Painting You, Painting Me:

Viewing the ‘Other’ through gendered-violence against Indigenous women and girls in Kent Monkman’s “Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience”

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Dedication

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Abstract

This paper presents a critical analysis of the ‘Other’ as a mechanism of hegemonic Eurocentric colonialism. ‘Othering’ as a methodological lens allows for consideration of the complexities of identity politics, in an interdisciplinary manner. Through this interdisciplinary approach, a re-telling and re-consideration of the position of Indigenous Peoples in Canada is possible, engaging in a process of decolonization through ‘resurgent recognition’. The disproportionate gendered-violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls in the Canadian context acts as an example of the extent to which the prescription of the ‘Otherness’ distorts power relations: not only does the ‘colonial imagination’ situate the West and European settlement as ‘civilized’, and the Indigenous as ‘savage’, but it also inscribes a heteropatriarchal hierarchy. Through the representational art of Kent Monkman, ‘resurgent recognition’ provides public audiences, Indigenous and non-Indigenous alike, with the opportunity to reflect and reconsider the past 150 years of colonialism in Canada.
Chapter 1: Introduction

In the contemporary Canadian context, discussions and actions taken towards reconciliation between Indigenous Peoples and settlers prove complex and contentious. Among such complexities, the prophetic future proposed by reconciliation requires the recognition of Canada’s implicit in the solidification and perpetuation of the colonial social imaginary. By means of constructions and depictions of the “Indigenous Other,” assimilationist policies and ideologies of the past have continuing currency in the Canadian imagination. A recent travelling exhibition by the Canadian Métis (Cree and Irish Settler) artist Kent Monkman entitled, “Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience”, aims to contest, destabilize and reimagine these colonial ideologies by presenting an Indigenous retelling of hegemonic Christian settler portrayals of Canada’s history. Chronicling a re-telling of the last 150 years of Canadian history, reimagining and affirming the nationhood and personhood of First Nations, Métis, and Inuit populations in Canada, Monkman provides a creative milieu that is distinct from the Eurocentric focus of traditionally acknowledged fine art. Through a religious studies lens, the manifest interaction between ‘religious’ as opposed to ‘spiritual’ worldviews and lifeways expressed in Monkman’s work highlights the imposition of colonial enterprises in Canada to categorize and distinguish populations from one another. As a site of colonial resistance, Monkman’s artwork addresses major historical and contemporary issues experienced throughout Indigenous communities in Canada, informed by Eurocentric representations of the “Indian Other”.

Prior to an examination of Monkman’s “Shame and Prejudice” exhibition and visions of the “Indian Other”, an overview of the development of the theory of ‘Othering’ and its application as a methodological lens is required. Such an overview, while originating its discussion in Western thought, will likewise seek to address alternate Indigenous understandings
of processes of Othering. Echoing the retelling of a Eurocentric history of Canada, as proposed by Monkman’s artwork, investigating Indigenous perspectives and responses to colonial enterprises sustained through mechanism of Othering aims to support the decolonization of academic praxis.

In order to contextualize the tangible impact of processes of Othering of Indigenous Peoples and communities in Canada, consideration must be given to the historical roots, and residual contemporary impacts of, colonial Eurocentric enterprises. Thus, recognition must be given to the systemic injustices imposed upon and experienced by First Nations, Métis and Inuit peoples in Canada. Framing such injustices through Monkman’s artwork, while numerous Indigenous issues are brought to light, settler-colonial ideologies and assimilationist policies can be seen to have directly contributed to the disproportionate violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls, entrenched in both the historical, and contemporary, Eurocentric Canadian society. When processes of othering are considered as contributing factors to issues of recognition and injustice, Eurocentric stereotypes of the “Indian Other” are exacerbated by additional power dynamics that emphasize the ‘othered’ position of the gender binary: man, versus woman. While colonial legacies in Indigenous communities in Canada are complex and intersectional in nature, a critical consideration of the aforementioned issue, calls attention to the connections between lived experiences of “Othering” and Monkman’s “Shame and Prejudice.” Such connections, visually represented and publically accessible, assist in establishing the groundwork for improving social and political relations between Indigenous and non-Indigenous communities in Canada.
**Origins of Othering**

Within the scholarly discourse surrounding religious studies, diverse theories and methodologies have been proposed and implemented in the pursuit of understanding the contexts, subjects, and reasons for research in the field. Among such theories, broad categories have frequently been used to identify the rationale behind the research, while also being understood as lenses through which the researcher is interpreting their investigations and explorations. While philosophical, psychological, sociological, colonialist and political theories, to name a few, demarcate specific understandings of the purpose and scope of research, a common thread can be found running through many of these theories, in the form of ‘Othering’. Although ‘Othering’ may not be considered its own theoretical framework, it can be understood as a methodology or lens informing the manner by which research is executed, as well as its reception in both academia and, perhaps even, broader social spheres. Drawing primarily on the work of James Waller to frame ‘Othering’ as method, to be discussed further, ‘Othering’, as a mechanism of human understanding, creates and supports the view of the self, while simultaneously demarcating who or what qualifies as outside of the self, fostering identity formation (of the self) and creation (of the other). For this reason, ‘Othering’ is a methodological lens that is both overt in various theoretical frameworks, as research in itself engages with exploration of ideas, concepts and people beyond the self, as well as covert, as the individual engages in the process of ‘Othering’ by natural understandings of the self as separate from other individuals or communities.

**Psychological Scaffolding in Western Thought**

In order to illustrate the ever-present methodology of ‘Othering’ throughout much of Western academic research and scholarly pursuits, the historical roots and understandings of the
other must be considered initially, as these depictions of the self as separate from the other independent ‘selves’, inform the contemporary research milieu, as well as dominant psychological, social and political conditions of many societies. Focussing first on G. W. F. Hegel’s (1770-1831) *Philosophy of Mind* (1817) and *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807) as the inciting works to explicitly address the ‘Other’ as a mechanism of human understanding, the groundwork will be presented as a platform for subsequent ‘Self’ versus ‘Other’ research endeavours, highlighting the presence of ‘Othering’ within a philosophical and psychological context. When Western understandings of Hegel’s separation of ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ are understood as both current, and historical in nature, the continuing legacy of processes of “Othering” have retained psychoanalytic currency, sustained through social and political mechanisms to perpetuate the ‘Other’ in the social imaginary.

*Social and Political Spread in Western Thought*

With the psychological basis of the methodology of “Othering” established, social and political understandings of the ‘Other’ require examination. The socially accepted and politically enforced concepts of the “Other” act to sustain dominant hegemonic identity projections, concreting stereotypes used to justify policies and practices that perpetuate inequality in society. Two major Western theories of social and political ‘Othering’ are proposed by Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) and Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983), both addressing the manner by which visions of the ‘Other’ are produced and perpetuated by societal mechanisms that introduce the method’s connotation and exploitation for colonial, dominant, and racial means.
Othering as a Methodological Lens

With the bedrock of influential Western scholars and theories established, a contemporary understanding of the ‘Other’ should be addressed, to elucidate the continuing legacy of ‘Othering’. American professor of Genocide Studies, James Waller’s *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killings* (2005) details the processes which go into the methodology or approach of ‘Othering’, explicating how the everyday individual is capable and conditioned for the categorization of individuals outside of the ‘Self’. Waller addresses several foundational perspectives that have contributed to the contemporary understanding of ‘Othering’, and as such, the positions of prior psychoanalysts, anthropologists and historians will be surveyed, in respect to their direct influence on Waller’s description of ‘Othering’ as a lens of understanding and perception.

Reflections from “Others”: Indigenous Perspectives on Othering

Following a consideration of Western theorizing of the ‘Other’, as well as Waller’s description of ‘Othering’ as a mechanism of human understanding and interaction, engagement with Indigenous perspectives of processes and outcomes of ‘Othering’ must be considered, echoing the aforementioned necessity of recognizing alternate historical and contemporary circumstances, opposed to the hegemonic Eurocentric Christian-oriented philosophical, political and social rhetoric. The subsequent ordering of Indigenous perspectives following that of Western thought does not intend to perpetuate a subordinated position to Traditional Knowledge in academia, but rather, emphasize the resurgent spirit of the colonized ‘Other’, highlighting the strength and integrity of beliefs and knowledge held from time immemorial.

Initially, responses to the anachronistic tendency to assume the existence of ‘religion’ and ‘modernity’ as binding forces for ‘civilized’ society must be refuted, as per Tomoko
Masuzawa’s discussion of categorization as a hallmark of uniformity in Western imperial thought in *The Invention of World Religions: Or, how European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (2005). Focussing the argument into the context of Indigenous scholarship, the work of N. Scott Momaday’s “Native American Attitudes to the Environment” (1976) and Vine Deloria Jr. and Daniel R. Wildcat’s *Power and Place: Indian Education in America* (2001) outlines the difference in perspective of visions of humanity as opposed to Western hierarchies of being, emphasizing human existence as one among many animated beings.

Once Indigenous visions of humanity are established at a conceptual level, Vine Deloria Jr.’s *We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes New Turf* establishes how ‘Indian’ individuals and communities have been relegated to the position of ‘Other’, as an act of the colonial categorizing imagination. Expanding this portrayal of Indigenous peoples as the ‘Indian Other’ in the colonial imagination, Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999) examines how the subjugation of the subject as object, results in the essentialization and assumed control of the ‘Other’ through categorization and study, entrenching the ‘Indian Other’ in academic study. Subsequently, Glen Sean Coulthard’s *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (2014) argues that recognition of Indigenous communities, rights and knowledge does not adequately address processes of ‘Othering’ that have been indoctrinated into both Indigenous and non-Indigenous psychological understandings of ‘self’ versus ‘other’. Instead, as reiterated in Leanne Betamosake Simpson’s *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (2017), Coulthard and Simpson both propose resurgence, as an act of radical resistance against the colonial imagination, polices and institutions, which have enforced and informed visions of the ‘Indian
Other’ in contemporary Canadian settings. Through weaving a web of scholarship and resistance against the hegemonic forces of Western academia, the aforementioned Indigenous scholars re-paint the characters of domination and subjugation in the Canadian context.

**Othering in the Canadian Context**

Once the basis of ‘Othering’ as a methodological lens is established, in both Western and indigenous practice and thought, practical application of the theoretical perspective can be applied to processes of colonialism in the Canadian context, resulting in disparities and injustices experienced in the past and present for many First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities. Through consideration of Monkman’s artistic representations of the Indian Residential School system, as well as assimilationist ideologies and polices, exacerbating gendered-violence against Indigenous women and girls in his “Shame and Prejudice” exhibition, the insidious nature of ‘Othering’ can be identified as justifying the abhorrent treatment of Indigenous women in Canada, historically supported, and unfortunately continued, through a dominant Western Christian hegemonic understanding of the ‘Self’ versus the ‘Other’. While Indigenous women are not the only minority group affected by ‘Othering’ in the Canadian context, such an example illustrate the importance of promoting future scholarly engagement that does not identify an enigmatic subject, but instead a dialogical and collaborative endeavour to better understand one and other, promoting respectful representation and research, and promote equity and resurgent Indigenous identities. Further, with such representative research endeavours, public audiences have the chance to reflect on the process of ‘Othering’ by which they create and perpetuate social imaginaries, a cycle that must be broken if the prophetic future of reconciliation is to ever come to fruition.
Chapter 2: Othering as a Theory and Method in the Western Tradition

Origins of Othering in Western Thought: Psychoanalytical Underpinnings

Hegel: Human Consciousness and the Other

As a forerunner of hermeneutical philosophy, Hegel’s *Philosophy of Mind* (1817) delves into the concept of self-consciousness, or recognition of the individual as their own entity. In his opening of *Philosophy of Mind*, Hegel asserts: “‘Know thyself’...is not to promote mere self-knowledge in respect of the particular capacities, character, propensities, and foibles of the single self”, highlighting the inter-relational character of the human being in its broader social context (Hegel 2010 ed., 3). In the paper “Hegel on Other and the Self” (1982), Frances Berenson interprets Hegel to be suggesting that “self-knowledge cannot be achieved through mere introspection...because I do not exist in isolation from other selves, and my introspection must of necessity be based on an examination of my relationship with others” (Berenson 1982, 77). Here, a reciprocal relationship of the self as separate from the other is established, as the self maintains an independence from the other, but only through the recognition that there is even an ‘Other’ out in reality, distanced but associated to the self.

In Hegel’s view, the human mind is a universal construct, with shared engagement and understanding of multiple individuals as relational to one and other. Hegel presents this concept as follows: “If we consider mind more closely, we find that its primary and simplest determination is the ‘I’...When we say “I”, we mean, to be sure, an individual; but since everyone is ‘I’, when we say ‘I’, we only say something quite universal” (Hegel 2003 ed., 11). The ‘I’ identified here is understood to belong to the individual who has perceived and self-reflected on their own consciousness, but this also means that those outside of the self have engaged in a similar, if not the same, process of determining their self-hood as something
distinctly belonging to themselves. However, what Hegel illuminates is the universality of the mind, and the identification of ‘I’ within the individual, which could be interpreted as demonstrating the connectivity of humankind by means of understanding the self. Berenson extends Hegel’s position through a connection to shared human languages, identifications, and understandings of objects: “Reality is assimilated to Ideality” (Berenson 1982, 79). Through this assertion, what is depicted is the mental process of the individual identifying and attributing particular characteristics or symbolic associations to particular manifestations of reality, projected onto subjects or objects outside of themselves.

