized by an unprovoked attack," and under a bold heading halfway through the article, her release from the hospital is again referred to as "nothing but a miracle." The text further indicates that "the woman's father-in-law said that their faith has really helped the family get through the past four months." In this same article, her father-in-law is quoted at length claiming that the family harbors no ill will toward Denzel Bird, articulating that "nothing good ever came out of anger" and repeating the rhetorical question "How would being angry help?" implying the misogynistic, heteropatriarchal trope that anger suggests the ability to defend

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oneself against sexual violence, thereby making angry women deserving of assault if they failed to do so.

A second article published by CBC News Calgary one year earlier used the same image with the headline "Family of Lethbridge Assault Victim Say Faith Is Helping Her Heal" (Adach 2016). This article emphasizes the power of positive energy and the number of people, including her family, who have offered prayers, well wishes, and "words of support," referring again to the money raised on behalf of the woman and her husband. The article then highlights the stepfather's decision to prioritize love over anger. Again, an article published in the *Calgary Herald* (2017) references the family's Facebook page, this time articulating that "some doctors and therapists treating the woman told family members that the victim's healing was a miracle." Finally, in a Global News article profiling Victor Girbu, the man who found her, he is quoted as saying, "Maybe God sent me" (Heidenrich and Tams 2016). This quotation becomes both a headline and a hyperlink used to connect readers to a video clip. Using this statement generates both intertextual and interdiscursive connections by inserting a new text and a discourse about faith into other articles, one of which featured the racist backlash against members of the Blood Tribe (Tams 2016).

In contrast to the figurative, emotive language, and impersonalization, Monk (2016) instead individualizes the woman by pointing to her personal characteristics, directly stating her status as a good victim in opposition to those who are deemed culpable and blameworthy. In Monk's account, the woman's whiteness is positioned in opposition to those who are not white as a means of acknowledging systemic racism and the differential treatment and access to supports for survivors of sexual violence. Before admonishing readers to imagine that the woman "wasn't white but her attacker was," she articulates,

> Some of the outrage at this tragedy is in the devastating details. She was simply walking to work between 6 and 7 am, and it's been reported that she was working extra shifts to pay for her recent wedding. She is young, petite, blonde and beautiful. Never in a million years did she deserve something so atrocious and vicious against her.

Monk's lexical choice of deserving is upheld by the normalcy and respectability that is reinforced through representational strategies that individualize the woman as someone who not only is married but is also young, employed, and physically mobile and embodies white Western ideals of beauty. Describing

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her as someone who is working to pay for her wedding suggests that the work that she engages in is primarily a means to maintain her connection to a cisgendered white man. The repeated references to her youth in conjunction with her new marital status also essentialize her through implicature: the possibility of having children. All the articles in the corpus identify her on the basis of age as either a twenty-five-year-old woman or a young woman. While Denzel Bird ages as articles describe his trial and sentencing over a period of three years, her age remains the same across articles, with the exception of one indicating that she was twenty-six in 2018.

Describing her walk to work as taking place between six and seven in the morning not only indicates that she is physically mobile but also implies her normalcy and her respectability. As Monk (2016) points out, she was not walking home at two or three in the morning after a night of partying. This detail is something that was included in over half of the articles covering the case. Many identified the specific hours, others identified the time of day as morning, and a cross section of them identified her as being "on her way to work" or "walking to work." One of them identified the darkness at that time in the morning. Several articles also included details about how she was "texting her husband" on her way to work and both implied her to be and directly identified her as someone who was innocent and undeserving of her attack. Writing for Global News, Mikkelsen and Miller (2016) combine her employment status and her good character through implicature by quoting her colleagues who say, "It's unimaginable to think someone could attack someone like her." They then include the voice of a friend who corroborates her good character: "When you know her, when you know what type of person she is, you can't imagine something like that happening to her." CBC News Calgary (2016a) included direct quotations from a community organizer who referred to her as "an innocent young lady."

In this context, identifying the time of day exceptionalizes the attack as something shocking that is highly disruptive to the everyday, indirectly normalizing violence that takes place at night. In addition to statements about her innocence and good character, one of the articles identified the time of day in conjunction with descriptions of the attack as "random," and two emphasized that it was "unprovoked"—one in both the headline and the content of the article, the other in the caption below the photograph of the woman's father-in-law described earlier (CBC News Calgary 2017b; Adach 2016). These details work in conjunction with those articles implying the woman's

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innocence by emphasizing that she did not know her attacker. Together, these discursive strategies indirectly reinforce the populist "stranger danger" rape myth. This is something that is accomplished through the remaining discursive strategies that paradoxically exceptionalize the violence at the same time as they imply its prevalence.

One of the earliest articles that was reproduced across news sources was a warning. This was issued before Denzel Bird was arrested, prior to any knowledge of whether the two had a pre-existing relationship and irrespective of the time of day in which the assault occurred. This warning reinforces the presumptions endemic to the "stranger danger" rape myth that suggests women are most likely to be assaulted at night by someone they don't know:

> Always be alert and be aware of your surroundings.
> Use well-lit, well-travelled routes—paths and sidewalks near main roads.
> Avoid Dark, Vacant or Isolated Areas.
> Plan your route in advance and let someone know where you are going and when you'll be back.
> Intentionally vary your route if you use it on a regular basis.
> Do not wear headphones or at lease wear one out, so you can hear what's going on around you.
> Don't walk or run alone if possible.
> Carry a noise making device, such as an alarm, and use it if you feel in danger.
> If you think someone is following you, look behind you and change your route.
> If you feel you are in danger, run to a well-lit place and yell and cause a commotion as you are running.
> Carry a cell phone and ensure the battery is charged.
> Don't be complacent. Always report suspicious activity to police immediately.
> Call 911 in an emergency. (Bowen 2016)

Although the warning's delivery is gender neutral, statistics documenting self-reported sexual assault indicate that those targeted are disproportionately women, women under the age of twenty-five, Indigenous women, lesbians, bisexual women, and neuro-atypical women. The same statistics reveal that most offenders are men under the age of thirty-five and that over half of those assaulted know their attacker(s) (Conroy and Cotter 2017).

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This warning sets the stage for a sensationalized moral panic. This case, however, shares many of the statistical criteria of typical sexual violence cases. It became newsworthy because the sexual violence was interracial, it was severe, and the people involved did not know each other. Together, these features led to the tabloidization of its details. When combined with the discursive strategies that appear in other news sources—including perspectivization, nominalization, and impersonalization—this warning supports the kind of social control identified in De Welde's (2003) study.

The articles that engage in this seemingly contradictory discourse do so in a number of ways. As already discussed, the "walking to work" series does so through time of day, marital status, and destination. The other articles do so by including graphic details of the woman's injuries after she was assaulted and by nominalizing the verbs *assault* and *attack* in their headlines through a range of different adjectives, including *brutal*, *vicious*, *horrific*, and *savage* (Schurtz 2016b). These articles also include the perspectives of friends and individual police officers and the impersonalized perspectives of the Lethbridge Police as an organization. All this together leads to a tabloidized construction of sexual violence through the "stranger danger" rape myth that also structures the representations of Denzel Bird in ways that reproduce the carceral logic endemic to the broader settler-colonial context. In Mikkelsen and Miller's (2016) article, Staff Sergeant Scott Woods is quoted describing the violence as follows: "It certainly ranks up to the top of the list of some of the most disturbing things I've seen." Their article is also interdiscursively linked to a range of other articles through the discourse on shock that appears in the headline.

The paradoxical account of the violence as exceptional yet also a cause for generalized fear of crime also appears through reporting on the perspectives of the woman's friends. The following quotations are featured in a larger font and set apart from the body of Mikkelsen and Miller's (2016) article, accompanied by a red line in the margin for extra emphasis: "It's just shocking, it could be anyone right?" and "This type of thing doesn't happen in small cities." These statements are accompanied by descriptions of the woman as "happy and cheerful," as caring and "loved by customers" at her work, as kind and somebody who "would never hurt a fly." The need for corroboration in the first statement is signified through the rhetorical question "Right?" This question would be later answered through repeated references in future articles to the random, unprovoked nature of the attack and her lack of connection to Bird, implying her innocence.

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A second layer of implicature thereby emerges, leading to an unstated variation on Monk's (2016) rhetorical question: Had she been less nice, less cheerful, or as described in the articles discussed earlier, less beautiful, less responsible, less married, less employed, less able bodied, less white, less passive, less heterosexual, would she have instead become a culpable and more blameworthy victim? The statement that it could be anyone appears again in later articles across news sources quoting police officers. Like the statement issued by police, it implies that the violence could happen again, but this time to a generalized person. Together with the presumption that this doesn't happen in small cities, this collection of statements also simultaneously exceptionalizes the violence. As in the police warning, at the time this article was written, the information about whether she knew her attacker was not yet known.

After Bird was arrested and it was released that the woman did not know her attacker, Villeneuve (2016) restates the perspective of Staff Sergeant Scott Woods quoted in Mikkelsen and Miller's (2016) piece, thereby intertextually connecting her article to theirs. Like so many of the articles, Villeneuve's (2016) paradoxically and simultaneously exceptionalizes the violence and reinforces the fear of crime discourse that presupposes its pervasiveness and potential for recurrence. In contrast, her article in conjunction with some of the others limits this discourse to the Lethbridge Police and their officers. In another article published for CBC News Calgary (2016b), Woods is also quoted as indirectly acknowledging that sexual violence is less often perpetrated by strangers, saying, "The fact that the two were strangers is something police don't see very often." Nevertheless, in the broader context, this quotation underscores a generalizable fear of crime. For instance, Woods is further quoted as saying, "It hits home to everybody that as this family is going through that, it could have happened to anybody. The fact that somebody is just doing what they should be allowed to do any day of the week—walking down the street—and have this happen to them."