Stemming from this concept of internalized consciousness that is expressed or engaged in external reality, through interpersonal interactions, Hegel establishes the oppositional or differentiated nature of the ‘Other’. Hegel states that, “In as much as both are there for the same consciousness, it is itself their comparison; it is a fact for consciousness whether its knowledge of the object corresponds to it or not”, highlighting the necessity of human understanding and consciousness to be based in a comparison: that which is the ‘Self’ versus that which it is not, that which reflects one’s understanding of an object or subject versus that which does not (Hegel 2003 ed., 141). In such a manner, the conscious self creates categorizations necessary for an understanding of reality outside of one’s own mind, creating systems of interpersonal interaction, communication and meaning. In this way, the identification of the ‘other’ could be understood as a productive and necessary process for developing an informed and engaged level of both self-consciousness and consciousness of those people, things and places outside of the self.

However, ‘Other’ with a capital ‘O’, distinguishes itself from this productive form of self-consciousness by incorporating a power dynamic into the equation, limiting the recognition of the full humanity and consciousness of the ‘Other’ outside of the self. Hegel illustrates this
imbalance of self-consciousness through his vision of the Master-Slave dialectic in *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807). Using Berenson’s explanation of the Master-Slave dialectic, the Master can be seen as engaging in the first stage of consciousness, namely the internal dialogue previously discussed during which the individual establishes and recognizes their own thoughts (Berenson 1982, 83). However, the Master does not follow the progression of self-consciousness to understanding the inherent consciousness of those outside of himself, and instead “seeks to assert his own self-consciousness even at the price of destroying the life and self-consciousness of others, even though this risks his own existence” (Berenson 1982, 83). Seeing as Hegel’s understanding of fully developed self-consciousness results in the definitive and individual ‘I’ of the self, by denying the Slave their own recognized, respected and separate personhood, the ‘I’ of the Master is not a differentiated entity, making the Slave and Master indistinguishable, except through the external, outwardly directed actions of the Master. Berenson summarizes Hegel’s position as follows: “to be merely a master is to fall short of being a fully self-conscious person”, demonstrating the necessity of recognizing and engaging with the self-consciousness of the ‘other’ (Berenson 1982, 84). It is through this mirroring and reciprocity of each other’s self-consciousness that the self can develop into its own full-fledged identity. Thus, for Hegel, when the other is subjugated to the self, self-consciousness cannot be fully achieved, and imbalances of power as with the Master-Slave dialectic can lead to misguided and distorted visions of the ‘Other’ as someone alien and unlike the self, deserving of less humanity.

**Origins of Othering in Western Thought: Social and Political Frameworks**

*Edward Said: Orientalism and European Expansion*

Looking now at a further contemporary understanding of the method of ‘Othering’, it is fruitful to look at Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1978). Said’s work explicitly utilizes the
concept of the ‘Other’, with a capital ‘O’, as an example of racialized, colonial interpretations of
the self as opposite, and in ways superior, to the mysterious Oriental other. As such, the ‘Other’
is extended into the context of the colonial imagination. Said introduces the rationale and scope of *Orientalism* as follows:

“The Orient is...the place of Europe’s greatest and richest and oldest colonies, the source of its civilizations and languages, its cultural contestant, and one of its deepest and most recurring images of the other. In addition, the Orient has helped to define Europe (or the West) as its contrasting image, idea, personality, experience” (Said 1978, 9).

Through such a portrayal, Said can be seen to be following a Hegelian understanding of self-consciousness and the necessity of the other, as a contrast or measure to be used to differentiate oneself from another. While initially this may seem to be a categorical demarcation of geography, with the ‘Orient’ or the East on one hand, and the ‘Occident’ or West on the other hand, Said aims to highlight that “Orientalism can be discussed and analyzed as the corporate institution for dealing with the Orient, by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism is a Western style for dominating restructuring, and having authority over the Orient” (Said 1978, 11). Through this understanding of Orientalism, Hegel’s Master-Slave power dynamic is echoed, and extended into the social framework: the dominant self produces and prescribes the image of the ‘Other’, but not through mutual appreciation of self-hood, instead as a thing or object of consideration and dealings, including academic dealings. Said attributes the observation of Denys Hays as an astute interpretation of Orientalism being: “a collective notion identifying ‘us’ Europeans as against all ‘those’ non-Europeans...the idea of European identity as a superior one in comparison with all the non-European peoples and cultures”, illustrative of the assumed dominance of the Master as fully human, and the Slave as the sub-human “Other” (Said 1978, 15).
With colonial expansion, systematically the image of the ‘Oriental Other’ was produced, maintained, and perpetuated through political and social institutions, as well as scholarly discourse (Said 1978, 10). This essentialization and control over the image of the ‘Orient’ and the ‘Oriental’ meant that the subject of interest lost autonomy or agency, being a manifestation of European (namely French and English) interpretations and portrayals of the “Oriental Other”, disregarding the reality of the expansive and complex histories and cultures of the East that were beyond the grasp of the colonial endeavour (Said 1978, 11). Said asserts that it is out of dominance of the Western, Eurocentric, Self-based consciousness that cultural representations of the East were celebrated in both the academy and through institutions housing images of collective consciousness, such as museums and also art (Said 1978, 15). This impression and projection of the ‘Oriental Other’ so deeply informed theoretical endeavours as a method of inquiry and research, that comparative models of human development, revolution, cultural identity, nationality, and religious characteristics were determined as astute observations of humanity and the universe at large: there were those of the West and those of the East, the former superior and the latter inferior (Said 1978, 15-16).

With this viewpoint in mind, Said proposed a new vision of academia and research, across disciplines, which could recognize one’s place and privilege within the hegemonic social structure, by acknowledging the politicized nature of consciousness and human knowledge (Said 1978, 18). What this means for the Western scholar according to Said can be illustrated as follows: “For if it is true that no production of knowledge in the human sciences can ever ignore... it’s author’s involvement as a human subject in his own circumstances, then it must also be true that for a European or American studying the Orient...It meant and means being aware, however dimly, that one belongs to a power with definite interests in the Orient” (Said 1978, 19).
Said promotes the scholar, and the citizen in a broader sense, to engage in what can be considered ‘Scholarly Reflexivity’.

Rajeswari Sunder Rajan points out the importance of “scholarly reflexivity”, where personal cultural lenses must be acknowledged, in order to avoid painting a lens of inferiority or subjugation onto the practices and social patterns of societies different than one’s own (Rajan 1998, 35). Said’s understanding of the role and responsibility of the theorists, scholars, and individuals is to “locate himself vis-à-vis the Orient… [this] includes the kind of narrative voice he adopts, the type of structure he builds, the kinds of images…which add up to deliberate ways of addressing the reader, containing the Orient, and finally, representing it or speaking in its behalf” (Said 1978, 28). As a salient example, Said points to a 1972 article “The Arab World” in the American Journal of Psychiatry printed an essay by Harold W. Glidden, who is identified as a retired member of the Bureau of Intelligence and Research, United States Department of State in which Glidden prescribes an identity of malice, vengeance and hostility to 100 million people covering 1,300 years of history (Said 1978, 56-57). Due to his position of privilege and prestige, Glidden was given an opportunity to present what is considered an informed and educated perspective, but instead maintained the dichotomization of the Western ‘Self’ opposed to the Eastern ‘Other’. As such, Said illustrates his concern for scholars perpetuating the status quo of

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1 While Said’s Orientalism can be charged with using non-inclusive gendered language, focussing exclusively on dialogues surrounding the male author and scholar as the influential writers on, as well as perpetrators of, Orientalism, in his later 1994 work Culture and Imperialism, Said acknowledges this gendered short-coming. Said acknowledges that there has been an “extraordinary change in studies of the Middle East, which when I wrote Orientalism were still dominated by an aggressively masculine and condescending ethos” (Said, Culture and Imperialism, xvii). Among such changes, Said discusses the increased amount of feminist literature being driven by considerations and representations of Islamic women, which Said celebrates as “not exclusivist; they demonstrate the diversity and complexity of experience that works beneath the totalizing discourses of Orientalism and of Middle East (overwhelmingly male) nationalism…they are works that are in dialogue with, and contribute to, the political situation of women in the Middle East” (Said, Culture and Imperialism, xvii). This discussion and acknowledgement of advancements in inclusive research speaks to Said’s overall desire for representative, respectful community-based scholarship.
Western academic superiority over the living subject of research, and as such, research speaks to political and social mechanisms of dominance and power imbalance of Western academic pursuits.

Further reflecting on his position and research within *Orientalism*, in 1994 Said released *Culture and Imperialism*, a reconsideration and extension of his previous work on the ‘East’ and ‘West’ division of power and culture, focussing his work on literary representations of the Orientalist gaze. According to Said, what was most evidently missing from his previous consideration of Orientalism was the response of those subjugated to Western authority and hegemonic political, social and cultural forces (Said 1994, xii). Said asserts that in the wake of *Orientalism* he realized that “Yet it was the case nearly everywhere in the non-European world that the coming of the white man brought forth some sort of resistance”, citing the increasing presence of liberation movements, identity politics, and the process of decolonization as prevalent throughout many previously colonized nations (Said 1994, xii). As such, Said highlights the growing awareness in not only academic circles, but also changes within the political and social spheres, moving towards inclusive and representative understandings and actions within independent nations, demonstrating the self-conscious perception of the needs of the ‘Self’, instead of the appointed or projected needs of the ‘Other’.

**Consideration of the Influence of Gramsci in Said’s Orientalism**

In the case of Said’s *Orientalism*, consideration must be given to the sources of his understanding of hegemony and the subaltern classes, by means of Antonio Gramsci’s (1891-1937) *Prison Notebooks*. Said’s understanding of hegemony and the domination and amalgamation practiced by the ‘ruling’ class can be linked to the works of Gramsci. Gramsci
highlights how the concept of the ‘West’ developed and retain traction as an imperial force in the broader social and political framework.

Gramsci’s *Prison Notebooks* considers the Western lens by means of Italian fascism and rebellion, comprised of thirty-three notebooks containing Gramsci’s research and reflections on political, social, and cultural conceptions of power and society. Said acknowledges Gramsci’s influence in regard to his own understanding of hegemony through cultural dominance, as follows:

“In any society not totalitarian, then, certain cultural forms predominate over others, just as certain ideas are more influential than others; the form of this cultural leadership is what Gramsci has identified as hegemony, an indispensable concept for any understanding of cultural life in the industrial West” (Said 1978, 15).

For Said, the cultural dominance of the West is made tangible through a phenomenon such as Orientalism, largely due to the widespread influence of the idea throughout scholarly and political discourse. Looking at Gramsci’s own writings, one can see where Said developed aspects of his base understanding of the spread of imperialistic enterprises by means of the hegemony of the West. In *Notebook I*, Gramsci states:

“Nowadays, one talks of the West as one used to talk of ‘Christianity’ some centuries back…a second unity was in fact achieved in the West…deeply permeating life all over Europe and culminating in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries: nor did the resistance it encountered invalidate it…We must save the integral West; all knowledge, together with all actions” (Gramsci 1975, § (76) The Crisis of the ‘West’; vol.1; 180-181).

The ‘West’ for Gramsci, and later Said, exists as an ideological force, a cultural glue, something of the level of world-view and control as religion, retaining an authority over its adherents as powerful as that found within the Catholic Church. The permeating nature of the imaginary of the ‘West’ is extended and continued in Said’s work through his dialogue surrounding the role of the academy. As a mechanism of education and knowledge spread, the academy retains a level of authority that shapes worldviews and perceptions of the reality of things. As such, Said supports
Gramsci’s consideration of the power and authority of the ‘West’ throughout the religious, political or social spheres, and extends it into the realm of cultural depiction, as well as research and education.

Said’s consistency with Gramsci’s perception of the spread and strength of the ‘West’ in shaping international imperial dialogues is continued through the concept of hegemony. In *Notebook III*, Gramsci discusses the “History of the Subaltern Classes”, in which he explains that in ancient and medieval contexts the subaltern classes were able to engage in a level of autonomous organization beneath the larger governmental umbrella, creating a ‘federation of classes’ (Gramsci 1975, Notebook III: §18 History of the Subaltern classes; vol. 2; 24-25).

According to Gramsci, what changes in the modern nation state scenario, is that the ‘federation of classes’ is amalgamated into the overarching national body and identity, which is something even further solidified through colonial endeavors to achieve assimilation into dominant ideological systems of governance, society, and culture (Gramsci 1975, Notebook III: §18 History of the Subaltern classes; vol. 2; 24-25). This amalgamation into the dominant or conquering society is the source of hegemony that Said identifies as a contributing factor in the sustenance and spread of imperial Western authority over the ‘East’, while not in actuality an identifiable territory, but instead an imaginary cultural boundary.

*Benedict Anderson: The Other of the Social Imagination*

Turning now to a different social and political theoretical framework that employs the method of ‘Othering’ to expand the explanation of the social construction of identities, Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) addresses how communities are constructed through a social imagination and are designated with their powerful social and political qualities. Anderson begins with the assertion that “nationality,
or, as one might prefer to put it in view of that word’s multiple signification, nation-ness, as well as nationalism, are cultural artefacts of a particular kind”, pointing to the cultural influence of identity production and perseverance (Anderson 1983, 4). Through this opening statement, Anderson points to the ‘artificial’ or created aspects of a cultural understanding; an understanding that varies depending on an individual's positionality within a culture, whether the aspect of culture being discussed is shared language, art, religion, political systems, to name but a few demarcations of cultural identity.

However, what is most important to Anderson’s contribution to the implementation of ‘Othering’ in social and political theories is his perception of the ‘Nation’ itself. He writes: “I propose the following definition of the nation: it is an imagined political community- and imagined as both inherently limited and sovereign” (Anderson 1983, 5-6). For Anderson, the ‘Nation’ entails the creation of envisioning of a community of people, functioning on a ‘horizontal plane of comradeship’ (i.e. everyone can be a member if they meet the cultural qualifications, and thus should feel a connection to their fellow members of the Nation), that has boundaries of inclusion and exclusion, gaining its sovereignty through a recognition of religious pluralism, a result of Enlightenment thinking and a shift away from divinely sanctioned kingship experienced in Western cultures (Anderson 1983, 7). When viewed in this light, social ordering and cohesion is thought to be fostered through shared identity, and the independence of communities as distinct from one and other is endorsed.

It should not be thought, however, according to Anderson, that this idea of distinctive communities sprung out of a secular political model, but instead took root in religious community understandings and reverence. Anderson asserts that “All the great classical communities conceived of themselves as cosmically central, through the medium of a sacred
language linked to a super-terrestrial order of power”, suggesting that the communities ‘special’ identity was determined and ordained by a transcendent power, derived from a superhuman realm, gifting the specific community with sacred practices, languages and beliefs that linked them to this superhuman entity (Anderson 1983, 13). Anderson argues that the distinctiveness of ancient religious communities from modern nations rests in the attributed sacredness of their endeavours, such as with the language of their religious texts and ceremonies (Anderson 1983, 13). To support this argument, Anderson exemplifies the Imperialist understanding of a minority culture’s forced assimilation into the dominant cultural practices, through the ‘policy on barbarians’ from early nineteenth century Colombian liberal Pedro Fermin de Vargas:

“To expand our agriculture, it would be necessary to Hispanicize our Indian. Their idleness, stupidity, and indifference towards normal endeavours causes one to think that they come from a degenerate race which deteriorates in proportion to the distance from its origin…it would be very desirable that the Indians be extinguished, by miscegenation with the whites, declaring them free of tribute and other charges, and giving them private property in land” (Anderson 1983, 13-14).

Anderson highlights the cosmic relevance in this statement through the idea that the Colombian ‘Indian’ could be saved and redeemed, through speaking the right language, engaging in capitalist accumulation and consumption, and last but not least, eradicating the traces of their Indigenous lineage through impregnation by the white man (Anderson 1983, 14). This sentiment is echoed throughout various situations of conquest and colonization by means of dominant Eurocentric interpretations of the nation as a distinct and indestructible existing entity, instead of a phenomenon created by the social consciousness of its dominant inhabitants.

When considering the spread of the notion of ‘Nation’, Anderson suggests that colonially charged nationalism is a result of the spreading and “pilgrimage” of colonial forces beyond distinguished national territorial boundaries, assuming and subsuming additional territories as rightfully belonging to the nation who vanquishes and conquers (Anderson 1983, 114).
Colonialism can be understood today as the territorial, institutional and political rule of distant territories subject to the direct rule of a foreign state (Onder 2010, 167). The rising influence of capitalist economies and increased industrialisation of Europe, in the Western context, can be noted to have spurned the international interest in gaining and exploiting the resource-rich colonies, leading not only to externally controlled economic systems, but also social and cultural re-construction and control of the colonized territories (Onder 2010, 167-168). Through economic, political and social pressures colonization “was supported by, and propagated, ideologies of the racial and cultural superiority of the colonizer”, engaging in what Anderson deems a socially and politically constructed vision of the self, as opposed to other, with the colonial nation’s imaginary understandings of themselves as dominant over the infamous ‘Other’ (Onder 2010, 168). To reinforce such perceptions, and promote shared ideological stances within an imagined community of a nation, Anderson points to the use of education to shape the social consciousness of community members: “modern-style education, not only by the colonial state, but also by private religious and secular organizations...occurred not simply to provide cadres for government and corporate hierarchies, but also because of the growing acceptance of the moral importance of modern knowledge even for colonized populations” (Anderson 1983, 117). As an imagined community, the nation required a coherent and consistent vision of its morality, informed by the dominant cultural group, deemed to be the appropriate version of their nation.

When viewed in this light, it could be challenging to see why there is not an increased rebellion and response to even the mere notion of a nation, if it is but an imagined community constructed for the benefit of the dominant cultural group. However, Anderson insists that the reason for the continuance of the nation state rests in the production of an emotional attachment to one’s understanding of their home, and the naturalness of this attachment:
“Even in the case of colonized peoples...it is astonishing how insignificant the element of hatred is in these expression of national feeling...in everything ‘natural’ there is always something unchosen...national-ness is assimilated to skin-colour, gender, parentage, and birth-era...To put it another way, precisely because such ties are not chosen, they have about them a halo of disinterestedness” (Anderson 1983, 142-143).

What Anderson is illuminating, is the manner by which the ‘Other’ becomes subsumed into the ‘Self’ of the dominant cultural group. Thinking back to the work of Hegel, where the ‘Other’ must be identified in order to give substance to the concept of the self as separate from general persons, if this differentiation is consumed and digested by the hegemonic cultural powers that be, identity of the self also decomposes. In such a manner, like with the Master, the imagined community of the ‘Nation’ has the potential for solipsistic consciousness, if the ‘Other’ is viewed as the enemy to be eliminated and denied their full personhood, instead of respected for their differences.

Othering as Method

Having gained a cursory knowledge of depictions of the ‘Self’ as opposed to ‘Other’ in the psychological, social and political landscape in Western thought, an explanation of contemporary understandings of the process of ‘Othering’ will demonstrate it as a lens or methodological mechanism that can inform scholarship, as well as broader societal assumptions and perceptions. Using the work of James Waller as a schema for the process of ‘Othering’, the pervasive and insidious nature of ‘Othering’ becomes manifest, requiring increased attention for future ethical research, representation, and reconciliation.

In *Becoming Evil* (2002), Waller provides a genealogical track of his own perception and understanding of ‘Othering’, resulting in his description of the ‘Social Death’ of the victim as demonstrative of the employment of the method of ‘Othering’ against the perceived and projected ‘Other’. Waller associates ‘Othering’ with previous theorization on the concept of
human ‘instinct’ to associate with that which the individual identifies as belonging to, or as similar to, the ‘Self’.

As a starting point within the field of psychology and human consciousness, Waller cites the work of the American philosopher William James’ (1842-1910) *Principles of Psychology* (1890). James asserts that instinct could be understood as “the faculty of acting in such a way as to produce certain ends, without foresight of the end, or without previous education in the performance”, thus suggesting that instinct exists within the individual as an inbred feature of survival and existence, something that is brought out in order to achieve a particular need or desire (James 1981 ed., 1004). Building off of this concept of ‘instinctive human nature’, Sigmund Freud in *Civilization and Its Discontents* (1930) asserts that the human has an inbred disposition “to aggression, destruction, and, in addition, cruelty” (Freud 1930, 49). This move to include an innate aggression within human instinct connects Waller’s understanding of the ‘Other’ with Hegel’s negative capital ‘O’, formatting human interaction in a manner that promotes violence towards those deemed to be the ‘Others’.

In the immediate context of Waller’s presentation of the ‘Social Death’ of the ‘Other’, one can look to the work of Orlando Patterson and Donald Brown. *In Slavery and Social Death: a Comparative Study* (1982), Patterson asserts that the slave in the master-slave relationship (in the physical property sense, as opposed to the Hegelian psychological conception of the dialectic), the power of the master comes from his authority and control over the entirety of the slaves being as the ‘Other’ (Patterson 1982, 35). However, what Patterson identifies as an important contributing factor to the Master-Slave dynamic is that the master must defend his power from external threats, and these threats are major contributing factors to his desire to gain authority and enslave the ‘Other’ in the first place. According to Patterson:
“In all slaveholding societies the slave posed grave moral and spiritual dangers…their danger lay in their capacity to offend supernaturally…On the negative side, he had to defuse the potential physical and spiritual threat…And on the positive side, he had to secure extra-coercive support for his power. Both were achieved by acquiring the thing we call authority” (Patterson 1982, 36)

In such a manner, the master’s authority was derived from a threat to this gained authority: due to the fact that the slave represented and venerated beliefs in opposition or contention with those of the dominant hegemonic cultural forces behind the master, the master had to dispose of the slave’s humanity in order to justify his superior status. Through this process of ‘Self’ protection and preservation (namely, the overall perceived integrity of the cultural dominant ideologies, practices, and even spiritualties or religions), the ‘Other’ must be disposed of, producing what can be understood as the ‘Social Death of the Victim’. Brown echoes this oppositional or contentious dynamic of the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’ in Human Universals (1991) by means of his identification of the common characteristics of Universal Peoples (UP). When considering how the perception of the ‘Self’ as opposed to ‘Other’ accelerates to states of violence, Brown asserts:

“Important conflicts are structured around in-group- out-group antagonisms that characterise the UP…An ethical dualism distinguishes the in-group from the out-group, so that, for example, cooperation is more expectable in the former than with the latter” (Brown 1991, 138-139).

Repeating the hegemonic identification with those the individual identifies as similar to the ‘Self’, and an abhorrent rejection of those different as reflected in the ‘Other’, Brown furthers Patterson’s explanation of the ‘Social Death’ experienced by the ‘Other’ to the level of physical death, by means of violent intergroup conflict. With the image of ‘Social Death’ furnished by the work of Orlando Patterson, and the violence producing ethics of ‘in-groups’ versus ‘out-groups’ as proposed by Donald Brown, Waller’s thesis surrounding the process that produce the methodological lens of ‘Othering’ can be explicated.
Looking at interpersonal violence, whether politically, socially or religiously charged, Waller proposes that a ‘Social Death’ occurs for the victim, when what is accepted as reality or fact is the “perpetrators’ definition of the target of their atrocities, or who the victims have been made out to be in the eyes of the perpetrators” (Waller 2002, 237). According to Waller, this ‘Social Death’ can be understood as an ultimate form of ‘Othering’, outlining the methodological characteristics of “Othering”: the victimized ‘Other’ must be viewed through a lens of Us-Them thinking, dehumanized, and blamed for their victimhood (Waller 2002, 237).

Waller attributes Us-Them thinking to social categorizations, thus making the visions of the ‘Self’ oppositional to the ‘Other’ through socially and politically constructed and instructed images (Waller 2002, 239). Waller acknowledges that this process of categorization is a phenomenon of human understanding that appears to be unavoidable, and underscores the significance of Hegel’s understanding of self-consciousness and other-consciousness (Waller 2002, 239). In such a manner, Hegel’s understanding of the ‘Other’ is the most basically, and arguable most benign, variation of the lens of othering. The ‘Other’ is categorized against the ‘Self’, and when this is performed in a respectful manner. However, in the vein of Anderson and Said, Waller also acknowledges that if these social categorizations are essentialized in a manner that attribute particular qualities as universal to specific groups of people, discriminatory, generalized and xenophobic results are possible (Waller 2002, 239). What this develops into is an ‘in-group’ versus ‘out-group’ hegemony, oppression, and exploitation, where boundaries are drawn not only in territorial or community-based manners, as with Anderson, but also through ethnic, racial and religious means, speaking to the work of Said. Through this identification of the ‘Self’ with the ‘in-group’ and the ‘Other’ with the ‘out-group’, the shared social
characteristics of each group are overly emphasized and established as undeniable features of each group, favouring the dominant cultural social categories.

Waller emphasises the increasing distance between the ‘Self’ and the ‘Other’ through negative methodologies of ‘Othering’ by means of dehumanization. Dehumanization can be understood as a process by which non-human attributes and characteristics, such as monstrous, deviant, or animal imagery, is used to describe the characteristics of the ‘Evil Other’ (Waller 2002, 245). Dehumanization is both disturbing, but consistent, mechanism in the ‘Social Death’ of the victim or minority community, as it works to justify the maltreatment of the ‘Other’ but the majority or the ‘Self’. This dehumanization can be seen in Hegel’s Master-Slave dialectic, as the Master does not recognize or allow for the Slave to have their own personhood or consciousness, arguably to protect the superior and special nature of the Master’s own self-consciousness. Likewise, Anderson’s example of the nineteenth century Colombian liberal politician Pedro Fermin de Vargas’ treatment of the Indigenous community as savages who ought to be fertilized by the civilized in order to save them from their inhumanity (Anderson 1983, 13-14). Dehumanization can also be identified in Said’s theoretical understanding of Islam and colonialism, through his citation of Harold W. Glidden’s “The Arab World”, emphasising the superior peaceful, humanistic approach of the West over the feral, bellicose East, though no such geographical space actually exists (Said 1978, 56-57).

Finally, Waller addresses the process of blaming the victim for their own misfortune, making inhumane perceptions and treatment of the ‘Evil Other’ justified and valid. According to Waller, the propensity to blame victims for their own victimization comes from the common practice of “grant[ing] ourselves the benefit of the doubt in explaining our own behaviors but [being] much harsher in explaining other people’s behaviors” (Waller 2002, 250). Additionally,
blaming the victim often draws attention to the shortcomings of the victim for their own defense: “there is a focus on the victim's' passivity...the victims bring their fate on themselves not by deserving it but by not fighting back” (Waller 2002, 253). What occurs through this process is a prioritization of the psychological comfort of the perpetrator, the hegemonic cultural force, or the individual who like Hegel’s Master, only identifies the ‘Self’ as worthy of protection. By blaming the minority group for their own inferior status, the dominant group can attempt to disengage from a situation that they may find morally distasteful, even if dominant systematic processes have contributed to the demise of the ‘Evil Other’. Again, Anderson’s example of the early nineteenth century Colombian politician blames the victimized Indigenous population for being lazy, and thus deserving of their colonization. Likewise, Said’s example of Glidden’s portrayal of the ‘Violent Arab’ trope perpetuates the assumption that it is a Western duty to preserve peace, against a formulated enemy.