This phenomenon also takes place through impersonalization not only in the article citing Woods, but also throughout the "walking to work" series and those that emphasize discourses on shock and the privilege of youth. The exceptional nature of the violence, innocence, and "stranger danger" all come together in one succinct comment attributed to the Lethbridge Police as an organization: "Lethbridge Police are absolutely rattled by the savage attack by an apparent stranger on a young woman as she was walking to work

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in Lethbridge" (CBC News Calgary 2016b). Again, the everyday juxtaposed against the exceptional reproduces a generalized fear of sexual assault.

A range of graphic details further reinforce these mixed messages. Two CBC News (2017a; Grant 2018) articles went so far as to include trigger warnings. Fifty of the articles describe a range of graphic details in eighty-six separate references across the corpus. Because of the volume, I have referenced only single examples of each detail, although quite often they appear together in the same article. The most common were descriptions of the skull fractures and broken bones in the woman's face (Graveland 2018a); that she had been struck with a weapon or a metal pipe (Grant 2018; Graveland 2018a, 2018b); that she was left naked and partially stuffed in a garbage can (Graveland 2018a); that she had to relearn how to walk and talk (Graveland 2018a); that she struggles with her speech, emotions, and balance (*Huffpost* 2018); that she had spent weeks in a medically induced coma (CBC News Calgary 2017a); and that she had contracted a sexually transmitted infection from Denzel Bird (Graveland 2018a). Many of these articles were originally written for the Canadian Press and reproduced in news sources across the country. In contrast, the *Lethbridge Herald* included two stock paragraphs with specific details that were reproduced unchanged over time. These details included that the woman had been struck with a weapon, sexually assaulted, and found by a passerby with life-threatening injuries and was making a slow and steady recovery in the hospital (Schurtz 2016a, 2017). The majority of the graphic details referenced here appear in conjunction with headlines nominalizing and individualizing the violence as a "brutal sexual assault," a "vicious sexual assault," and a "savage attack."

A small sample of the articles that tabloidize the violence through graphic details also quote the following passage from the VIS: "I'm more alive than ever. He hasn't taken away my will to live. I am a survivor." Two of these articles include her self-identification as a survivor in the headline, one written by Meghan Grant (2018) for CBC News Calgary and one produced for the Canadian Press (2018) that was also reproduced in two other news sources: the *Calgary Sun* (2018) and the *Medicine Hat News*. Despite outlining her strength and the wounds she incurred from fighting off her attacker, in order to preserve the aura of passivity and victimization and to deflect any possibility of provocation, each article also repeatedly refers to her as a victim.

The headline of Grant's (2018) article passivates the woman by negating her self-identification in favour of her family's characterization of her experience

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by implying that one cannot simultaneously experience ongoing trauma and also be a survivor: "Lethbridge Victim of Violent Sexual Attack Says She's a 'Survivor' but Family Details Ongoing Trauma." Both Grant and the Canadian Press (2018) also include the following excerpt: "I am not the same person I was. [. . .] At times I even wished Bird had finished me off, but then I remember how strong I am and I don't want to give him that power over me." These excerpts were cited in both articles that named her as a survivor in their headlines in addition to Bill Graveland's (2018b) article, originally written for the Canadian Press and subsequently reproduced in the *Toronto Star*, the *Globe and Mail*, the *Calgary Sun* (2018), and the *Red Deer Advocate*. Additional excerpts of the VIS referenced in other news sources indicate, "She hasn't returned to normal after the attack and has years of therapy ahead of her" (Schmidt 2018; Franklin 2018), thereby reinforcing a pathologizing, ableist script suggesting that recovery means a return to a standardized set of mental and physical capabilities.

The discursive strategies that go into constructing the good victim through privileged (white) femininity play a role in reinforcing and normalizing an ableist, heteropatriarchal, racialized gender order characterized by violence and misogyny. Together, these criteria fix the woman who was attacked as privileged, white, and cisgendered, as someone who has a broad network of social support and is intimately connected to white cisgendered men and to cisgendered men of colour who provide public access to information about her employment status, faith, and moral character. As Constance Backhouse (2008, 2001) has documented, the need for corroboration by male relatives, community leaders, and/or spouses was at one time foundational to sexual assault law in Canada and other settler-colonial contexts. Although this has changed over time, the reporting on this case reproduces this expectation primarily through the voices of cisgendered heterosexual men. The implication of this is that proximity or distance from any of these criteria, including having access to cisgendered men to corroborate their existence, can lead to one's movement closer to or further away from the good victim.

Representations that fix her as someone who embodies the "good victim" do not mean that she lives it. As Frankenberg (1993) and McIntosh (2003) remind us, gender and whiteness are normative ideals that shift according to time and place, and these representations of this woman embodying them more likely erase her experience than depict objective truths or realities. The material consequences of these normative ideals emerge in the ways that

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they structure social, cultural, and representational hierarchies that lead to different forms of striving, competition, and social control through practices of exclusion and the policing of oneself and others. In the context of sexual violence, most women will never embody the criteria of the good victim. Even the woman who was assaulted in the Bird case remains under the shadow of an ever-present possibility that she too could become a bad victim. One moral transgression, expression of anger, or loss of any of these privileges can lead to her movement into the realms of the culpable, the blameworthy, those who lack credibility, and she will thereby join the ranks of those assaulted in both the *Wagar* and *Ewanchuk* cases.

The Guilty Perpetrator: The Racialized Other, the Stranger

The guilty perpetrator frame shares certain discursive practices in common with the good victim frame, but they are used to accomplish different things. Discursive practices such as implicature, visual imagery, and tabloidization often work to bracket whiteness as a present absence in the context of the good victim frame. As part of what goes into creating the guilty perpetrator, however, they are instead used in ways that not only explicitly racialize Denzel Bird and criminalize Indigeneity more broadly but also continue to mask the role of white supremacy and systemic racism in structuring the stereotypes that are reinforced through this representational violence. These frames work together as part of an oppositional structure rooted in binary relationships between victim and perpetrator, privileged white femininity and racialized masculinity. They also support and maintain the contentious distinction between "us" and "them."

Media representations of Indigenous people typically unyoke present from past, erasing the impacts of genocide, the ongoing structural and direct violence of settler colonialism, and the toxic masculinities that these have engendered (National Inquiry into MMIWG 2019, 140–41). These representations have material consequences. As Carter (1997), Acoose (1995), Belanger (2002), Frances and Tator (2002), Harding (2005), Innes and Anderson (2015), the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (1996), and the National Inquiry into MMIWG (2019) have all documented, representations of Indigenous people that rely on stereotypes reproduce and reinforce a type of settler common sense that supports ongoing dispossession and criminalization, overincarceration, the discrediting of claims to territorial sovereignty, and

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violence against Indigenous cis and trans women and girls across Canada. Like those who are fixed as good victims and bad victims, representations of perpetrators are also shaped by the invisibility of whiteness as part of a deeply gendered social structure that contributes to the racialization of those who are deemed to be other. Representations of both those who have been subject to sexual and physical violence and those who perpetrate it are widespread, systemic, structural, and constructed in very particular interdependent ways in genocidal settler-colonial contexts like Canada.

Innes and Anderson (2015) describe the impact of colonialism on the internalization of toxic masculinities. White heteropatriarchal notions of normative masculinity—coupled with the range of media representations that appear in everything from grade school textbooks, news reporting, and the names and logos of sports teams to film and television depictions—routinely inundate Indigenous men and boys with racist stereotypes that associate Indigenous masculinities with savagery, violence, and brutality. These contribute to an internalization process that limits the range possible expressions of masculinity. Innes highlights that patriarchy is about exerting power. He equates hegemonic masculinity with a type of glass ceiling that sets some men up for failure in the competition to achieve a certain ideal based on the experiences of white upper- and middle-class men who possess the necessary cultural capital to successfully compete in a white supremacist, capitalist marketplace.

Like privileged (white) femininity, the fragility of this normative ideal is such that nobody actually inhabits it. The policing of its boundaries through differential proximity fixes it in place as part of a gendered and racialized hierarchal social order that has built within it automatic exclusions. It nevertheless structures the striving, the competition, the jealous protection of privileges and resources, the sense of entitlement to women's bodies, the homophobic and transphobic violence that shore it up, and the differential access to benefits and opportunities that go into attempts to achieve it. It also often results in the creation of remedies for those who do not succeed in the settler-colonial contest in terms of what Crenshaw (2016) refers to as patriarchal enhancements. Innes and Anderson (2015) conclude that the inability to gain proximity to this ideal often results in cisgendered Indigenous men asserting their power over women, 2SLGBTQQIA people, and one another.

The goal, however, is not to achieve some sort of inclusion into or parity with white hegemonic masculinity. As Crenshaw (2016) elucidates, significant articulations of anti-racism have been built around patriarchal denial.

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Those that focus on masculinities, men and boys, often frame discrimination and exclusion in terms of patriarchal absences such as the denial of leadership in families, communities, work, and politics. These remedial strategies are often part of a politics of inclusion that ignores the historically situated structural, systemic, and gendered nature of discrimination and other forms of violence, thus creating the foundation for intersectional failure. Despite articulating how these absences work, Crenshaw, however, falls prey to a kind of intersectional failure of her own by not including settler colonialism and genocide as part of the structural foundation for the kinds of violence and discrimination that looking through an intersectional lens is meant to address.

Fighting for inclusion into normative gender regimes is counterproductive in this context because hegemonic exertions of white patriarchal power are just as violent as their toxic and rebellious counterparts. They perpetuate a range of ongoing settler-colonial processes of displacement and dispossession through gender-based forms of violence. Just as representations of privileged (white) femininity function through erasure, the white hegemonic masculinity that upholds it as a normative ideal also erases the violence at the heart of heteropatriarchal relations in all their forms, irrespective of economic status or how the violence plays out.

Harris (2000) and Maynard (2017) examine the ways that practices of law enforcement in carceral states like the US and Canada converge with gender-based violence to uphold law and order, thereby preventing more constructive ways of creating safe communities. In the context of media representations of the Bird case, law enforcement as an expression of hegemonic white masculinity is glorified through representations of police officers exerting militaristic control over Denzel Bird's body. In this series of representations, both toxic and hegemonic forms of masculinity are juxtaposed against each other to fix Denzel Bird as the guilty perpetrator in ways that both rely on and generate stereotypical representations that contribute to not only his racialization and criminalization but also that of Indigenous men in general, as evidenced in the racist backlash faced by the Blood Tribe and the expectation that leadership in the Blackfoot community release a statement condemning the violence. The threshold that divides the toxic from the hegemonic is settler-colonial rule of law. Here the violence of hegemonic white masculinity is glorified and celebrated for its capacity to achieve social control and group management and in so doing enables the racist backlash faced by the Blood Tribe and its members. The lack of response to violence against Indigenous women and

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girls coupled with media representations of overt police control of Indigenous bodies are together among the ways that systemic racism becomes visible, and the originary violence of settlement takes place through policing in the present (Özcan, in this volume).

The first and most striking of these representations is the discursive and visual construction of the "perp walk." Bird was arrested on October 5, 2016. The next day, he was charged with attempted murder, aggravated sexual assault, sexual assault with a weapon, aggravated assault, and breaking and entering. That same day, he was escorted from the police service station to a van where Global News (Burles 2016) captured a video and an image that were reproduced consistently across news sources until he was sentenced in 2018. In the video of the spectacle, following a three-hour interrogation, Denzel Bird is paraded in front of cameras wearing handcuffs and escorted to a police van by four white men that are all almost a head taller than him. Two of them are uniformed officers and visibly armed wearing bulletproof vests—one leads the group, and the other follows behind. The other two are wearing suits and ties, one on each side of Denzel Bird, and each of them has his hands on one of Bird's arms. Just before he enters the van, one of the journalists asks, "Do you have anything to say?" Bird replies, "Sorry," and as he enters the van, he repeats, "Sorry, man" (Burles 2016). Although it was released that he had turned himself in and confessed to the assault, on top of not yet having hired a lawyer, he had not yet stood trial, nor had it been ascertained that the confession had not been coerced. This was two days before he had retained a lawyer.

Both the *Lethbridge Herald* and Lethbridge News Now reported on the "perp walk." On October 7, Bill Schnarr (2016), writing for the *Lethbridge Herald*, made it appear that he was quoting Bird directly. Instead of what can be heard in the contents of the video, however, Schnarr quotes him as saying, "I'm fucking sorry, man" (A1). On October 8, Delon Schurtz (2016a), writing for the *Lethbridge Herald*, also reported that Bird said, "I'm fucking sorry, man" in the context of another front-page story leading with the headline "Brutal Sex Assault Suspect in Court" (A1). While Schurtz's article did not include the image of the perp walk and its subtitle is "Lawyers Criticize 'Perp Walk,'" this large, bolded headline pointedly conflates the assault with the suspect by failing to include a comma between the words "brutal sex assault" and "suspect in court." Instead of being a man arrested and charged in connection with a "brutal sex assault," Denzel Bird becomes a "brutal sex assault suspect"

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who is identified by a photograph that looks like a mugshot, thereby presupposing his guilt. After misquoting Denzel Bird, the article then proceeds to identify why Bird's lawyer at the time, Greg White, expressed concerns regarding Bird's constitutional rights to be presumed innocent and to remain silent.

In contrast, Patrick Burles (2016), writing for Lethbridge News Now, reported what can be heard in the video; it was also embedded in the online version. He writes, "In the transfer—captured below by *Global Lethbridge*—Bird states I'm sorry when asked if he has anything to say" (Burles 2016). Despite Schurtz's (2016a) embellishment following Schnarr (2016), both he and Burles (2016) include the details of defence lawyer Greg White's concerns regarding Bird's constitutional rights. Juxtaposing the content of Burles's (2016) article against Schurtz's (2016a) illustrates the different ways that, in combination with images and video, different discursive strategies can be used to either minimize or underscore and emphasize racist stereotypes.

Harding (2006) has documented a long history of Canadian media that have used highly judgmental adjectives to describe Indigenous people, notably words that convey moral outrage and savagery. In this context, the word "brutal" before "sexual assault," together with Schurtz's (2016a) decision to quote Bird as saying that he was "fucking" sorry, signifies anger and underscores what Belanger (2002) and Sanchez (2012) have identified as one of several broad categories of stereotypes associated with representations of Indigenous masculinity: "the bloodthirsty savage." When read together with the opening sentence, this presupposes guilt through both implicature and othering: "The man accused of brutally assaulting a young woman on a Lethbridge street last week in May, when he appears for a court hearing later this month, will try to convince a judge he should be released from custody." This choice of discursive strategies predicts the future by suggesting that Bird, who had not yet stood trial and whose bail hearing had not yet taken place, is not only a man accused of and charged with a violent crime but also a "brutal sex assault suspect" who will try to hide his brutality but will not likely be released from custody.

Burles (2016) also includes both the photograph and the video of the perp walk but reports on the same set events very differently. Instead of implying either guilt or innocence, Burles's article is mainly descriptive. He quotes White's concerns, impersonalizing what are variously recited in all the articles as the facts. He then attributes his description of the assault to the Lethbridge Police, writing, "They noted that the victim and the accused do not know

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each other and that this was a random attack." The contents of the article do not sensationalize events in the same way that Schurtz (2016a) does; they instead minimize overt stereotypes. The photo in conjunction with the video and the last sentence emphasizing the randomness of the attack, however, creates a stranger, and an unpredictable other, out of Bird. Together with the handling of his body in both the photo and the video, the text invites readers to presume danger, impending violence, and guilt in spite of text indicating that Bird had not yet stood trial or been given time to prepare his bail hearing. The perp walk video thereby provides a visual record of the differential treatment accorded to Indigenous men who are accused of violent crimes, but the text that accompanies it, more often than not, serves as a justification for differential treatment instead of an account of systemic racism.

Ten of the articles in the corpus include large photos of the perp walk, but Burles's (2016) is the only one that also includes the video. Several of the online sources include links to other articles that appear next to smaller thumbnail images of the perp walk. Over half of these articles contain the adjectives "vicious," "horrific," or "brutal" in their headlines. Where they do not use these adjectives, they indicate that the assault was an "attack." Where they do use them, occasionally they appear in conjunction with "attack" and "assault," thereby individualizing the violence through nominalization. One article references the woman's VIS in a headline that reads, "'I Had to Relearn How to Do Everything': Statement from Lethbridge Victim Read in Court," directly above the photo of the perp walk, two years after the image had been created and Bird had been sentenced (Franklin 2018).

Lisa MacGregor's (2016) article for Global News is also illustrative of how interdiscursivity and intertextuality work together to reinforce stereotypes in online news sources. This article includes the image of the perp walk below a headline that points to the racist backlash that had emerged from the Lethbridge community against members of the Blood Tribe. It was published three days after the video was shot and combines a range of different discourses and texts to create a representation that directly connects the Blood Tribe to the image of Bird in handcuffs. Its lengthy reference to the statement that they released on their website condemning both the sexual violence and the violence that had taken place against their members is overshadowed by the visual representations of Bird. The passages of the Blood Tribe statement cited in the article emphasize that the Blood Tribe "do not condone violence of any kind and are working hard in [their] community to address social issues,"

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implying responsibility for the violence while condemning it (MacGregor 2016). When juxtaposed against the image, the meaning shifts to imply taking responsibility for what were still, at the time, Bird's *alleged* crimes, despite his confession. This representation thereby not only presumes Bird's guilt but also criminalizes the entire Blood Tribe through implication by association.

In contrast to MacGregor's (2016) piece, which unyokes the past from the present, a small cross section of the articles includes details about Bird that point to Canada's past and ongoing settler-colonial violence. Nevertheless, these articles do not acknowledge these details in a way that complicates the frame. They instead sustain negative stereotypes in much the same way as the perp walk. One of the CBC News articles published after Bird's guilty plea in 2017 begins with a trigger warning and a Facebook profile picture. The photo identifies Bird as a twenty-one-year-old, but it was taken from his page at least one year prior to the publication date of the article. The same photo appears in early accounts of the case that indicate Bird was twenty at the time (CBC News Calgary 2017a). This piece provides a sensationalized and graphic account of the assault in addition to two specific details about Bird under the headline "'I'm So Sorry for That Poor Girl': Man Pleads Guilty in Vicious Sexual Assault in Lethbridge." Although the content of the article contains no reference to this version of Bird's apology, an apology that is described in greater detail across a range of news sources as taking place in court, the two details about Bird are included with a similar lack of context and are both unnecessary.

The first detail offered reads as follows: "Sentencing has been put off to Jan. 5, 2018, so that pre-sentencing reports can be compiled, including a Gladue report as Bird is a member of the Blood Tribe." There is, however, no explanation of what a Gladue report is or why it is important in the context of sentencing. This implies that the Gladue report has something to do with Bird's Indigeneity and that it somehow caused a delay. Gladue, however, is a sentencing principle designed to ensure that a trial would happen on the appropriate day following Bird's ability to exercise his rights as an Indigenous person.

The Gladue principle is recognized in the Criminal Code of Canada as a means of addressing the systemic discrimination and racism against Indigenous people in the criminal division of the Canadian legal system. Gladue reports take into account the impact of residential schools, child welfare removal, physical and sexual abuse, and other physical and mental health concerns. In their 2012 report, the Native Women's Association of Canada

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(NWAC) prepared a primer on Gladue rights, pointing to the many ways that judges, parole officers, and others working within criminal law have a limited understanding of what systemic racism is and how the legal system is not equipped to rehabilitate offenders. Gladue reports thereby facilitate access to culturally appropriate programming, where it is available, and diversion programs that are meant to address the overrepresentation of Indigenous people in Canadian prisons. However, concerns have been raised as to whether diversion programs can provide proper support (NWAC 2012).