When Waller’s explanation of the ‘Social Death’ of the victim is seen as a methodological use of ‘Othering’ by means of Us-Them thinking, dehumanization, and blaming the victim, the philosophical, psychological, sociological and political theories of Hegel, Anderson and Said can be seen to be using the lens of ‘Othering’ to construct and inform their research endeavours. If ‘Othering’ is consider in this way, as a methodological tool for interpreting and framing research, the importance of identifying the presence of negative ‘Othering’ in research becomes manifest, reminding the scholar of the necessity of reflexivity and respectful representation of subjects.

**Western Theories of Othering Concluded**

After considering the development of the method of ‘Othering’ in Western thought by means of G. W. F. Hegel’s philosophical and psychological understandings of the consciously
identified ‘Other’ *Philosophy of Mind* (1817) and *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807), and both Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) and Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983) and as sociological and political manifestations of the ‘Other’ in societies, as well as scholarship, ‘Othering’ can be seen as a methodology or lens for understanding one’s position, embodied and ideological, within the broader community, society, and even, universe. As with many socially constructed human understandings, the enigmatic entity that is identified as the ‘Other’ is charged and perpetuated through bifurcations and categorizations on the basis of nationality, race, gender, sexuality, religion, all falling under the overarching social phenomenon of culture.

Using James Waller’s understanding of the schema of ‘Othering’ as the presence and application of Us-Them thinking, dehumanization and blaming the victim, Hegel, Anderson and Said correspond to the contemporary Western understanding of the creation of the ‘Other’. However, what is also important is the recognition of the ‘Other’ as not inherently evil or contentious. As with the Hegelian model, self-consciousness requires the recognition of the other as a dialogical, collaborative and mirroring partner. This notion in itself is positive, and promising for the future of academic research, if it can be channelled in a manner that creates communal learning and respectful representation of subjects of inquiry that respects their inherent personhood and their own self-consciousness, instead of through a domination-submission power and knowledge model. For this reason, increased attention must be given to a re-construction of the ‘Other’, not as some distant enemy, but instead as an ally and fellow member of humanity, deserving every dignity as the identified ‘Self’. As such, the Indigenous perspectives discussed in the subsequent chapter are a vital reminder of the diverse and varied histories that shape the current Canadian social and political structure. In order to move in this
direction for future research, the privilege of hegemonic Western academia must be acknowledged and mitigated, allowing for alternate modes of understanding and knowledge to be recognized and resourced in a manner that is outward facing and on an equal plane with research subjects.

Chapter 3: Experiences of the ‘Othered’ in Indigenous Theory and Thought

Categorization and Christianization: Humanity and Indigeneity

In the previous chapter, Hegel, Said, Anderson, as well as their predecessors and contemporaries, laid-out the ground work of the philosophical, psychological, social and political implications that have uncovered, and frequently supported, the processes of ‘Othering’ in Western thought. Waller’s “Social Death” of the victim by means of Us-Them thinking, dehumanization, and blaming the victim, likewise contribute to the demarcation of ‘victim’, versus ‘perpetrator’, establishing the necessitated dominion of master over slave, human over environment, colonizer over colonized. Through such distinctions, a hierarchy of being is established. In the case of Hegel, a necessitation of the ‘Self’ as a separate and conscious entity from the ‘Other’, existing in dialogue with other beings but distinctive in existence, secures a relationship between fellow humans that is disconnected. Looking at Said’s discussion of ‘orientalization’, this distinctiveness of personhood extends beyond the inter-personal to the international, resulting in the categorization and control of colonized societies through the lens of the domain Christian European colonizers. Finally, Anderson’s ‘social imaginary’ acts to solidify the distinctiveness of personhood on a transnational scale through the pseudo-separateness of nation-states as independent entities, regardless of the proximity and interaction between such nation-states.
This experience of categorization and disconnection is inconsistent with various
Indigenous worldviews and Traditional Knowledge. Professor of history and comparative
literature, Tomoko Masuzawa’s *The Invention of World Religions: Or, how European
Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (2005) examines the classificatory
hierarchies established through Enlightenment thinking’s emphasis on the rational mastery of
‘mankind’ in and by the West. According to Masuzawa, “the protean notion of ‘religion’…has
not been, until the eighteenth century, a particularly serviceable idea”, suggesting the
identification and appropriation of particular cultural behaviours as ‘religious’ to be associated
with the advent of the proclaimed superiority of ‘Western thought’ (Masuzawa 2005, 2). As
such, Masuzawa asserts that the distinction ‘Western’ in and of itself “is articulated from the
point of view of the European West…aligned or conflated…with Christendom” (Masuzawa
2005, 2-3). Such an entrenched locality-based classification not only functions for a
cartographical benefit, but also an educational, economic and political benefit to the European
West, prioritizing the agenda of the colonizer, while simultaneously enforcing foreign
classification systems to various ‘non-Western’ worldviews and practices.

The divisive nature of such an understanding of ‘West’ versus the rest results in a
glorification of “The East [which] preserves history, the West [which] creates history…[and] the
tertiary group of minor religions…lacking in history…hence its designation as preliterate”
(Masuzawa 2005, 4). In such a manner, a veneration is attributed to the East, although rampant
with Orientalist associations and assumptions, previously commented on by Said’s *Orientalism*,
allowing for the authority of progressive power in ‘Western’ hands. A result of the tertiary
position of all other cultures (including Indigenous communities) is an assumption that European
hegemony means a “singular civilizing process”, that the universe unfolds as proclaimed by the
intentions of the ‘Western’ vision of progressive thinking: namely, a disenchanted reality (Masuzawa 2005, 12). Correspondingly, the disenchanted ‘West’ assumes its extreme opposite to be the religiously-charged “archaic metaphysics…a form of natural religion…saturated by supernatural and autochthonous powers”, a resulting colonial consumption of non-European identity under the subheadings and categories celebrated and relied on by European academics and settlers alike (Masuzawa 2005, 16). As such, “Europe was general of the opinion that… indigenous tribal religion would eventually and inevitably dissipate or disappear, through the process of assimilation, atrophy, or banishment”, ascribing and affirming the colonial enterprise as the authority on what would be defined as ‘religious’, and thus available to criticism and control, economically, socially and politically (Masuzawa 2005, 18).

Responding to Masuzawa’s warning against the assumptions of the ‘West’ of the tertiary categories of ‘religions’ and cultures being without history, one can look to various Indigenous scholars for in-depth discussions of the importance of recognizing enchantment and interconnectivity for the protection, preservation, and respect of various Indigenous lifeways.

It is initially important to acknowledge and address the unfortunate possibility of essentialism experienced by many Indigenous communities in relation to reverential naturalism, or an assumed connection to the land, as the primary marker of a mystified interconnectedness often superficially attributed to many Indigenous Lifeways. N. Scott Momaday addresses this issue overtly in “Native American Attitudes to the Environment” (1976), asserting that reverence of the earth for Native Americans can be “misleading because they don’t indicate anything about the nature of the relationship which is…an intricate thing in itself”, highlighting the importance of exchange and reciprocity, conditions required for a relationship, to be established with the land (Momaday 1976, 79). Likewise, Momaday’s statement reiterates the metaphysical realities
being discussed: this is not simply a respect for the land, but a recognition of one’s place within a larger interconnected web of being.

Momaday expresses the notion of reciprocity as follows: “Native American ethic with respect to the physical world is a matter of reciprocal appropriation: appropriation in which man invests himself in the landscape, and at the same time incorporates the landscape into his own most fundamental experience” (Momaday 1976, 80). Momaday illuminates the manner by which the immanent and transcendent cannot be separated, particularly when the immanent is inclusive of all universal things, and the transcendent is not things of mystery and fancy, but instead interactive forces deserving respect. This inseparable relationship is understood in two ways: “One is physical, and one is imaginative” (Momaday 1976, 81). As a living being, one is intrinsically constructed of the non-human entities involved in the natural environment (in the physical sense), as well as through a relational enterprise between various life-forms (in the imaginative way), which threatens the dichotomized order of the hierarchical universe proposed through Western understandings of power and human agency.

It is here that Waller’s argument for ‘Othering’ as a methodological lens reinforces the agenda of the colonial imagination against the Indigenous ‘Other’: to attain the power imbalance that results in the ‘Other’ by means of Us-Them thinking, dehumanization, and blaming the victim, the so-called ‘victim’ is assumed to have a distinct nature as a solitary figure. When Western individuality is questioned, as per Momaday’s insistence on the ‘recognition and reciprocity’ model of Indigenous worldviews, the proverbial ‘Us’ cannot be distinguished from the ‘Them’, dehumanization does not retain the insulting insinuation of humanity’s superiority over other beings, and ‘reciprocity’ requires an interaction that circumvents blame, and instead engages with interpersonal responsibility.
Picking up this ontological argument for the reality of the inseparability of the immanent and transcendent, which entails a web of interconnection between all beings, Vine Deloria Jr. rewords the physical and imaginative components of an Indigenous understanding of existence to “place and power, the latter perhaps better defined as spiritual power or life force” (Deloria 2001, 2). What is established through this re-naming is a further necessitation of the inseparability of the locality from the local: to be in existence requires acknowledgement of the relational and interactive materiality and spirituality of the world at large, a power with strength and agency of its own. Additionally, Deloria’s discussion of defining common personality traits that people and animals share reinforces the inseparability of lifeforms, again seemingly disengaging from the threats of Us-Them thinking and dehumanization, demonstrating that previously dismissed Indigenous metaphysical conceptions has resulted in “Western science edging ever closer to acknowledging the intangible, spiritual quality of matter and intelligence of animals” (Deloria 2001, 3). In line with contemporary scientific discoveries and propagations, the enchanted materiality of Indigenous lifeways stands to discredit the assumed authority of the colonizer to establish hierarchies of being, unsettling claims to domination of the ‘civilized man’.

While it would appear that Indigenous metaphysics acts to circumnavigate a necessitated hierarchy of being proposed by Western colonial enterprises, European colonial forces’ can be seen to have re-interpreted Hegel’s Master-Slave dialectic as being an affirmation of colonial authority and strength. This power is achieved through the collective identity produced by means of Anderson’s ‘imagined community’ of Said’s observed ‘West’ versus ‘East’ dichotomization of society (previously noted as contributing to Masuzawa’s ‘West’ versus ‘the Rest’ colonial dynamic). This categorization of society resulted in the production of the ‘Other’, embodied in Canada by Indigenous Peoples (among many other marginalized communities). In We Talk, You
Listen: New Tribes, New Turf (1970), Vine Deloria Jr. asserts that Western colonial enterprises have proceeded, historically and contemporarily, to maintain power by “thinking that by labelling [Indigenous Peoples] they have understood and disarmed [them]”, with the intention of producing an ‘Other’, deriving identity from the categorization of the Western colonial imagination (Deloria Jr. 1970, 85).

According to Deloria Jr., what is most destructive to the identities of those peoples and communities that have been ‘Othered’ rests in the opacity of the experience and the term: “It would not be so bad being an ‘other’ if the word meant something; generally, it does not. It is a polite way of including you in something that you later find you really didn’t want to be included in…trapped in a meaningless cycle of policies that merely repeat your otherness to you in an infinite variety of ways” (Deloria Jr. 1970, 86). Deloria Jr.’s discussion of the meaning of the word ‘Other’ corresponds to Hegel’s assertion that the ‘Self’ requires the ‘Other’ in a dialectical relationship that affirms the existence, and importance, of each other’s consciousness (Hegel 2003 ed., 141). However, Deloria Jr.’s suggestion that the identity of ‘Other’ results in a paternalistic relationship, where identity is superficially bestowed upon the object of colonial conquest and control, extending even to the social and political structuring of what Anderson envisions as the ‘nation-state’, reaffirms the power imbalance experienced by the ‘Self’ claimed by the colonizer, and the ‘Other’ attributed by the colonizer to the colonized.

Resurging Indigenous Identity

Maori and Indigenous Education professor, Linda Tuhiwai Smith argues that this sense of giving identity to Indigenous peoples can be considered a hallmark of the imperial agenda, and a resilient re-taking of identity is required through projects of resurgence in Indigenous communities. In Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples (1999),
Tuhiwai Smith asserts that “knowledge about Indigenous peoples were collected, classified, and then represented in various ways back to the West, and then, through the eyes of the West, back to those who have been colonized” (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 1-2). Tuhiwai Smith argues that this corresponds to Said’s observation that both the scholarly and lay imaginative construction of the ‘Other’ over which the colonizing nations and institutions aim to ‘authorize, describe, teach, settle and rule’, whether in the context of the ‘Orient’ or Indigenous Peoples in Canada, and internationally (Said 1978, 2-3; Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 2). Tuhiwai Smith suggests that the West not only engaged in the production of the ‘Other’, but also the creation of a coherent social imaginary of the West: “The ‘idea’ of the West became a reality when it was re-presented back to the Indigenous nations through colonialism” (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 64). This process of creation is reflective of Anderson’s claim that the fabric that holds together the nation-state are ‘cultural artefacts’ (Anderson 1983, 4), an argument that supports Tuhiwai Smith’s urgency for an Indigenous resurgence. With the identity of the West positioned as an ‘idea’, it becomes one among many, retaining power through its domineering political and social institutions, but no longer impenetrable. As with this ‘creation’ and projection of the West onto the colonized Indigenous peoples, the inverse relationship retains strength for radical reaffirmation of Indigenous identity.