A second article containing details about Bird's life published in the *Huffington Post* (*Huffpost* 2018) also mentions the Gladue report, but this time in the context of the sentencing hearing and with an explanation. Justice Jerry LaGrandeur is paraphrased describing the mitigating factors in sentencing, including Bird's "youth, his guilty plea and the fact that he was remorseful." The judge is also described as having "noted that Bird's family were survivors of residential schools [and that] he was also abused as a child and has lower than average intelligence." Directly following these details, the woman's stepfather is quoted as having said that "no sentence would undo what was done to his 'little girl,'" and the crown prosecutor is then directly quoted as saying that Bird is a young man and that fifteen years was "still a significant sentence." In lieu of the perp walk photo or the Facebook profile picture, this article includes pictures of the crown prosecutors and Bird's second lawyer, Tonii Roulston. Despite offering clarification on the purpose of the Gladue report, like the CBC News article, this piece pathologizes Bird in a way that reinforces the ableist script from the good victim frame. Just as the woman who was assaulted must work to return to normal, Denzel Bird is irrevocably other than normal not only because he is a racialized Indigenous man but also because he is someone identified as having "less than average intelligence" and who has been abused himself (*Huffpost* 2018).

The second detail that first appears in the CBC News article in 2017 is reproduced in three subsequent articles one year later. Combining what Vowel (2012) has described as the pernicious stereotype of the "drunken Indian" with what Sanchez (2012) and Belanger (2002) have described as the stereotype of the "blood thirsty savage" (405), the discursive strategies that are used to narrate the assault create out of Bird an irredeemable other. CBC News Calgary published the first piece indicating that Bird had "been drinking whiskey hours earlier" and "was armed with a two-foot length of blue metal pipe" (CBC News Calgary 2017a). The following year, Grant (2018) and Graveland

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(2018a, 2018b) persist in reproducing sensationalized, graphic accounts of the violence, starting with their headlines. Graveland (2018a) describes it as a "sexual assault that left the victim in a coma." Grant (2018) describes Bird as the "Lethbridge man who beat a woman unconscious with a pipe before sexually assaulting her." In a second article by Graveland (2018b), the woman's ongoing trauma is described by putting the word "survivor" in scare quotes, thereby backgrounding her own means of self-identification and passivating her as a victim.

Together, these discursive strategies reproduce stereotypical accounts of toxic, violent, racialized masculinity that is upheld through the production of passive, virtuous, privileged (white) femininity, each one reinforcing the other in a hierarchical relationship through representational violence. Both frames support and maintain the contentious distinction between "us" and "them" that not only criminalized Bird prior to his trial, bail hearing, and sentencing but also continues to criminalize Indigenous men in general. These discursive strategies also materialized in the racist backlash experienced by members of the Blood Tribe.

Conclusion

Almost thirty years after she published her analysis of media representations of interracial sexual violence, Crenshaw (2016) articulated that intersectionality is not "primarily about identity, it is about how structures make certain identities the consequences of and the vehicles for vulnerability" (n.p.). Crenshaw has also explicitly articulated the importance of recognizing that when Black and racialized women are assaulted, the same kinds of media coverage are unavailable to them. This case is a prime example of Crenshaw's foundational concerns given that this assault and the subsequent coverage of it took place in a context where widespread sexual violence against Indigenous women, girls, and two-spirit and trans people is seldom reported or addressed with the same urgency, support for the families, and follow-up.

This chapter, however, begs the question of why anyone would want to be named or recognized in a media account of the violence that has been done to them, particularly when journalists and editors make decisions that may not only fail to reflect someone's own account of the violence they have experienced but also fix them in time and place, reducing them to a single experience. As such, Crenshaw's early work falls prey to a kind of

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intersectional failure on two counts. First, by not explicitly including settler colonialism, anti-Indigenous racism, and genocide as part of the structural foundation of racism in settler-colonial law, media, and language in use, and the kinds of violence and discrimination that looking through an intersectional lens is meant to address. Second, recognition and inclusion are not necessarily beneficial or meaningful in the absence of careful attention to transformative discursive practices that move beyond reductionist binary constructions of victims and perpetrators through overly simplistic narratives that construct the same old story of good versus evil. This chapter reveals that nobody benefits from the way sexual violence has been reported in popular media accounts of this case. Crenshaw's omissions, however, do not reflect a theoretical impasse or categorical failure. They instead invite us to create more complex analytical "cartographies that are irreducible to identity; that challenge how things work" in settler-colonial sites of institutional power and beyond (Hodes 2016). Crenshaw's early concern and later emphasis on context, and the changing structures and modalities of intersectional failure that shape representations and events, make her early insights strikingly relevant to a thorough analysis of the heteropatriarchal, ableist, genocidal, settler-colonial discourse in the media reporting on this case.

The frames analyzed here are built using a variety of discursive strategies that combine visual and textual images. Each one is illustrative of the transmutations and adjustments, the shifting modalities, narratives, grammars, and institutional formations of systemic racist sexism and ongoing settlement. As Wolfe (2006) has articulated, settler colonialism is a structure, not an event; its history does not stop (402). Social practices and institutional processes continue to be organized around shifting colonial grammars of race, class, gender, and sexuality (Wolfe 2006, 387). The representational violence and intersectional failure endemic to each of these frames point to the ways that settler colonialism makes the bodies of both the woman who was assaulted and Denzel Dre Colton Bird the vehicles for, and consequences of, different kinds of vulnerability through the systematic erasure of their experiences and voices. Identifying the "what" of these frames through the discursive practices that go into creating them is therefore key to also identifying how their representational violence is materialized and sustained over time and across borders in settler-colonial contexts.

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12 "Meanwhile, in Canada"

Systemic Racism, "Happy Points," and Some Challenges and Possibilities for Anti-racism in Lethbridge

Jason Laurendeau

Former officer Derek Chauvin's May 25, 2020, murder of George Floyd on a Minneapolis street in front of many witnesses has had far-reaching consequences. Video footage of Chauvin calmly kneeling on Floyd's neck for eight minutes and forty-six seconds went viral and spurred mass protests in cities all across the US, as well as in numerous other countries, including on lands claimed by Canada. Among Floyd's last words were "Momma, I love you. Tell my kids I love them. I'm dead" (France-Presse 2020). Floyd's words, the actions that prompted them, and numerous other Black deaths at the hands of police around the same time (including Breonna Taylor and Tony McDade in the US context and Regis Korchinski-Paquet and D'Andre Campbell in Canada) were all too familiar in Black, Indigenous, and other racialized communities. Though Floyd's murder was only the latest (at the time) in a hundreds-of-years-long history of deaths of racialized people at the hands of law enforcement officers on this continent, it led to mass protests in *many* North American cities (as well as a number of cities overseas) and seems to have sparked a reckoning moment with respect to systemic racism in general, and racism in policing in particular.[1]

1 I begin with this US example and the breadth of media and protest responses to it not to conflate the US and Canadian contexts (while there are some important shared

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The protests, and state responses to them, dominated news cycles for quite some time and prompted sustained discussion of the place of protest and violence in society. Many protests and rallies were relatively uneventful, while others were characterized by a degree of conflict and "disorder" (for a critical interrogation of "order," see Özcan, this volume), often sparked and exacerbated by heavy-handed law enforcement responses. Some protesters, for example, set fire to the Minneapolis Police Department building, and others were accused of "looting" in a number of cities. The police, meanwhile, employed tear gas, pepper spray, rubber bullets, and batons, often against protesters and witnesses who were fully complying with police instructions.

The protests have contributed to a number of developments related to policing, as well as important conversations about systemic racism in other institutions. Though there are too many such developments to comprehensively list here, it is worth noting a few, if only to offer a sense of the scope and scale of what seems to be unfolding in this moment: (1) Though Chauvin was originally charged with third-degree murder in Floyd's death, on June 3, 2020, it was announced that the charges had been upgraded to second-degree murder and that the three other officers who were present were to be charged with aiding and abetting second-degree murder (Bensadoun and Boynton 2020).[2] (2) Minneapolis city council drafted and approved a resolution to construct a

histories, there are also critical points of differentiation in terms of both white supremacy and settler colonialism generally and police violence specifically) but as an entry point into a consideration of the local(ized) ways in which this broad conversation has unfolded in Lethbridge. This localization is important not least because one of the too-easy narratives about racism and white supremacy on lands claimed by Canada is that these are problems "south of the border"; that Canada is a benevolent, progressive country; that "we" are not like "them."

2 As many readers will know, Chauvin was convicted of second- and third-degree murder as well as second-degree manslaughter in April 2021. Although this particular case is not the focus of the current chapter, it is worth noting the following: (1) while Chauvin's conviction is seen as "a victory" or "justice" by some commentators, it does little to unsettle the *systemic* issues in and with policing (it is too easy, in other words, to see this as a "bad apple" being brought to justice), and (2) the cases against Chauvin's alleged accomplices—J. Alexander Kueng, Thomas Lane, and Tou Thao—are complicated by many factors, including the inexperience of these officers relative to the seniority of Chauvin. Also noteworthy is that "these subordinate officers were immigrants and people of colour" (personal communication with the author, anonymous peer reviewer of this manuscript).

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"transformative new model" of policing in the beleaguered city, noting in the resolution that they plan to "end the current policing system as we know it" (Cooper, Alonso, and Hanna 2020). (3) Building on long histories of organizing and activism, there are initiatives at various stages of development in a number of North American cities to "defund the police," with advocates pushing for a redistribution of tax dollars away from policing and toward investment in community infrastructure and services.

It is against this backdrop that I consider how this conversation has (and has not) been taken up in Lethbridge, Alberta. In what follows, I interrogate a key rally in the city and two op-eds published in the local newspaper, as well as mediated accounts of and select responses to all three, to investigate the politics of race and anti-racism in the hub of southern Alberta. In interrogating how these events have unfolded, my aim is not to indict *particular social actors* (e.g., reporters, those commenting on media posts, etc.). Rather, in this chapter, I ask after the discursive *effects* of these stories being taken up: How they are shaping a key conversation of our lifetimes, one that has, for too long, been pushed to the margins of mainstream political- and mediascapes. As this conversation comes to occupy a more central position in national and local discourse, what does its shape reveal about contemporary politics of race and anti-racism?

Diversity Work

Sara Ahmed (2012) has undertaken extensive research on what she terms *diversity work*. Though this research is situated most squarely in the context of institutions of higher education in the UK and Australia, Ahmed's ideas have been taken up in myriad other institutional and geopolitical contexts. In this chapter, I suggest that we can extend Ahmed's work to think of what is happening right now with respect to policing as a very particular kind of diversity work brought about by the extraordinary traction of this moment in terms of anti-Black racism and systemic racism more broadly. As protesters, activists, academics, civil servants, and others advocate for racial justice (or, rather, an end to *in*justice), many institutions and social actors are being held to account in new ways. High-level social actors (e.g., politicians, business executives, media figures, civil servants) are being asked regularly about systemic racism in key societal institutions. Leaders of policing organizations big and small are being challenged to address systemic racism in their ranks,

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their practices, and their policies. Media organizations are being called to account for their lack of representation of Black and Indigenous peoples and other people of colour. In this moment, then, whether or not they are ready for it, innumerable institutions are engaging in diversity work.

Importantly, Ahmed (2012) illuminates that *diversity* work is a very different undertaking from *justice* work. In contrast to a focus on questions of *justice*, Ahmed (2012) argues that diversity has come to be about "generating the right kinds of appearance" and not challenging—or even necessarily *considering*—the power structures at the core of the institution (85). Diversity work, then, regularly involves *adding* diversity, which often comes in the form of adding a person or people who are said to *embody* diversity. What too rarely happens, Ahmed explains, is deep thinking about how dominant structures and practices are, themselves, the problem.

Ahmed (2012) suggests that it is productive to think of diversity as a perspective: "If diversity is a way of viewing or even picturing an institution, then it might allow only some things to come into view." Ahmed discusses this point alongside a consideration of intersectionality, which she describes as thinking "about and through the point at which power relations meet" (14). Intersectionality entails grappling with multiple systems of power and marginalization—recognizing that they intersect and shape the lives of people who, necessarily, are positioned in different ways along multiple axes of power, privilege, and oppression (Crenshaw 1991). Building from this idea, Ahmed (2012) suggests that diversity "is often used as shorthand for inclusion, as the 'happy point' of intersectionality, a point where lines meet" (14). By *adding* diversity (or, as we shall see, *celebrating* the adding of diversity), we create a perspective of this happy point, one that obscures the hard work that needs doing.

On Community

On June 4, the *Lethbridge Herald* published a piece they titled "Invest in, Rather Than Policing, Communities." I quote from this piece, which I coauthored with a colleague specializing in policing and racialization, at some length here:

> Many readers will have grown up understanding the police as a force for good, as the people you could trust if you were worried, scared, or in danger. But we must understand that historically, that has not been

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true for everyone. Historically [. . .] the police have been a force that [. . .] *divides*, one that sees some as suspicious based on assumptions about whether someone that looks a certain way belongs in a certain neighbourhood—indeed, we heard this from the former Police Chief in Lethbridge. They have been a force that has torn children from parents to put them in residential schools. A force that disproportionately stops, questions, arrests, and charges Black and Indigenous people, and other people of colour. A force that somehow finds ways to deescalate situations with even armed white suspects, and yet too often fails to find ways to peacefully engage with unarmed Black folks.

It is as part of this history that we must understand the kind of blatant police brutality the world witnessed on May 25th, 2020: the violent murder of George Floyd at the hands of Minneapolis police officers. This form of blatant cruelty is not new—Floyd's death has sparked nation-wide protests not because it is unusual, but because it was caught on video and is but the latest example of an unarmed Black person being killed by those charged with law enforcement. This kind of violence—foreign to many readers but all too familiar to Black people and communities—stands to remind Black people that their lives do not matter, just as they did not matter during slavery and the Jim Crow era. What lynching, a practice of public execution, was to Black people during the Jim Crow era, police killing of Black people is today, in this era of mass incarceration. Breonna Taylor. George Floyd. David McAtee. And too many more lives and loved ones lost.

And as the hashtag highlighted this past weekend, "meanwhile, in Canada [. . .]" Meanwhile, in Canada: Regis Korchinski-Paquet. D'Andre Campbell. Machuar Madut. All dead after encounters with Canadian police forces. And again, they are among too many racialized folks whose lives have ended in this way. Canada, like the U.S., has a long history of police violence disproportionately directed against Black people and communities, as well as Indigenous peoples and other people of colour. For example, recent data indicate that while members of the Black community represent only 3.4% of the Canadian population, they constitute 9% of the victims in fatal police interactions.

As the mainstream media tells all of us, we are in an extraordinary moment including "looting" and "violent unrest." But who, exactly, is being violent? And what, exactly, does "looting" mean in a country literally *founded* by stealing land? What does it mean to refer to

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> protestors *fighting for their lives* as looters, while celebrating those who profit from the exploitation of those same lives by paying them less than a living wage to cut our meat, to ship our online purchases to our homes, and to be more at risk for exposure to COVID-19 than those of us who wait in our comfortable homes for our purchases?
>
> In a different register, we might ask what it means to think of the safety of our communities in terms of law and order. We might define safety, or perhaps better yet, the well-being of our communities, in other terms. Instead of investing most of our property taxes in police "services," perhaps we should follow the advice of activists, journalists, and authors like Sandy Hudson or Desmond Cole[3] and invest, instead, in community supports and services. Instead of investing in a force designed to arrest offenders (a symptom of a broken system), perhaps instead we should treat the causes: record levels of social inequality, lack of access to housing, quality food, and mental health supports, for example. Perhaps, in such a world, society would respond to a mental health crisis with support rather than force, and a woman would not fall 24 floors to her death. Perhaps, in such a world, we might work towards *reducing* social inequalities rather than responding with force to those fighting for justice in their communities. If we think in terms of *investing* in our communities rather than *policing* them, not only will we better serve marginalized peoples and communities, but we might work towards redefining community itself. (Turay and Laurendeau 2020)

Though my coauthor and I did not linger with it at length, the "meanwhile, in Canada" hashtag is worth reflecting on here. As noted previously, one of the ways Canada and Canadians refuse difficult conversations about white supremacy on these lands is through a sanctimonious finger pointing, a suggesting that these are problems "down there" but not, we insist, "up here." The fact that #meanwhileinCanada was, for a time, the top trending topic

3 At the time of writing this piece, I did not do enough to engage with the histories of these particular activists or of anti-racist work(ers) in general. As one reviewer notes, "Hudson and Cole were the prime movers in destroying the career of Justice Donald McLeod, one of the few criminal court justices in Ontario. [. . .] They are far more complicated persons than perceived by most non-Black people in Toronto, Nova Scotia, and elsewhere." My point here is not to delve into the specifics of Hudson's and/or Cole's actions in depth but to acknowledge my/our simplistic framing of them in this particular media contribution.

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on Canadian Twitter should give us pause; it should have us asking serious questions about how and why racial violence is so routinely glossed over, whitewashed, or relegated to a bygone past. As Dwaine Taylor (2020) explicates, "Canadian Exceptionalism has crippled our ability to critically reflect on the issues in our own country."

The same day that the previously quoted op-ed was published, a large rally was held at Lethbridge City Hall in support of Black Lives Matter (BLM). Organized by Lethbridge's Group United Against Racial Discrimination, the rally was attended by an estimated one thousand people and was supported both online and in person (e.g., cars honking as they drove by) by many who chose not to attend the rally in person during the pandemic.

I begin with the op-ed and rally not because either, by itself, could provide a comprehensive treatment of a complex and multifaceted issue. Rather, in the case of the op-ed, my coauthor and I intended it as a provocation, one aiming to nudge the conversation unfolding in our local community. In the case of the rally, meanwhile, the point was to draw attention to a "system that was built on white supremacy that has sought to marginalize the lives and voices of Black, Indigenous and People of Colour (BIPOC)" (Dhaliwal 2020). More to the point in terms of this chapter, I begin with these moments to set the stage for a consideration of whether and how these arguments were taken up and what all this tells us about how race and racism work in Lethbridge.

"Race Relations"

On June 4, 2020, at 9:34 a.m., I received an email from someone in public affairs at my institution that included the following: "I've got a Global Lethbridge reporter who would like to speak with someone about race relations in Canada." Right away, I was on alert. Someone asking about "race relations," as opposed to "racial injustice," for example, suggested to me a focus on "relations," a desire, perhaps, to write a feel-good story. In my view, that was not what was called for. Instead, we needed to be having hard conversations, conversations that make folks—and privileged folks like me, especially—uncomfortable. Warily, I connected with my coauthor, and we agreed to do the interview.

The interviewer was professional and pleasant and asked a number of insightful questions. She asked about police body cameras, about better unconscious-bias training for police officers, about investing in community. For our part, we pushed back as much as possible, pointing out that many

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racial justice advocates *do not* want body cameras, as this means *more* funding of police as well as *more* surveillance—not simply of police officers, but of racialized citizens too. We highlighted that unconscious-bias training is largely cosmetic when we have grown up in and work and live in institutions in which white supremacy is deeply embedded. Perhaps most importantly, we pointed out that many racialized folks have been doing this work in Canada for a long time and that it is high time we listen to them (e.g., Maynard 2017; Cole 2020; Diverlus, Hudson, and Ware 2020).