Connecting the argument of colonization to processes of ‘Othering’, as outlined with its defining features by Waller, Tuhiwai Smith’s identifies this colonization process as the dehumanization of Indigenous Peoples, masked in “justification for imperialism and colonialism which were clothed within an ideology of humanism and liberalism and the assertion of moral claims which related to a concept of the civilized ‘man’” (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 26). Creating a juxtaposition of ‘civilization’, as opposed to ‘primitivism’, the un-humanness of the Indigenous
populations within the European settler colonial imaginary enhances a difference in expectations of treatment of particular ‘acquisitions’ of the catalogs of the West.

Speaking to Hegel’s conception of the human subject as a fully conscious and co-recognizing entity, Tuhiwai Smith highlights that the categorization of the colonized by the colonizer results in an ‘Other’ who is further categorized, with increasing ‘exactitude’ for the specific stereotype attributed to the particular variety of ‘Other’. According to Tuhiwai Smith, once Hegel’s assertions were accepted in Western academic circles, that the ‘Self’ was distinct from the ‘Other’, “The racialization of the human subject and the social order enabled comparisons to be made between ‘Us’ the West and ‘Them’ the Other” (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 32). Recalling Said’s argument that to be involved in Western academia, the scholar must recognize their role in regard to power and an inescapable vested interest in the positionality of ‘objects’ of study, including the ‘Oriental Other’, so too scholarship functions through “ideas predicated on a sense of Otherness (Said 1978, 19). They are views which invite comparison with ‘something/someone else’ which exists on the outside, such as oriental…the ‘Indian’, the ‘Aborigine’” (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 32). This conception of either similarity or difference is central to the resurgence movement proposed by Tuhiwai Smith, where the Indigenous individual, and even more importantly community, must reclaim Indigenous identity and sovereignty beyond projected and conceived ‘Otherness’, “rewriting and re-righting our position in history”, adhering to the previously discussed retelling of alternate visions of personhood, history, and a prophetic future of self-determination and protection (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 28).

Tuhiwai Smith provides several tangible strategies to assist Indigenous communities in approaches to rejecting ‘Otherness’ and reclaiming Indigenous identity. Tuhiwai Smith asserts that this must be done from the inside to the outside: “Representation of Indigenous peoples by
Indigenous peoples is about countering the dominant society’s image of Indigenous peoples, their lifestyles and belief systems. It is also about proposing solutions to the real-life dilemmas that Indigenous communities contain”, with Indigenous activists, scholars, and community members as central actors in the process of ‘de-Othering’, and decolonizing (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 151). Central to this project of decolonization is the development of strong community connections, and providing support to all Indigenous, regardless of gender. This is especially important in the process of reclaiming Indigenous Lifeways through de-colonial endeavours as, “Family organization, child rearing, political and spiritual life, work and social activities were all disordered by a colonial system which positioned its own women as the property of men…A key issue for Indigenous women in any challenge of contemporary Indigenous politics is the restoration to women…their traditional roles, rights and responsibilities” (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 151-152). Following the active self-representation of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the recognition of equal rights amongst the community to establish the interconnection and reciprocity central to many Indigenous Lifeways (previously discussed by Momaday and Deloria Jr.), Tuhiwai Smith suggests that ‘Creating’ is important for sustained resurgence for Indigenous identities as it “is not just about the artistic endeavours of individuals but also about the spirit of creating…imagination enables people to rise above their won circumstances, to dream new visions and to hold on to old ones” (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 158). Here, unlike the corrupted colonial imagination as its outcome, Anderson’s vision of ‘imagined communities’ can furnish resilient imaginations, that can create for the betterment of Indigenous communities, spiritually, socially, politically and culturally.

Continuing the consideration of resurgence as a mechanism for moving beyond the colonial designation of ‘Other’, towards the reclaiming of Indigenous identity, scholar and
member of the Yellowknife Dene First Nation, Glen Sean Coulthard’s *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (2014) asserts that the mutual ‘recognition’ proposed by Canadian multiculturalism continues “to reproduce the very configurations of colonialis, racist, patriarchal state power that Indigenous peoples’ demands for recognition have historically sought to transcend” (Coulthard 2014, 3). Defining settler-colonialism as “a particular form of domination…a relationship where power…has been structured to a relatively secure…set of hierarchical social relations that continue to facilitate the dispossession of Indigenous peoples of their lands and self-determining authority”, Coulthard highlights the institutional effects of ‘Othering’, through which the ‘Othered’ population is placed in a disadvantageous, but contingent position, in relation to the dominant political and social powers (Coulthard 2014, 6-7). In order to reverse these dispossessing effects of the colonial-colonized relationship, Coulthard asserts that resurgence is “less oriented around attaining legal and political recognition by the state, and more about Indigenous peoples empowering themselves through cultural practices…I call this a resurgent politics of recognition” (Coulthard 2014, 18).

Coulthard’s ‘resurgent politics of recognition’ remind the colonial state that it is not within their power to *gift* Indigenous independent nations with their rights and responsibilities, but it is in fact their *duty* to respect Indigenous rights to self-determination, the return of stolen land, and sovereignty.

As with Tuhiwai Smith’s consideration of Hegel’s Master-Slave dialectic, Coulthard examines Franz Fanon’s *Black Skin, White Masks* (1952), utilizing Fanon’s critique of Hegel’s dialectic as unsuccessful in conditions of colonial and racialized. Central to Fanon’s critique, Coulthard points out that “in actual contexts of domination (such as colonialism), not only are the terms of recognition usually determined by and in the interests of the master (the colonizing
state and society) … tend[s] to develop…attachments to the master-sanctioned forms of recognition” (Coulthard 2014, 26). This reinforces Coulthard’s concerns with ‘recognition’, as it perpetuates paternalistic relationships between the state and the Indigenous community, continuing in a similar manner to the colonizer/colonized dynamic, based in the power imbalance of the Master over Slave. ‘Recognition’, if it is not by mutual means, entails a top-down approach to social and political rights, a process of giving and receiving. Hegel’s assertion that ‘I’ represents a universal ‘Self’ recognizable through acknowledgement of mutual consciousness, could be argued to retain merit within an Indigenous metaphysics, if this universal ‘I’ is considered part of an interconnected web of respect and reciprocity (Hegel 2010 ed., 11). However, Hegel’s conception the ‘Self’ and ‘Other’ requires that both participants be self-determining, conditions that cannot be met if one half of the party is not considered fully human, as per the colonial enterprises of dispossession, regulation, and incarceration (Coulthard 2014, 28).

Resurgence as a mechanism of recognizing and decolonizing the identity of the ‘Indian Other’ is taken up by writer, activist, professor of Michi Saagiig Nishnaabeg (Anishnaabe) descent, Leanne Betasamosake Simpson in As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom Through Radical Resistance (2017). Grounding her argument in Nishnaabeg Traditional Knowledge, Simpson recognizes the word Biiskabiyang as “the process of returning to ourselves, a reengagement with the things we have left behind, a re-emergence, an unfolding from the inside out- is a concept, an individual and collective process of decolonization and resurgence. To me it is the embedded process of freedom” (Simpson 2017, 17). This process of inside-out reclaiming of identity, practice and knowledge reflects Coulthard’s differentiation between visions of Hegel’s ‘Self’ versus ‘Other’ as a colonial enterprise, as opposed to reciprocity of
mutual connection and recognition. Simpson’s use of Biiskabiyang places authority in the hands of the colonized, allowing for those disposed of social and political authority to push beyond external recognition, and centralize the ‘Self’ as a cohesive identity, instead of the prescribed role of the ‘Other’.

Likewise, Simpson’s work reiterates Tuhiwai Smith’s concerns surrounding the gendered nature of colonial controls, and subsequent gender-violence. According to Simpson, the colonial enterprise in Canada cannot be separated from an obsession with “breaking the intimate connection of Nishnaabeg bodies (and minds and spirits) …because this is our power…our bodies are commodified….and are naturalized as objects for exploitation”, as the perpetuation of Indigenous ideologies, identities, and even spirit, relies on the support and cohesion of the future generations of Indigenous communities (Simpson 2017, 41). While not limiting gendered colonial controls to those concerning the reproductive capacities of Indigenous women, counter-colonial demonstrations or understandings of sexuality have historically, and contemporarily, been targeted for dispossession and destruction (Simpson 2017, 45). As an Indigenous woman, Simpson asserts: “I am not murdered, I am not missing, but parts of me have disappeared”, affirming the interconnected nature of community bonds required for the success of Indigenous resurgence activism, scholarship, art, and community building (Simpson 2017, 92). Not only disruptive to the colonial status-quo, but actions of resurgence and the re-claiming of Indigenous identity ensure the continuation of future generations of Indigenous Peoples and Knowledges, “resulting in…collective constellations of disruption, interrogation, de-colonial love, and

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In the subsequent chapter, the implications of colonial controls and the sexuality and safety of Indigenous women will be considered in greater detail, expanding on the historical and contemporary political and social institutions in Canada that have contributed to the disproportionate number of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls.
profound embodiment of Indigeneity”, toward an Indigenous ‘Self’, not the ‘Indian Other’ (Simpson 2017, 198).

**Conclusion: Moving Beyond the ‘Indian Other’**

Following consideration of Indigenous perspectives on processes and theories of ‘Othering’, as well as reclaiming of Indigenous identity as opposed to the role of the ‘Indian Other’, a re-telling of Western academia’s colonial enterprises provides a voice to the ‘Othered’. Responding to Hegel’s Master-Slave dialectic, Said’s examination of the orientalising nature of exploration and discovery by the ‘West’ of the ‘East, and Anderson’s ‘imagined communities’ as a social imaginary that fosters boundaries and territories, not only between nation-states, but amongst different communities and individuals.

Looking at the work of Tomoko Masuzawa, *The Invention of World Religions: Or, How European Universalism was Preserved in the Languages of Pluralism* (2005), Scott Momaday’s “Native American Attitudes to the Environment” (1976) and Vine Deloria Jr. and Daniel R. Wildcat’s *Power and Place: Indian Education in America* (2001), the tendency in the colonial setting to categorize and subsume Indigenous Traditional Knowledge and interconnectivity is examined, and countered through reflections on reciprocity in Indigenous Lifeways. Extending this tendency toward the categorization of Indigenous Peoples, Vine Deloria Jr.’s *We talk, you Listen: New Tribes New Turf* and Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999), expose the extension of categorization to control by means of colonial destruction of Indigenous identity, and the imposition of the role of ‘Indian Other’.

Finally, Glen Sean Coulthard’s *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (2014) and Leanne Betamosake Simpson’s *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous
Freedom through Radical Resistance (2017) provide support and guidance for future scholars and activists, Indigenous and allies alike, to engage in a meaningful resurgence of Indigeneity.

Chapter 4: The Canadian Context

Continuing within the contemporary setting, consideration in regard to the process of ‘Othering’ in the Canadian context can prove demonstrative of the need to continue the process of reconciliation between Canada’s non-Indigenous and Indigenous communities. This need stems from the distortion of the other into the ‘Evil Other’, who is demarcated from the ‘Self’ by means of Us-Them thinking, dehumanization, and blaming the victim. The other does not necessarily require a capital ‘O’, but could instead remain another ‘I’, a distinct self-consciousness with whom fruitful dialogue and collaboration could be achieved. However, Canada, like most colonies of the British Empire, created and sustained a variation of the ‘Evil Other’ in a continuing legacy of racial, spiritual, and cultural desecration of Canada’s First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples.

Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls

In Canada, as with many other colonized nations, Indigenous populations experience disproportionate levels of marginalization and discrimination, stemming from historical policies and institutions aimed at the assimilation of Indigenous cultures into ‘mainstream’ society. Within the Canadian context, among the various rationales for colonial and assimilation-oriented enterprises was the intention to introduce Christian ideals of civilization to Canada’s Indigenous populations, creating cultural and spiritual disconnect and destruction. Among the plenitude of injustice experienced by Indigenous populations in Canada is the disproportionate sexual and physical violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls, tangibly reflecting the residual effects of disconnection and destruction of culture, communities, and families.
Underpinned by a dominant white Christian vision of ‘the woman’, Canadian Indigenous women have traditionally and contemporaneously been victimized by extreme violence, through the depiction of, and subsequent discrimination against, the ‘Indian Other’. Among ways that these categorizations of communities have been informed by a ‘religious’ lens is through traditionally Eurocentric hegemonic Christian understandings of sexuality and power, resulting in stereotyping, objectification, and violence perpetrated against Canadian Indigenous women and girls. As such, the dichotomy of ‘religious’ as opposed to ‘spiritual’ lifeways has resulted in further hierarchal relationships of domination and submission in colonial enterprises in Canada, among which the position of Indigenous women can be included. These forms of discrimination come from religious, political, and social sources, resulting in pervasive and cyclical forms of violence against Indigenous women and girls.