At the end of the interview, the reporter indicated that the on-air segment would be quite short, but that she would have more space to write a broader piece for the online story. When the segment aired that evening, I was disappointed, but not surprised. The on-air segment, one minute and fifty-one seconds long, opens with Jordan Ledyit—one of the organizers—noting, "I do believe that the response was quite overwhelming, and it was amazing to see so much support for our message." Legacy McAdam, another organizer, is then quoted: "It was very overwhelming, as a good thing, knowing so many people support this common cause." Later in the segment, the reporter notes that my coauthor Ibrahim Turay "says a diverse and large turnout at the protest shows immense solidarity." Further along, we hear the reporter's voice-over: "Jason Laurendeau is a professor at the University of Lethbridge who studies sociology and race relations, and he says this may be the biggest protest Lethbridge has ever witnessed." The segment concludes with the notion that "this movement is echoing cries for proactive change across the country" (Dhaliwal 2020).

What strikes me now about the segment (and the slightly longer online story—Dhaliwal 2020—that accompanied it) is that it *is*, largely, a feel-good story. We learn that the rally was "overwhelming," was "amazing," and showed "immense solidarity." The only sustained call for action evident in the story is found in the middle of the segment and lasts approximately eight seconds on camera: "Ledyit says she doesn't want this to be a phase, and voices what she would like to see done immediately: '[. . .] our government officials [need to] *hear* us, and do something.'" What's more, the segment then moves away from this single—and somewhat broad—call for systemic change to cite the "experts"[4] but draws only on the briefest and most banal comments

4 The notion that expertise accompanies academic credentials rather than lived experiences of racialization and racism is part of how knowledges get constructed in

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from our interview. Yes, I observed that it was a tremendous turnout for a rally in Lethbridge. But I—and we—also observed many things about the persistence of white supremacy, the limits of police training initiatives, and more. And yet the particular quotes they chose from *each* of the key figures in the short segment speak to what a positive sign it was that there was a large turnout, with only the briefest and most general acknowledgement of the very real issues of anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism in our community and the world more broadly. This, to borrow from Ahmed (2012), highlights that the "promise of diversity is the promise of happiness: as if in becoming happy or in wanting 'just happiness' we can put racism behind us" (165). In other words, to borrow from Tuck and Yang (2012), this story and video clip invoke "a fantasy of mutuality based on sympathy and suffering" (20).[5]

In this instance, Ledyit, McAdam, Turay, and I are all pictured as "happy" about the rally, buoyed by the "solidarity" it illustrated, as if solidarity—rather than *justice*—is the desired outcome. We are marshalled, that is, to illustrate the "happy point," the point where lines meet. But what makes this a "happy" story "is partly what it conceals or keeps from view. It might offer a relief from the negative feelings surrounding racism. [. . .] It allows white guilt to be displaced by good feelings" about a successful rally (Ahmed 2012, 165). But neither guilt nor good feelings are what are needed in this moment. Audrey Lorde (1997) reminds us, "Guilt and defensiveness are bricks in a wall against which we will all perish, for they serve none of our futures" (278). Guilt, moreover, is not generative; indeed, it is "only another way of avoiding informed action, of buying time out of the pressing need to make clear choices" (282). So what is needed is not a feel-good story to displace guilt but a difficult story to transform guilt toward something more productive. Perhaps, what we need instead is anger. Not solidarity, certainly not amazement or optimism, but anger. Lorde (1997) puts it succinctly: "Anger is an appropriate

very particular ways. Moreover, drawing (selectively) on "race relations experts," in this instance, invokes a kind of authority that has important discursive effects.

5 Importantly, Tuck and Yang's article is about settler colonialism and what they call "settler moves to innocence" specifically, and this specificity matters a great deal. I avoid borrowing the phrase *move to innocence* in this chapter in order not to conflate the groundedness and specificity of their call with the more general point I am making in my analysis of this particular news story.

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reaction to racist attitudes, as is fury when the actions arising from those attitudes do not change" (282).

In the media account of the BLM rally in Lethbridge, I see what Ahmed (2012) describes when she theorizes a "fantasy fold": "Diversity is often imagined as a form of repair, a way of mending or fixing histories of being broken. Indeed, diversity enters institutional discourse as a way of imagining that those who are divided can work together; as a way of assuming that 'to get along' is to right a wrong" (164). In other words, the arguments activists and commentators marshal toward addressing racial injustice are *folded in* and become part of a story about "solidarity," "cries for proactive change," and "support for our message." This folding in ensures that the conversation is not about racism, white supremacy, and injustice but about a rallying moment about which we (should) *all* feel good. As Ahmed (2012) notes, folding in has implications for how we relate to the past: "Racism is framed as a memory of what is no longer, a memory that if it was kept alive would just leave us exhausted" (164).

On the one hand, my analysis here is about the story itself—the ways in which this BLM rally and "expert" analysis of the issues were (re)framed (see Hodes, this volume). On the other, however, in the age of digital media, we get a glimpse into the public's engagement with these stories. In this instance, as of the time of writing, the only online response to the story points to the depth of racism in Lethbridge:

> As I commented before, what a pack of racists at this rally. You do know that promoting one race or culture over another's is the definition of true racism. You should all be ashamed of yourselves. Myself? I promote the concept of "All Lives Matter" which is true equality for everyone. All these naïve protesters are doing is spinning the "hamster wheel" of true racism. If you keep living your lives looking backwards, you are doomed to repeat the past. (Dee Ironside commenting on Dhaliwal 2020)[6]

This comment draws on the "discourse of universalism" that DiAngelo (2011) describes in her discussion of "white fragility." Universalism, she explains, "functions to deny the significance of race and the advantages of being white" (59). In laying a claim to the contours of "true racism," this

6 See Ironside's comment in the comments section of Dhaliwal (2020).

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commentator refuses even the most basic critique included in the story and the movement more broadly. At the same time, their hearkening to "All Lives Matter" operates as a "racial spectacle [. . .] because it disguises the prioritizing of white lives." It is, in other words, a form of "racial gaslighting" that

> co-opts Black social justice intellectual work[,] pushes Black communities further to the margins of society by insisting that all lives [matter,] erases the centuries of brutalization and dehumanization of Black bodies[, and] obfuscates the role of the white supremacist state power structure by eliding over the specific targeting of Black lives by state institutions and actors, such as prisons and police. (Davis and Ernst 2019, 764)

The Watch

On June 11, 2020, another op-ed appeared in the Herald, this one focused more specifically on the Watch, a pilot and mostly volunteer program that had been active in Lethbridge since 2019 (Walker and Runions 2020). The Watch, paradoxically, was modelled on the Bear Clan initiative in Winnipeg. The Lethbridge Police Service (LPS) borrowed the Bear Clan model, adapting (and, arguably, perverting) it by bringing it more squarely in line with policing practices and affiliations. Not only is the Watch overseen by the LPS, but it serves as a key "community engagement" opportunity for students in a local Criminal Justice program, many of whom undertake their practicum hours as Watch patrollers.

Spurred both by their opposition to the Watch program and by the reckoning moment described at the outset of this chapter, two Lethbridge citizens launched a petition to defund the Watch (the petition had been signed by almost 5,700 people as of the time of writing) and published their own op-ed on the topic, reproduced here in its entirety:

> The Watch was established in Lethbridge in 2019 in order to "increase the perception of public safety" (Lethbridge Police Service's 2018 Annual report). The volunteer-run program received $1.2 million of taxpayers' money over its first two years. However, there are growing concerns amongst community members who are questioning the efficacy of this program, and proposing Watch funding be re-allocated to support harm reduction and re-housing initiatives.

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We spoke to former Watch volunteers, academics, social workers and harm-reduction specialists on the frontline of homelessness, policing, and outreach initiatives, as well as everyday citizens concerned about the frequency of violence and racial profiling enacted by Watch volunteers against the unhoused population in Lethbridge's downtown core.

One community member spoke to The Watch's "colonial legacy of the militia-based policing of marginalized bodies and lives in North America" stating: "Rather than providing meaningful and actionable care and resources, The Watch roams the downtown area, intimidating and abusing marginalized people while being celebrated by white settlers. Nothing proved that more clearly to me than when I saw four separate Watch members, on two different occasions, approach an Indigenous person who appeared to be experiencing an overdose and choose to kick that person to see if they were alive, rather than speaking to them" (Jamie Lewis, recent graduate).

A Community Support Worker says The Watch have "repeatedly approached clients [they] have worked with in aggressive ways that scare and startle individuals" and "[do] not understand individual's state or mental health and that many of those they approach live with invisible disabilities such as [fetal alcohol spectrum disorder and autism spectrum disorder]."

One previous Watch member even spoke to the "inherent prejudice" of the program, describing how they wear "a uniform white people can run to." These community concerns are supported by feminist legal scholar Dr. Caroline Hodes, who commented: "a group like 'The Watch' follows an outdated and inappropriate crime control model that has no place in Lethbridge. 'The Watch' have developed a reputation for putting people's personal security at greater risk and for discrimination, harassment, and violence."

Community members have various ideas as to how the money could be reallocated, with the intention of helping the most vulnerable populations in Lethbridge. These include a new treatment centre, a drop-in center, and housing initiatives; as the budget for The Watch was originally cut from the Housing First program. A former member of The Watch stated that "[a]t best it is a referral program, and is simply a Band Aid effort to improve the lives of the homeless population and increase public *perception* of safety. Funds are much better spent on housing, support and harm-reduction

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> strategies than on a group of people with radios and no real authority."
>
> Unhoused communities in Lethbridge deserve programs that are informed by best practices for support, and we call on city council to hear the thousands of people who have signed our petition and mobilized their voices for this cause. In fact, our proposal supports the key strategies of the City of Lethbridge's Reconciliation Implementation Plan (2017–2027), where the City expresses its commitment to "[s]upport alternative forms of community justice initiatives to divert individuals from criminal justice processes for minor offences to more culturally relevant restorative justice processes framed around healing and rehabilitation."
>
> As Dr. Hodes suggests, "given the recent and overwhelming support for the BLM movement and the transnational public outcry against police violence, you need to find more productive, community enhancing ways to spend this money." Ultimately, in the words of one community member, "When Black/Indigenous/people of colour say The Watch has not done much for them, you should listen" (Poahksikakii B. Child). (Walker and Runions 2020)

In their contribution, Walker and Runions draw attention to and trouble the "common-sense" discourse of policing that so often places policing and police organizations beyond question. I do not mean to suggest that critiques of *particular police (in)actions* are not culturally intelligible—surely recent events have made clear that such critiques *are* getting traction. Rather, my point is that deeper interrogations of the *foundations* of policing—such as the spatial containment of racialized peoples—are rarely centred in these conversations (for more on this, see Özcan, this volume). By offering such an intervention, Walker and Runions urge readers to understand this particular kind of public safety work as one directly tied to white privilege, one that helps white folks, in particular, feel comfortable in "their" city (giving them "a uniform [they] can run to").