The introduction of the Indian Act, in its various forms and states of legislation, can be identified as a central element of political inequality perpetrated against Indigenous women, in particular. With the prioritization of male ‘Indian Status’ sustained, colonial policies reformatted traditional Indigenous community structures to the benefit of Indigenous men, lowering the number of Indigenous women within the various bands, while simultaneously introducing and enforcing patrilineal descent and patriarchal authority within both colonial and Indigenous community contexts. Having been excluded from their ‘Indian Status’ through marriage or enfranchisement, many Indigenous women were displaced from their communities, forced to face the realities of colonial rule. Coupled with the forcibly removal of children from their Indigenous family homes by means of Indian Residential Schools, assimilationist policies and institutions can be identified as corrosive to the safety and security of Indigenous communities in Canada, with particular detriment to Indigenous women’s identity and security.
Following a brief explanation of the British colonial settlement of Canadian territory and Canada’s First Nations, Métis, and Inuit peoples, an overview of the implications of the *Indian Act* and the Indian Residential School system will be surveyed as contributing factors to the disproportionate number of murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls in Canada. With such systemic factors under consideration, the Christian rhetoric and rationale for these policies and institutions will become manifest, highlighting the lasting hegemonic white-Christian patriarchal nature of not only Canada’s history, but current circumstances. Complicit with the political institutional level of discrimination against Canada’s Indigenous peoples, the social and interpersonal perceptions of Indigenous women and girls will be considered as a perpetuation of colonialist mindsets, demonstrating the long-lasting dichotomization of women as either worthy of protection (in the form of the ‘Indian Princess’) or of disposal (the ‘Indian Squaw’). With an understanding of the religiously-charged political and social contributing factors gained, the current disproportionate number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls becomes dishearteningly understandable and requiring of intensive attention on not only a governmental level, but also in the academic milieu, to promote inclusive and respectful steps towards reconciliation.

**Historical Context and Colonial Conquest**

In order to understand aspects of Indigenous Peoples in Canada, it is important to understand their contextual and historical status as the First Peoples of North America. Based on both literary and archaeological evidence, it is estimated that North America was sparsely populated by human beings in the approximated range of 50,000 BCE- 17,000 BCE (Dickason 2015, 2). Creation or origin stories can be considered a central common feature amongst most of the First Nations groups in Canada, most often suggesting a connection of the people to the earth
With varying structures, most of the stories relate to the birth of the First Peoples from the earth in some manner: the Gitksan of the west coast assert that their territorial lands of Upper Skeena River Valley (what are now considered to be the regions comprising North America) are their own Garden of Eden, whereas Salish Thompson River tribes and the Ojibwa of the Great Lakes establish origin from the earth itself, being birthed from Mother Earth, with the Iroquois believing in their ancestral goddess, Aataentsic, landing on the back of a great tortoise (Dickason 2015, 2).

However, with the arrival of colonization in North America, aspects of traditional origin stories, as well as linguistic evidence and practices, have been interpreted in a manner that does not always reflect the beliefs and meanings proposed by First Nations communities. Olive Patricia Dickason points to the fact that even the generalized names of many tribes, such as ‘Cree’, ‘Huron’, ‘Beaver’, ‘Haida’ cannot be taken as the true names of the First Nations groupings, but instead should be understood as the European interpretation of these communities (Dickason 2015, x). It is instead the case that most groupings of First Nations peoples include various distinct and individualized tribes, retaining their connections based on shared language or dialectal similarities, for example the language group of Algonkian (Dickason 2015, x).

Likewise, social roles and order in traditional Indigenous communities were structured differently than in that of the settlers. Focussing in particular on the circumstances and position of women, it was commonly understood that while women and men maintained distinctive roles within Indigenous communities, a level of equality of personhood was respected (Stolen Sisters 2006, 8). Janice Acoose addresses the elevated status and position of women in relation to traditional Métis practices, where women were involved as “pipe carriers, drummers, singers, and medicine/spiritual people, as well as participants in political, social and economic matters”
(Acoose 1995, 46). Priscilla K. Buffalohead echoes this increased participation of women within traditional Indigenous contexts, drawing on journal records of fur traders in the Great Lakes region, which suggest that Ojibway women were equally involved in both economic endeavours, in the form of trade commerce, as well as domestic endeavours, with the home being described as the “the precinct of the rule and government of the wife” (Buffalohead 1983, 241). Furthermore, matrilineal descent was common among many First Nations, Métis and Inuit communities, placing women as central members of the society, and orienting the passage of children’s identity, marriage practices, and living arrangements around the authority and lineage of the mother (Jacobs and Williams 2008, 123).

Women maintained roles of importance and authority within traditional Indigenous communities, making the implementation of colonial policies and practices privileging both Indigenous and non-indigenous men particularly unsettling and displacing. For this reason, it is important to recognize that the First Peoples of Canada had a long and rich cultural heritage prior to the arrival of the European populations, making it important to return authority to the individual Indigenous populations in order to truly understand and appreciate cultural practices, beliefs, and community structures. Of increased importance, is the recognition of the authority of Indigenous women, and aspects of identity that have been disrupted and dissolved by colonial policies and perspectives.

When looking to the Eurocentric historic context of Indigenous assimilation, the authority of the Christian religious vision informed understanding of the Indigenous female. David Morgan asserts that “Vision reveals authority and weakness, charisma and stigma, compassion and aggression”, suggesting that the manner by which the other is viewed speaks to an internalized understanding of the way the world should be, a projection of the necessitated values
for membership to the community to which an individual belongs (Morgan 2012, 3). Morgan points to a common understanding and product derived through envisioning the other as shame: “Shame easily establishes pecking order and etches primary distinctions such as good and evil, powerful and weak, pure and impure, right and wrong”, equating the perception of others to a hierarchy of moral underpinnings that inform the aforementioned worldview established by the particular group to which the individual belongs (Morgan 2012, 3). Furthermore, Stacie Swain notes that the attribution of the term ‘spiritual’ to the lifeways of Indigenous populations, as opposed to ‘religious’ “contributes to the construction of difference between Indigenous and Settler peoples, cultures, and nationhood”, entrenching a dichotomy of societies, oppositional in nature to one and other (Swain 2017, 1). However, such a dichotomy arguably lends itself to the construction of either ‘religion’ or ‘spirituality’ as the priority, depending on the context of its application.

Political and Institutional Factors

The effects of colonization in Canada have had lasting impact on the Indigenous population’s cultural heritage, health and self-understanding, as well as entrenched a divide between First Nations, Métis, and Inuit communities and broader Canadian society. When examined through political, social, and historical frameworks, the Canadian government can be argued to have endorsed policies of assimilation towards national Indigenous populations, with assimilation being defined as “the social process of absorbing one cultural group into another”, according to the Aboriginal Healing Foundation’s definition (Residential Schools 9-12).

In 1835, the House of Commons of Great Britain, following the model of the Law of the Poor, initiated a committee to oversee ‘Aborigine’ affairs in the colonies (Armitage 1995, 4). The Committee produced a series of regulatory policies that concerned itself with the ‘correct’
manner to deal with Indigenous populations, largely focusing on power assertion through legal and regulatory procedures, aiming policies and Christian mission work towards children within the assimilation framework (Armitage 1995, 4). Such policies were the beginnings of the long-lasting impact to be felt by Indigenous peoples, and in particular Indigenous women, “from the way they are educated and the way they can earn a living to the way they are governed”, creating a context of disempowerment and inequality at the hands of the dominant Christian-based colonialisit patriarchal system (Stolen Sisters 2006, 8).

Initially, it is important to consider the impact of the Indian Act on Indigenous identity, affiliation, and participation in Canadian social and political life. Ignoring facets of Treaties entered by the government with First Nations leaders, Canadian legislation centred on the Indian Act set out the definition of ‘Indian’ status, taking control over the economies, government, religion and land of Canadian Indigenous Peoples. The Indian Act itself has undergone numerous reconsiderations and amendments in relation to topics of status, lineage and sexual discrimination, to name but a few aspects of Indigenous identity controlled by the governmental policy.

Beginning in the 1850s, even prior to Confederation, laws pertaining to qualification as “Indian” were proposed in Lower Canada, with the 1857 Gradual Civilization Act introducing the concept of ‘enfranchisement’ to promote the voluntary abandonment of ‘Indian Status’ and band membership by Indian men, attributing decreased rights to women as compared to men within the Indigenous community itself (Jacobs and Williams 2008, 121-122). With the introduction of the 1876 Indian Act, an Indian was defined as “Any male person of Indian blood reputed to belong to a particular band” (Jacobs and Williams 2008, 122). Further variations of the Indian Act increasingly mitigating the authority and identity of Indigenous women, resulting
in Indigenous women who married men outside of their Indigenous communities to lose their ‘Indian Status’. However, the same legislation assured ‘Indian Status’ to non-Indigenous women who married Indigenous men under section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act Prior to 1985 (Jacobs and Williams 122). In 1920, the Canadian government amended the Indian Act, providing authorities with the power to enfranchise, or strip individuals of their Aboriginal status (They Came for the Children 2012, 12). Through such tactics, colonial policies reformatted traditional Indigenous community structures to the benefit of Indigenous men, lowering the number of Indigenous women within the various bands, while simultaneously introducing and enforcing patrilineal descent and patriarchal authority within both colonial and Indigenous community contexts.

Having been excluded from their ‘Indian Status’ through marriage or enfranchisement, many Indigenous women were displaced from their communities, forced to face the realities of colonial rule.

Returning now to the notion of missionary work with Indigenous children, the prevalence of assimilation policies directed towards children, most notably in the form of the Indian Residential Schools, can be identified as a further mechanism for the distancing of Indigenous girls from their communities, resulting in displacement and increasing vulnerability. Recognizing and exploiting the malleability of a child’s mind, the “British Empire had [Indigenous] children removed from them so that the dominant culture could pursue its objective of carrying ‘civilization and humanity, peace and good government, and above all knowledge of the true nature of God, to the uttermost ends of the earth’” (Armitage 1995, 5).

Beginning in 1883, the Indian Residential Schools functioned under the assertion that Indigenous peoples were “inferior, savage, and uncivilized…Aboriginal languages, spiritual beliefs and ways of life were irrelevant”, run predominately by the Roman Catholic, Anglican,
Presbyterian, and United churches (*They Came for the Children* 2012, 2; Macdonald 2008, 355). The church and the government asserted that the removal of Indigenous children from their home environments would assist in distancing them from their Traditional Knowledge, the belief systems followed by First Nations, Inuit and Métis communities that purported holistic spirituality, passed generationally (“Chapter 9: Research Involving the First Nations, Inuit and Métis Peoples of Canada: The Interagency Advisory Panel on Research Ethics” 2015).

Having been under the guidance of the House of Commons, the tactics taken to ‘whitewash’ the population into European ‘civility’ is strongly identifiable, particularly when addressed in regard to the influence of Christianity. In Canada, the aim of Government and church was to “civilize and Christianize Aboriginal children”, demonstrating the religiously-charged nature of the assimilation policies (*They Came for the Children* 2012, 10). Acoose draws on her own experience at the Cowessess “Indian” Residential School in Saskatchewan, highlighting the religious authority present in assimilation policies: “Very soon, I became aware that this institution [namely, the Catholic Church] and all its representatives who functioned as agents of the colonial system perhaps represented the most powerful ideological source operating on Indigenous peoples” (Acoose 1995, 23). Acoose’s observation of the authority of the church, with a continued legacy of Christian influence throughout both non-Indigenous and Indigenous communities, demonstrates the durable authority and power of Christianity within Canada, informing not only political decisions and institutions, but public perspectives and ideologies, as well.

With the Christian base of the Indian Residential Schools established, reinforced by governmental assimilation policies, what deserves further consideration is the impact of violence within the Indian Residential School system. While under the guise of preparing students for a
successful transition into ‘mainstream’ Canadian society, the conditions experienced within the facilities indicates that Indian Residential Schools were underfunded, overcrowded and under-supervised, resulting in poor education, poor health and high cases of sexual and physical abuse against students.

Components of residual family and community dysfunction caused by Indian Residential School abuse can be identified through the high number of Indigenous children in child welfare services: in a 2011 Statistics Canada study that found that 14,225 or 3.6% of all First Nations children aged fourteen and under were in foster care, compared with 15,345 or 0.3% of non-Indigenous children (“Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada” 2015, 186). Education continues to be inaccessible for many Indigenous Peoples, resulting in under-employment and poverty. While improvements have been made with each generation, the 2011 census revealed that 29% of Indigenous people are not graduating from high school, compared with 12% in the non-Indigenous population (“Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the Future: Summary of the Final Report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Canada” 2015, 194). In Canada, the poverty rate of Indigenous women is considerably higher than that of non-Aboriginal women, with that of Aboriginal single mothers at 73 % (Koukkane 2015, 274). Finally, correlations between the legacy of Residential Schools and health can be associated psychological effects of childhood abuse and loss of traditional spirituality. Such findings are reflected in the prevalence of suicide among Canadian Indigenous youth, with the overall rate among First Nations at twice that of the total Canadian population, Inuit rates at six to eleven times, and Indigenous youth between the ages of ten and twenty-nine who are living on reserves at five to six times more likely to die by suicide than non-Aboriginal youth (“Honouring the Truth, Reconciling for the

Christian Colonialist Vision of the Woman

Following an examination of both the Indian Act and the Indian Residential Schools, underlying traditional Christian values emerge as factors contributing to not only colonization, but also increased discrimination against Indigenous women, within the Canadian context. As a primary piece of evidence, one can address the notions of domination and submission present within the Bible, in both Genesis in the Old Testament, as well as Timothy in the New Testament. It is important to note that Biblical sources are open to interpretation, thus allowing for the opportunity to engage and reconsider past perspectives of various verses. It is not the intention of this paper to proclaim the inherent patriarchal structure of the Old and New Testament, but instead to highlight representations of women which could be understood as contributing factors in both sexual and gender inequality.

Looking first at the Book of Genesis, God’s creation of the world could be interpreted to attribute authority to the male, creating a world regulated by hierarchical patriarchal dominion. God proclaims “Let us make man in our image, after our likeness: and let them have dominion” (Genesis 1: 25, KJV), followed up with the God-given instruction to “be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it: and have dominion over the fish of the seas, and over the owl of the air, and over every living thing that moveth upon the earth” (Genesis 1: 28). Through these two verses, the notion of dominion is highlighted as an authority of man, specifically, over
everything, providing the rationale or defence of a potential God-given authority to the Christian male. If viewed as a proclamation of ultimate authority, the assimilationist policies of the colonial forces become not only a majority perspective, but divinely attributed, gaining superhuman authority.