Here, again, the *responses* to the op-ed are quite revealing. While a small number of commenters accepted and applauded Walker and Runions's analysis, others engaged in racist and misogynist trolling, best exemplified by the following comment:

> The loudest voices on this front seem to be a minority who have good intentions but ignore the fact that we have a massive problem here in

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> Lethbridge most of which originates from the Blood Reserve. Population there is around 10,000; yet they generate 95% of Lethbridge problems primarily due to bad parenting. These women should be advocating for social programs for the reserve starting with parenting skills. Rather they focus on bashing white society calling us racist, colonials etc. Fact is white society has been very generous and now we are paying a heavy price seeing our city degraded before our eyes: gangs of losers drugging and drinking in public, trolling our alleys looking for things to steal to get their next fix; laying around in our parks drugging, drinking and fornicating in the open (I've got pictures); helping themselves to new new [*sic*] clothes and needles paid for by us tax payers. This sector has no pride of getting by on their own steam; rather they play victim believing white society "owes them." After World War 2 hundreds of shell shocked veterans burdened with PTSD settled here and in spite of years of horror they went on to work and make this city great; they didn't get hand outs; didn't spend their lives crying and playing victim, they worked in spite of their psychological traumas. Back then natives weren't even allowed in Lethbridge. A few decades later, here they are with them we have problems and more problems. Yes there are natives that positively add to our city but what we see too much of on the streets, filling our courts, hospitals etc are losers who are every bit racist as they call us. The Watch needs far more power and more funding as do the police. They are the only buffer we have between the law abiding taxpayer and the parasites that have infested our city. De-funding The Watch program or the police is a pie in the sky dream concocted by a naive minority. (Chinook commenting on Walker and Runions 2020)

This comment clearly indicates an utter failure to understand the violences of settler-colonial heteropatriarchal structures and practices, the specific and concerted efforts of the settler state to attack Indigenous kinship formations, and the extraordinary resilience and strength of Indigenous peoples and communities in the face of these orchestrated attacks (e.g., Elliott 2019; Morgan 2018). Moreover, it illustrates the kind of "racial arrogance" DiAngelo (2011) describes, one that "includes strongly positive images of the white self as well as strongly negative images of racial 'others'" (61). Further, it points to the process whereby white observers "have no compunction about debating the knowledge of people who have thought complexly about race [and] feel free to dismiss these informed perspectives rather than have the humility to acknowledge

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that they are unfamiliar, reflect on them further, or seek more information" (DiAngelo 2011, 61). Finally, it points to the intersections between settler colonialism and oppressive gender structures, as the commenter draws on both symbols of militarized masculinity and misogynist tropes of Indigenous women supposedly lacking parenting skills to make profoundly racist claims about "parasites" from whom "the law abiding taxpayer" needs protection. Not only are this person's claims fundamentally without factual basis, but their entire framework also neatly sidesteps any acknowledgement of the hetero-patriarchal violence inflicted against Indigenous peoples and communities by the Canadian nation-state (for examples rooted in Blackfoot communities near Lethbridge, see Choate and Lindstrom 2017; Lindstrom and Choate 2016).

Anything Less . . . Would Be a Futile Exercise

As noted previously, many people and communities have been engaged in anti-racist work since long before the murder of George Floyd sparked this particular iteration of the conversation. It is to these people and communities, I suggest, that we must look for guidance, for a deeper sense of the histories at play here, and for the kinds of imagination called for as we strive for more just futures. In terms of the particular contours of the conversation in and around Lethbridge, we might look, for example, to the Kanai Nation (Blood Tribe), who issued the following statement about systemic racism on June 18, 2020, a statement that was then picked up by local media in Lethbridge:

> Blood Tribe members have had their share of encounters with systemic racism in all areas including the criminal justice system such as in policing, and accessing other services off the reserve in health, education, employment, housing and retail. Like other people of color, Blood Tribe members have also been subjected to racial profiling by police and border crossing officials. Issues in policing came to a head in the late 1980s, resulting in the Rolf Inquiry on "Policing in relation to the Blood Tribe," which investigated suspicious deaths of a number of Blood Tribe members.
>
> Chief Roy Fox and Council had successfully convinced the provincial and federal governments that a Public Inquiry be conducted on inadequate police investigations regarding homicides of Indigenous people in Southern Alberta. Unfortunately, the reaction of certain police forces to the Inquiry resulted in physical and planned attacks to

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> Chief Fox and his family as well as other Blood Tribe members, even before the Inquiry started. The Chief was ambushed and assaulted by members of the RCMP[7] near his home; and a fellow tribal member was shot and killed in broad daylight by a member of the Lethbridge City Police. The Chief was charged with assaulting 2 police officers however he was found not guilty due to credible witnesses. No charges were laid against the Lethbridge City police officer who shot and killed the Blood Tribe member on the eve of the Inquiry hearings. These incidents happened over 30 years ago and even though some of the recommendations of the Blood Inquiry resulted in limited positive changes, systemic racism is alive and well today in the south and obviously in other parts of Canada. [. . .]
>
> Racism is systemic in that it is based on the core ideology of the dominant group and this ideology is manifested in its culture and institutions and expressed in the attitudes and behaviors of its members toward other groups who are seen as racially different. Contrary to RCMP Commissioner, Brenda Lucki's statement last week, systemic racism is very much a part of Canadian institutions such as the RCMP.
>
> We can however, work collectively to address racism. The move in Canada to reconcile with Indigenous Peoples should really be a move to address and eliminate systemic racism in all institutions and all areas of life, *anything less than that would be a futile exercise*. (Goulet 2020; emphasis mine)

This statement constitutes an important intervention in the conversation taking shape in Lethbridge for at least two reasons. First, it highlights that while the movement unfolding at the moment is and should be grounded in the work of Black activists, scholars, and communities, it is also inseparable from the workings of settler colonialism. Second, it historicizes the issue locally, outlining histories of systemic racism at work in and around Lethbridge and with specific reference to the LPS. Both constitute important reminders of the work that has been done and, importantly, the work yet to be done.

Refusing a Conclusion

On June 17 2020, federal New Democratic Party (NDP) leader Jagmeet Singh called out Bloc Quebecois Member of Parliament Alain Therrien, calling him

7 Royal Canadian Mounted Police.

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a racist for refusing to support an NDP motion to recognize and acknowledge systemic racism in the Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP) and "review the budget of the Royal Canadian Mounted Police and the use of force by Mounties, noting 'several Indigenous people have died at the hands of the RCMP in recent months'" (Lum and Maloney 2020). In a striking turn of events, *Singh* was censured, asked by the Speaker of the House to apologize for calling Therrien a racist, which was said to constitute "unparliamentary behaviour." Singh refused to apologize and was subsequently ejected from the House of Commons. As many on social media pointed out, this constituted what is arguably a quintessentially Canadian moment: a racialized national leader calls out an opposing politician for vetoing a motion toward racial justice, is removed from parliament for so doing, and then gets to watch as the mainstream media frame the story around *his* ejection rather than his political opponent's racism. This recent story helps frame the particular interrogation in which I engage in this chapter, as it provides yet another example of the ways Canadian settler society regularly and actively refuses deep conversations about systemic racism, *even at the very moment when that conversation seems to be occupying centre stage*.

The events in parliament point to some of the difficulties of having deep, sustained conversations about racial injustice. Meanwhile, as this conversation unfolds on national and international stages, it is also being pursued in local and specific settings, like Lethbridge. Recently, people connected to both of the op-eds outlined previously made presentations to the Lethbridge Police Commission, one arguing for an end to the Watch program, the other calling for a 10 percent reduction in the LPS budget and arms-length reviews of systemic racism in general and carding / street checks in particular. These are but two examples of local initiatives aiming to dismantle/destabilize practices and institutions that uphold white supremacy and perpetuate racism, including and especially anti-Black and anti-Indigenous racism. And yet at the same time as movements and initiatives such as these are gaining traction and media coverage, they are both meeting resistance (e.g., see Pagliaro 2020)[8] and being (re)framed in the ways outlined in this chapter, as indications that we have *arrived* somewhere. But as the editors point out in their introduction to this volume, the work of anti-racism is and must be more complicated,

8 In Toronto, Ontario, the city council recently refused the organized and sustained calls for a reduction in the policing budget, instead approving an *increase* to the budget to accommodate initiatives such as body cameras.

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more sustained, and much more uncomfortable than simply acknowledging that racism exists and then trusting that institutions and institutional actors will end racist practice.

What is needed more than anything is attention to the work of activists, scholars, and artists who are and have been doing this work for many years and are increasingly doing so in solidarity and collaboration across what are too often seen as dividing lines. We must follow them, especially, in thinking "about anti-Blackness and settler colonialism and their often (but not always) overlapping logics and outcomes" (Maynard and Simpson 2020, 79; also see Özcan, this volume). In other words, we must attend to the systems and structures that work in concert with one another to (re)produce white supremacy and global capitalism: "We need a layered and international understanding of the genocides [Black and Indigenous] communities have faced and are facing" (Maynard and Simpson 2020, 81). Moreover, it is not simply that we need to participate in constructing abolitionist and decolonial futures; more to the point, we must heed the insights and challenges to construct liberatory futures in broader senses: "Black and Indigenous futures of freedom are also feminist futures, and queer futures, and they are futures that [. . .] categorically reject the scaffolding of white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, capitalism, and all of their forms and manifestations" (Maynard and Simpson 2020, 83). This will, of course, be hard work that will require persistence, imagination, and hope. But it must start by refusing the too-easy framings of this moment instead actively seeking out the more difficult conversations and actions in and with which we must engage.