Likewise, the subordinate role of the woman is further entrenched when considering Genesis 2: 21-22, where Eve is made from the rib of Adam, reinforcing the primacy of the man, hierarchically situating men as not only dominant over the earth and its creatures, but also his fellow human consort. When considered in light of the Indian Act, actions taken to ensure patrilineal descent reflect the belief in the primacy and orientation of humanity through the male or the ‘father’, as well as reflect the overriding dominion of the British Christian colonists as being a God-given right and duty, giving the impression of the authority to even create an Indian Act in the first place. This dominion is further highlighted in the Indian Residential School system, as children were forcibly removed from their traditional Indigenous homes in order to be ‘Christianised’, sustained by the force and power held by the church.

With ‘man’s dominion’ asserted in the Book of Genesis, Timothy I 2: 9-15 highlights the further submissive role of women through a traditional Christian lens. In the First Epistle of Paul the Apostle to Timothy, women are expected to act as follows: “In like manner also, that women adorn themselves in modest apparel, with shamefacedness and sobriety; not with braided hair, or gold...Let the woman learn in a silence with all subjection...For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgressions. Notwithstanding she shall be saved in childbearing, if they continue in faith and charity and holiness with sobriety” (Timothy I 2: 9-15). Women, in light of Timothy I 2:9-15, are expected to behave as obedient subjects of the man, showing chastity and modesty, and due to their
inability to be trusted (namely, Eve’s incident with the forbidden fruit in the Garden of Eden) must demonstrate their use by means of their reproductive capacities, serving to continue the legacy of Christianity by means of its future adherents. While the qualities of modesty and motherhood in and of themselves are by no means negative qualities, the enforcement or policing of such qualities poses as problematic.

In the context of the position of Indigenous women in relation to the dominion of colonizing forces, Timothy I 2:9-15 highlights the manner by which Indigenous women were traditionally evaluated, and subsequently stereotyped, by dominant European Christian settlers. Andrea Smith asserts that the discrimination experienced by many Canadian and American Indigenous women alike is caused by an intersectional marginalization based on “colonial, race, and gender oppression [that] cannot be separated” (Smith 2003, 71). Smith’s position reflects the theory of intersectionality promoted by Kimberle Crenshaw in relation to identity politics. Crenshaw argues that identity politics, most often informed by feminist and liberationist perspectives, “frequently conflates or ignores intragroup differences” (Crenshaw 1991, 1242). Crenshaw is suggesting that the categorization of gender, race, or class identities as distinctive modes of understanding injustice does not account for the broad and interconnected aspects experienced by various marginalized groups, making generalizations about ‘women’ or ‘Indigenous peoples’ challenging. When this intersectional perspective is considered in light of Timothy I 2:9-15, as well as historical colonial perspectives of Indigenous women, the categorical demarcations of ‘woman’ and ‘Indian’ become important as adjoining concepts, as the subordination of the woman is further deepened by her status as an ‘Indian’.

Smith calls this categorization a function of the ‘colonial imagination’, and provides the writing of Alexander Whitaker, a minister in Virginia, from 1613 to illustrate the ‘polluting’
nature attributed specifically and specially to Indigenous women: “They live naked in bodies, as if their shame of their sinner deserved no covering. They esteem it a virtue to lie, deceive and steale as their master the divell teacheth them” (Smith 2003, 73). Smith further highlights the objectification and sexualisation of Indigenous women through the following settler journal excerpt: “Two of the best looking of the squaws were lying in such a position, and from the appearance of the genital organs and of their wounds, there can be no doubt that they were first ravished and then shot dead” (Smith 2003, 75). In both of these cases, the Indigenous woman’s’ sexuality is being depicted as oppositional to the Christian ideals of modesty and civility, which according to Smith situates Indigenous women “as bearers of a counter-imperial order pose a supreme threat to the imperial order” (Smith 2003, 74). In such a manner, a binary relationship is being established. Not only does this binary involve the ‘civilized Christian’ versus the ‘savage Indian’, but an additional level of discrimination is being enforced based on expectations of sexuality, where the ‘good Christian woman’ submits and is pure, and the Indigenous woman is seen as the ‘dirty squaw’. Through such tropes of the ‘Indian Princess’ and ‘Indian Squaw’ the binary of the Christian Madonna or virgin is placed against the ‘whore’, perpetuating hegemonic understandings of not only gender roles, but also sexuality. The Indigenous woman becomes the ideal target of male dominion: sexually available and easily disposable, as well as racially inferior and deserving of domination.

Indian Princess/Indian Squaw: A not-so-distant Past

This image of the promiscuous ‘Indian Squaw’ has not remained a relic of a colonial past in the Canadian context. While Acoose attributes the production of the modern image of the Indigenous woman as either an ‘Indian Princess’ or an ‘Indian Squaw’ to the era of Christopher Columbus’ ‘New World’, as depicted in Amerigo Vespucci’s _Mundus Novus_, the influence of
this image can be seen in the more contemporary era through media sources representations of the Princess/Squaw dichotomy (Acoose 1995, 1504-1505). Vespucci describes ‘Indian Women’ as having “had the opportunity of copulating with Christians, urged by excessive lust, they defiled and prostituted themselves”, a statement which both highlights the ultimate supposed desirability of the white Christian male, as well places the Indigenous woman as an expendable commodity (Acoose 1995, 42). However, Acoose also highlights the colonial tendency to attribute elevated status to Indigenous women who were considered of benefit to the white European cause, stereotyped as the beautiful Pocahontas, in love and dedicated to the white-man John Smith (Acoose 1995, 43). An additional binary is introduced and enforced through such depictions of Indigenous women: not only are they distinct from the ‘good Christian wife’, there are also good ‘Indian Princesses’ and bad ‘Indian Squaws’!

Mark Cronland Anderson and Carmen L. Robertson analyzed media responses and depictions of Indigenous women, in relation to both the popular Indian Princess pageants of the 1960s-1970s, in light of violence against women by means of the disproportionate number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada. While the Indian Princess pageants in themselves can be seen to prioritize the male gaze through a dramatized and fetishized ‘colonial imaginary’, the diminished statuses of Indigenous women and girls leading to the prevalence of violence perpetrated against them can be associated with the popular trope of the ‘Indian Princess’ versus the ‘Squaw’. The ‘Indian Princess’ is beautiful, hyper-sexualized and in love with a white man, much like the Disney version of Pocahontas, and the ‘Squaw’ is an anonymous outsider, associated with ‘whorishness’, barely human and available for use by the white man (Cronland Anderson and Robertson 2011, 193).
Cronland Anderson and Robertson deem media sources to be ‘agents of enculturation’, thus engagement in stereotypical depictions of the ‘Princess/Squaw’ binary functions as a branch of colonial and assimilationist practices (Cronland Anderson and Robertson 2011, 193-194). In regard to violence against Indigenous women, Cronland Anderson and Robertson assert that the ‘Squaw’ has been used as a justification for violence historically and presently. In an 1889 trial of a murdered Cree prostitute named Rosalie, “press contended that ‘Rosalie was only a squaw and that her death did not matter much’” and the “The Calgary Herald concluded: ‘Keep the Indians out of town’” (Cronland Anderson and Robertson 2011, 201). Cronland Anderson and Robertson compare the treatment of Rosalie to that of Helen Betty Osborne of The Pas, Manitoba, was brutally murdered by two white men in 1971 (Cronland Anderson and Robertson 2011, 202). Helen Betty Osborne case is as follows:

“On November 12, 1971, she was abducted by four white men in the town of The Pas and then sexually assaulted and brutally murdered. A provincial inquiry...criticized the sloppy and racially biased police investigation that took more than 15 years to bring one of the four men to justice...police had long been aware of white men sexually preying on Indigenous women and girls in The Pas but ‘did not feel that the practice necessitated any particular vigilance’” (Stolen Sisters 2006, 2).

What is made manifest by both the depictions of Rosalie and Betty, as well as the serious lack of media coverage or respectful representations of the two women, is the manner by which the stereotyped ‘Indian Squaw’ is conducive to blaming the victim.

According to James Waller’s theory of the ‘Social Death of the Victim’, if social categorizations are essentialized in a manner that attribute particular qualities as universal to specific groups of people, discriminatory, generalized and xenophobic results are possible (Waller 2002, 239). According to Waller, the propensity to blame victims for their own victimization comes from the common practice of “grant[ing] ourselves the benefit of the doubt in explaining our own behaviors but [being] much harsher in explaining other people’s
behaviors” (Waller 2002, 250). Additionally, blaming the victim often draws attention to the shortcomings of the victim for their own defense: “there is a focus on the victim's’ passivity...the victims bring their fate on themselves not by deserving it but by not fighting back” (Waller 2002, 253). What occurs through this process is a prioritization of the psychological comfort of the perpetrator, the hegemonic cultural force. By blaming the minority group for their own inferior status, the dominant group can attempt to disengage from a situation that they may find morally distasteful, even if dominant systematic processes have contributed to the demise of the ‘Evil Other’. In the case of the ‘Indian Squaw’, because the associated Indigenous woman in question does not fit within the categorization attributed to the ‘good Christian wife’, nor does she fulfil the male desirable ‘Indian Princess’, she is relegated to the role of ‘Evil Other’, most easily disposed of and ignored.

The Contemporary Canadian Context

While the Canadian government is currently in the process of engaging in a dialogical and representative inquiry into the case of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls, which is an important step towards reconciliation, the situation in which Canada finds itself cannot be spun in a positive way. According to the Government of Canada’s Interim Inquiry reports, “Although Indigenous women make up 4 per cent of Canada’s female population, 16 per cent of all women murdered in Canada between 1980 and 2012 were Indigenous”, marking violence and discrimination against Indigenous women a pressing and prevalent concern (Government of Canada 2016). Likewise, The Royal Canadian Mounted Police (RCMP)'s 2014 Missing and Murdered Aboriginal Women: An Operational Overview identified a total of 1,181 missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls (Government of Canada 2016).
In their 2004 Canadian inquiry *Stolen Sisters*, Amnesty International identified Canadian protective resources to have failed its Indigenous female population, also highlighting the inequalities faced by Indigenous women at a systemic and institutional level. For example, women living off-reserve but with their Indian Status only make $13,870 a year, which is $5,500 less than non-Indigenous women’s average annual income (*Stolen Sisters* 2006, 12). A lack of economic resources leads to various vulnerable circumstances for Indigenous Women, among which include staying with abusive spouses due to monetary constraints or fear of losing access to children to entering the sex trade due to situations of financial strain, as well as substance abuse and trauma-related phenomena (*Stolen Sisters* 2006, 7; 13). In Vancouver, a study by Prostitution Alternatives Counseling and Education Society (PACE) discovered that through interviews with 183 women in the sex trade, 30% of respondents were Indigenous women, making up only 6% of the city’s population, with “40 percent...[in] the sex trade primarily because they needed the money...25 percent referred to drug addiction...while many others referred to pressure from boyfriends or family member” (*Stolen Sisters* 2006, 13). This includes many of the aforementioned residual effects of colonial assimilationist policies and perspectives resulting from Indigenous women’s displacement within their own communities by means of the *Indian Act*, as well as the disconnection from culture and family, and subsequent intergenerational trauma produced by the Indian Residential School experience.

One of the major Indigenous women’s advocacy groups, the Native Women’s Association of Canada (NWAC), has dedicated immense research and resources to the uncovering, and hopeful eradication, of the disproportionate amount of violence perpetrated against Indigenous women and girls. It is of the NWAC’s position that the numerous incidences of violence against Indigenous women and girls are symptomatic of a greater pattern of
discrimination against Indigenous women in Canada (Stolen Sisters 2006, 14-15). Such a position echoes the argument that the combined religious, political and social factors that contribute the historical and present discrimination against Indigenous women and girls in Canada make these instances of violence not fluke occurrences, but residual representations of colonial policies and perspectives, further supported by the notion of a ‘colonial imagination’ that establishes certain types of women as good and bad, deserving their humanity or as disposable.

According to The Manitoba Justice Inquiry, in the situation of Betty Helen Osborne, “Her attackers seemed to be operating on the assumption that Aboriginal women were promiscuous and open to enticement through alcohol or violence...that young Aboriginal women were objects with no human value beyond sexual gratification” (Stolen Sisters 2006, 17). In such a manner, the treatment of Betty Helen Osborne by her attackers, as well as the subsequent disregard for her case by RCMP in The Pas, highlights the objectification of the Indigenous woman’s humanity, by means of her body. As previously discussed, the ‘Indian Squaw’ is seen as sexually available, thus positioned as an object of domination.

If considered, once more, in light of ‘man’s dominion’ as depicted in the Old Testament in the Book of Genesis 1: 28, everything that moves on the earth is available to the white Christian male colonizer in his ultimate rule. When viewed in such a manner, combined with the subhuman living conditions experienced by many Indigenous women in Canada, a further aspect of the ‘Social Death of the Victim’ as proposed by James Waller is present: dehumanization. The non-human nature attributed to the ‘Indian Other’ can be seen in the lack of resources and infrastructure made available to Canadian Indigenous women, arguably underscored even still by
a consideration of colonized or marginalized communities as being the infamous ‘Other’, belonging to the ‘everything that moves’ within the colonial dominion.