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Contributors

Deema Abushaban. My name is Deema Abushaban. I am a female, Muslim Palestinian. The three most obvious parts of my identity. I was born in Ottawa and moved to Denver, Colorado, three years later. After spending seven years in Denver, we moved to Dubai, where we lived for almost twelve years before moving to Lethbridge four years ago. I am now a graduate of the education program at the University of Lethbridge, hoping to pursue a career in physical education. Being of Palestinian descent, I naturally come from a displaced family. Although I have never lived in Palestine, I proudly identify as Palestinian. If you were to ask me why, I would say it is because my paternal grandfather, who was exiled, identified as such; my maternal grandfather, who was kicked out of his home in 1948, identified as such; my father, who was imprisoned by the Israeli Defense Forces at the age of seventeen, identifies as such; my grandmother, who pressed olives, whose youngest was taken away from her at seventeen, and whose husband was exiled, identified as such; and my mother, Zeina, whose name means beautiful and radiant, and who will never be able to step on the land of her ancestors, also identifies as such. *Naturally displaced.* I have had the privilege of visiting Gaza, the city where most of my family resides, several times.

Carly Adams is a Tier 1 Board of Governors Research Chair, co-director of the Centre for Oral History and Tradition, and professor in the Department of Kinesiology and Physical Education at the University of Lethbridge in Alberta, Canada. She teaches courses on sport history, gender, and oral history. As a social historian and an advocate for oral history, she explores community, resiliency, and gender in her research, with a focus on sport and leisure experiences. In collaboration with Dr. Darren Aoki, she is currently working on the Nikkei Memory Capture Project, a community-based oral

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history project focusing on Japanese Canadian histories in southern Alberta. She is the author of *Queens of the Ice* (Lorimer), editor of *Sport and Recreation in Canadian History* (Human Kinetics), and co-editor of the *Routledge Handbook of Sport History* (Routledge). Her work has also appeared in, among others, *Journal of Sport History*, *Journal of Canadian Studies*, *International Journal of the History of Sport*, and *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*. Dr. Adams is the editor of *Sport History Review*.

Darren J. Aoki is associate professor in world history and oral history at the University of Plymouth, United Kingdom. His research interests include twentieth-century Japan and East Asia, with a focus on the post–Second World War period. More recently, Aoki has realigned his interests in identity and narrative to exploring trans-Pacific migrations and encounter, specifically, the history of *Nikkei* (people of Japanese descent) in North America. Focusing on the little-heard history of postwar southern Alberta through oral history, his research privileges the voices of this area's Nisei (second generation) residents. In 2017, the project expanded significantly through Aoki's partnership with Dr. Carly Adams at the University of Lethbridge. Together, they lead the Nikkei Memory Capture Project, a transnational initiative including collaborative partnerships with key regional ethnic and heritage stakeholders, to expand the study of *Nikkei* in southern Alberta and innovate the definition of what it means to "be of Japanese descent."

Glenda Tibe Bonifacio is a full professor in the Department of Women and Gender Studies at the University of Lethbridge. She is the author of *Pinay on the Prairies: Filipino Women and Transnational Identities* (University of British Columbia Press 2013). Her research areas and other published works include gender and migration and post-disaster communities. She is the editor of *Feminism and Migration: Cross-cultural Engagements* (Springer 2012), *Gender and Rural Migration: Realities, Conflict and Change* (Routledge 2014), *Global Currents in Gender and Feminisms* (Emerald Press 2018), and *Global Youth Migration and Gendered Modalities* (Policy Press 2019). She co-founded the Support Network for Academics of Colour+ and the ReadWorld Foundation.

Rabindra Chaulagain works as an assistant professor in the sociology department at Acadia University. His research spans a broad range of social and political issues, including forced migration and refugee studies, critical border studies, race, critical theory, global post-colonialism, and Indigenous

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anti-colonialism. Besides his academic responsibilities, he regularly engages in volunteerism and community services.

Roxanna Balbido Epe is a PhD candidate in Cultural, Social and Political Thought. She has extensive engagements in research, development, and humanitarian works. Her interests are on gender and disaster, displacement and social protection, and governance. She is a coauthor of *Child Health and Nutrition Research in Asia and the Pacific: An Assessment of Research Priorities and Institutions*. She is a member of the Support Network for Academics of Colour+.

Oki, niistonakoak Ohnistayahkopi. Dustin Fox is a Blackfoot student, born and raised on the Blood Reserve, or Kainai First Nation. He has focused his undergrad research as a sociology and Indigenous studies student at the University of Lethbridge, situated in Blackfoot territory. He has focused his studies on Indigenous studies and sociology in the hope of bringing a Blackfoot perspective to the understanding of social justice on lands claimed by Canada. He believes his life experience as a Blackfoot person who was born and raised in Canada gives him a unique outlook on Canadian society, especially relative to the discourse of truth and reconciliation. He enjoys the mountains, fishing, sports, meeting new people, writing, and learning new things.

Monique Giroux holds a Canada Research Chair in Indigenous Music, Culture, and Politics at the University of Lethbridge (Alberta, Canada). Her research explores Métis cultural revival and resurgence, critically addressing how music is used to negotiate relationships between Indigenous nations and settler populations. She has undertaken ethnographic research in the Canadian Prairies, Ontario, North Dakota, and Montana, as well as extensive archival research focused on public discourse around, and settler appropriation of, Métis culture. Her publications include articles on Métis music festivals (*MUSICultures*), on Métis bard Pierre Falcon (*Ethnologies*), and on Indigenous/settler relations at old time fiddle contests (*Ethnomusicology*).

Caroline Hodes is an associate professor of women and gender studies at the University of Lethbridge. She has published work on settler colonialism, gender, racism, and intersectional failure in Canadian law. Her work can be read in *Feminist Legal Studies*, *Settler Colonial Studies*, the *Windsor Yearbook of Access to Justice*, the *Canadian Journal of Women and the Law*, the *Journal*

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of International Women's Studies, and *Atlantis: Critical Studies in Gender, Culture, and Social Justice*, among others. Her current project, *Unsettling Law's Archive*, is under contract with University of Toronto Press and is partially funded through the Community of Research Excellence Development Opportunities Program and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council of Canada's Explore Program. A strong advocate for scholarly activism and the recognition of invisible labour, she is also a co-founder of the Support Network for Academics of Colour+.

Jason Laurendeau is an associate professor of sociology at the University of Lethbridge, Alberta, whose research takes up questions and intersections of settler colonialism, embodiment and physical culture, risk, gender, and childhood. His work has been published in venues such as the *Sociology of Sport Journal*; *Emotion, Space & Society*; *Sociological Perspectives*; *Qualitative Research in Sport, Exercise and Health*; and *Communication and Sport*. His current work interrogates contemporary mountain culture as part of an ongoing history of settler-colonial and racialized violence as well as Indigenous-led movements resisting and reshaping those histories.

Gülden Özcan worked as an assistant professor in the Department of Sociology at the University of Lethbridge. She co-edited *A General Police System: Political Economy and Security in the Age of Enlightenment* (2009) and *Capitalism and Confrontation: Critical Readings* (2012). She contributed to *Alternate Routes: A Journal of Critical Social Research*, *Moment: Journal of Cultural Studies*, *Kampfplatz*, and *The Wiley-Blackwell Encyclopedia of Globalization*. Her commentaries appeared in *The Bullet* (Socialist Project, E-Bulletin). Her research interests include policing and social surveillance, social and political thought, and the neoliberalization process in Turkey. She has two current research projects that will remain incomplete due to her untimely death in 2022. The first focuses on policing, the commons, and the public from a historical perspective. The second project looks at the intersection of neoliberalism, national security, and the (displacement of) knowledge production and focuses on Turkish academics in exile.

The Reconciliation Lethbridge Advisory Committee is made up of seven Indigenous community members, including representatives from the University of Lethbridge, Lethbridge College, the Holy Spirit Catholic School Division, Lethbridge Public School Division 51; two business sector

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representatives; and both the mayor and the deputy mayor of Lethbridge. Their mandate is to promote mutual understanding and support for the urban Indigenous community and the municipality's relationship with the Blackfoot Confederacy and Métis Nation of Alberta, Region 3. They act as an advisory committee to City Council on matters relating to reconciliation.

Migueltzinta Solís is an interdisciplinary artist and writer. He was raised between southern Mexico and northern California, in both urban and rural areas. He has worked in a range of fields, including sustainable agriculture, childcare, theater technology, and fine arts education. Migueltzinta's interests include perversity as strategy for institutional intervention and critique, autotheoretical methodologies in queer and post-colonial studies, questions of (un)belonging to place and land, the potential for and limitations of hybrid Latinx Indigenous futurities, frontierism, the Wild West, and other colonial imaginaries. Migueltzinta holds an MFA in art from the University of Lethbridge and a BA in interdisciplinary studies from the Evergreen State College and is currently pursuing a PhD in Cultural, Social and Political Thought.

Ibrahim Turay is a PhD candidate in the Cultural, Social and Political Thought program at the University of Lethbridge and an instructor in the School of Justice Studies at Lethbridge College. He holds a MA in criminal justice from the University of Alberta. Ibrahim worked for the Alberta Justice and Solicitor General in the Correctional Services Division for eleven years as a correctional, probation, and senior probation officer. His research interests include marginalization, related to race (racism, racial profiling); youth gangs; corrections; and (in)justice in the criminal justice system.

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