As previously mentioned, the current state of inequality and violence experienced by Indigenous women in Canada has not gone unnoticed by the Canadian government. The National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls commenced in 2015, have released its interim report findings in November 2017. The Inquiry acts as a response to the Truth and Reconciliation 2015 “Calls to Action”, in which #41 calls for a national level inquiry into the murdered and missing Indigenous women and girls, in conjunction with an assessment of the contributing factors to their marginalization, such as the intergenerational legacy of the Indian Residential School system, emphasizing the importance of consultation and availability to Indigenous communities, leaders and victimized families (“Calls to Action” 2015, 4).

While the inquiry is underway, the manner by which the government funded event has been called into question. Among those considered with the approach and outcomes of the Inquiry thus far is NWAC, whom have produced ‘report cards’, highlighting concerns about the lack of community-based involvement, as well as minimal trauma or cultural support, particularly in Indigenous-dominant isolated and Northern communities (“Report Card 1” 2016, “Report Card 2” 2017). These concerns echo the policy-based approaches undertaken in relation to the Indian Act, posing concern as to the perpetuation of colonial rhetoric in the current governmental and research context.

Implications and Considerations

A potential counter-argument or concern in relation to the attention and governmental expenditures related to The National Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls could be as follows: violence does not only happen in the context of Indigenous women
and girls, but can be found in many homes in Canada. Is it not a Canadian problem then? Why should it be considered only in relation to the Indigenous populations in Canada? Statistically speaking, as of 1996 Indigenous women between the ages of 25 and 44 with under the Indian Act with status, are five times more likely than other women of the same age to die as the result of violence (Stolen Sisters 2006, 14). Additionally, Shannon Brennan’s report in regard to violent victimization of Indigenous women through Statistics Canada from 2011 reported that “in 2009, close to 67,000 Aboriginal women aged 15 or older living in the Canadian provinces reported being the victim of violence in the previous 12 months. Overall, the rate of self-reported violent victimization among Aboriginal women was almost three times higher than the rate of violent victimization reported by non-Aboriginal women” (Brennan 2011, 5). While such statistics are by no means a suggestion that any form of violence against women is of greater or lesser importance, they do highlight the particular prevalence and concentration of violence perpetrated against Indigenous women in Canada.

Crenshaw warns, however, that it is ill-advised to attribute all the violence perpetrated against Indigenous women to the results of colonial and racialized policies and practice, as this could be misconstrued as justifying the violence as a form of ‘acting out’, both by the community that has been victimized as a result of trauma, or by the majority dominant culture in the form of ignorance (Crenshaw 1991, 1258). What is important according to Crenshaw, is to dismantle and challenge the sources of hegemonic power, which includes reassessing the stereotype that ‘it doesn’t just happen to poor or minority women’ (Crenshaw 1991, 1259). This is not to say that stereotypes are to any extent good, but it instead acts as a reminder to the majority society that the removal and disbanding of stereotypes should not occur as a reaction to the self-identified plight, as such could result in the re-prioritization of the white-Christian-wife.
The Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls may have flaws in its execution of its task, but it does serve to remind the majority Canadian white Christian population that injustices of the past must be acknowledged, not justified, and are deserving of respectful and responsive actions.

For this reason, increased attention must be given to a re-construction of the ‘Other’, not as some distant enemy, but instead as an ally and fellow member of humanity, deserving every dignity as the identified ‘Self’. In order to move in this direction for future research, the privilege of the academia must be recognized and resourced in a manner that is outward facing and on an equal plane with research subjects. In the Canadian context, while there are obviously and undoubtedly many minority groups who require and deserve attention and investment, the ‘Indigenous Other’ must be addressed, with steps already being taken towards reconciliation, in order to ensure all persons in Canada are being researched, represented and recognized with full dignity and respect, including Indigenous women and girls.

Conclusion

Through the examination of the effects of the Indian Act and the Indian Residential School system, the political and institutional factors contributing the disproportionate number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls becomes relatively manifest, speaking to the colonial legacy of assimilation-based policies. However, when traditional and historical Christian rhetoric and perspectives are attributed to and considered in conjunction with such policies, the emphasis on white Eurocentric dominion over Canada’s Indigenous populations is further illustrated. When this Christian perspective is then considered in relation to understandings of the role and status of women, the subordination and domination of women is additionally emphasized. Located in the context of the ‘colonial imagination’, as described by Andrea Smith,
the Indigenous woman is further demonized and positioned against the idealized ‘good Christian wife’ trope. The ‘good Christian wife’ trope functions to highlight not only the ‘bad Indian Squaw’, but also acts as an exemplar or measure of the categorization of the Indigenous woman as those participating within the romanticized vision of the ‘Indian Princess’, servicing the needs of the settler man’s sexual and moral dominion.

Through these socially constructed binaries and categorizations, the social marginalization of Indigenous women is illustrated, solidifying discrimination across religious, political and social lenses in the Canadian context. With religious, political and social mechanisms not in their favour, the disproportionate number of missing and murdered Indigenous women and girls in Canada is not as surprising as it should be. However, while the actions of The Inquiry into Murdered and Missing Indigenous Women and Girls requires further refinement in its pursuit of justice, such actions provide a glimmer of hope for a future free of inequality for Canada’s Indigenous women and girls.

**Chapter 5: Visions of the Other in Kent Monkman’s “Shame and Prejudice**

**The Museum: A Place to Be ‘Othered’, A Place to Do ‘Othering’**

Having established the governmental and religious influence, and institutions, that have contributed to the disproportionate number of murder and missing Indigenous women and girls in Canada, a tangible example of resurgent Indigenous activism demonstrates the resiliency of the colonized ‘Indian Other’. Responding to Masuzawa’s argument that the Western hegemonic ‘proto-type’ civilization and religion is Christianity (Masuzawa 2005, 2), acknowledging the mirroring effect of the colonial West’s projection of the ‘Indian Other’, where vision is filtered through the Christian Eurocentric lens back to Indigenous Peoples and communities in an attempt to solidify stereotypes and misconceptions of inferiority, the Indigenous individual is left
with the option of radical resurgence and reclaiming of traditional values and cultural practices as proposed by Coulthard and Simpson. Recalling Tuhiwai Smith’s call for representation of Indigenous Peoples by Indigenous Peoples through creative enterprises that provides the imaginative scaffolding necessary for, not only Indigenous survival, but flourishing (Tuhiwai Smith 1999, 58; 115), enter contemporary Indigenous artists, including Kent Monkman.

Born in Winnipeg, Manitoba to a Cree Father and Settler Mother, as a member of the Fisher River First Nation, Monkman’s life has been informed, and to some degree deformed, by settler-colonial institutions and ideologies, such as the Indian Residential Schools, urban displacement, and a loss of language and traditional spirituality (Monkman 2017). Growing up visiting the Manitoba Museum, Monkman was disturbed by the stark difference between the pre-contact representations of Indigenous communities, and the horrors of injustice in the fallout of colonization found throughout Winnipeg’s North End. Having been inspired by the artwork of European masters, Monkman discovered an unsettling reality of traditional fine art: “And for all of those paintings that were made that I was looking at that were of this story of North America, there was virtually nothing that had even attempted to talk about the Indigenous experience. Of course, it was told by the European settler, so it was very biased, very subjective. I wanted to see history paintings that spoke about Indigenous experiences here” (Monkman 2017). Looking to provide a voice for those silenced for the past 150 years and beyond, with the support of Barbra Fisher from the Art Museum of Toronto, Monkman flipped the script on ‘Canada 150’ celebrations, producing the travelling exhibition, “Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience”, to educate Canadians on the history, and residual effects of colonization of the ‘Indian Other’. Through his exhibition, Monkman engages in Tuhiwai Smith’s call for creativity, representing the prejudices attributed by the Western ‘colonial imagination’ to Indigenous Peoples, reflecting
these stereotypes back to the viewer, creating a dialectical relationship between the ‘Otherer’ and the ‘Othered’.

Before examining Monkman’s artwork and exhibition for its resurgent merit, the revolutionary nature of retelling colonial history, particularly in the museum context through representational fine art, must be addressed. English academic and historian, Tony Bennett, proposes the museum to be an institution informed by the ‘exhibitionary complex’, a process focused on the “transfer of objects and bodies from the enclosed and private domains…into progressively more open and public arenas…inscribing and broadcasting the messages of power throughout society” (Bennett 1988, 74). However, as highlighted by Ruth B. Philips in “A Proper Place for Art or the Proper Arts of Place?” (2002), this ‘museum age’, “coincide[s] with the consolidation of Western imperial dominion over Indigenous peoples…the creation of public museums and the installation of exhibits inscribed Eurocentric metanarratives…. [and] constructs of nation and citizenship”, acting as a vehicle of colonization, commodification and consumption of visions of the ‘colonial imagination’ (Phillips 2002, 45). Reminiscent of the prior discussion of the forcible removal of children through the Indian Residential School system in Canada, as well as gender-based violence against Indigenous women and girls, is Bennett’s description of the re-appropriation of private objects (with objects including a myriad of items: whether this be fine art, ‘artefacts’ as deemed by colonial anthropologists, or even the creators themselves as ‘anomalies’ amongst the ‘uncivilized’). This practice echoes the seizure and incarceration of Indigenous children, as objects available for dispossession and disposal, as well as the sexual and economic controls and exploitation of Indigenous women and girls.

A further colonizing feature of the traditional museum structure can be found in the descriptors, or in the case of fine art, defining features of various movements within the
discipline. According to Sharday Mosurinjohn’s “The Dance Between Artefact, Commodity and Fetish: A Case Study of Brendan Fernandes’ Lost Bodies” (2017), there is a “colonial violence of reading…objects as ‘primitive’”, a violence that is “linked with an archipelago of other institutions in producing knowledge about the development markers and capacities of supposedly ‘primitive’ peoples” (Mosurinjohn 2017, 212; 215). Likewise, Bennett suggests that through “divisions of the body politic in constructing a ‘We’…[we] identified as a unity in opposition…the primitive ‘Otherness’ of conquered peoples” (Bennet 1988, 92). While the term ‘primitive’ may feel familiar from previous consideration of colonial rhetoric that paints the ‘Indian Other’ as savage, as opposed to the ‘civilized’ European settler, ‘primitive’ gains further influence when employed as a defining feature of Modernist art.

Métis Cree filmmaker and scholar, Loretta Todd, asserts that the Eurocentric framework of artistic movements embodies a colonial agenda: “Modernism contains…a hierarchy of cultures, the subduing of nature, and the supremacy of…reason”, highlighting the top-down approach of traditional European fine art as definable from the outside (Todd 1992, 72). Supporting this claim, Plains Cree artist and scholar Alfred Young Man asserts that ‘Primitivism’ is a traditional practice of incorporating Indigenous art forms into European pieces, from artists “who find in the Other, ‘the Unspeakable Other’, a certain exoticism”, and has been celebrated internationally in the works of contemporary painters and sculptors such as Picasso, Moore and Pollock (Young Man 1992, 95-96). However, in the spirit of resurgent Indigenous action and identity formation, the claiming of Modernist art forms by the Indigenous artist themselves can be seen as a reclaiming of the term ‘primitive’. According to Todd, “When we assert our own meaning and philosophies of representation we render the divisions irrelevant” (Todd 1992, 75), laying claim to the calls of not only Indigenous scholars to reclaim identity through creativity as
a method of de-colonization, but also speaking to Said’s observation of the colonized communities’ need to break free of Western categorization as the ‘Other’, and utilize Anderson’s ‘social imaginary’ to produce a prophetic future of respect and self-recognition for Indigenous Peoples and nations in Canada. It is within this context of resurgence and reclaiming that Monkman’s “Shame and Prejudice” engages in contemporary fine art to re-write and re-right (using Tuhiwai Smith’s meaningful phrase) representations of the Indigenous ‘Other’.

Monkman: Reminders/Refocus

While Monkman’s exhibition “Shame and Prejudice” addresses numerous Indigenous issues, looking as far back as first contact and fur trade, through to the creation of the Indian Act, and subsequent displacement and disintegration of Traditional Knowledge and Indigenous Lifeways, of primary focus in this paper is the positionality and injustices suffered by Indigenous women and girls, as an example of ‘Othering’ in the form of colonized versus colonizer, heathen versus Christian, woman versus man.

Using Monkman’s A Country Wife (2016, acrylic on canvas) as a commentary on the traditional and historical representation of the ‘idealized Christian wife’, The Scream (2017, acrylic on canvas) and Death of the Virgin (After Caravaggio) (2016, acrylic on canvas) illustrate the governmental and religious institutions assimilationist policies (such as the Indian Act) and facilities (such as the Indian Residential Schools) that have dispossessed and displaced indigenous women and girls historically, and contemporarily, from their traditional communities and distorted Indigenous identity through intergenerational trauma. Monkman’s further works Cash for Souls (2016, acrylic on canvas) and Le Petit dejeuner sur l’herbe (2014, acrylic on canvas) illuminate the continuation of the objectification and destruction of female Indigenous bodies and visions of sexuality into the contemporary era. Through such a discussion of
Monkman’s work, a Christian religious impetus can be identified as a contributing factor for the violent treatment of Indigenous women and girls in Canada, and resurgent creativity can be seen to work as a tool for public education of injustices suffered by First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples in Canada.

Looking now to Monkman’s pieces in “Shame and Prejudice”, a chronology of the colonial experience of many Indigenous women and girls emerges, beginning with Figure 1. A Country Wife (2016, acrylic on canvas) as a representation of the idealized Christian woman, as per the Book of Genesis and Timothy I 2: 9-15. In the piece, Miss Chief Eagle Testikle, Monkman’s alter-ego and trickster figure, is being depicted as the wife of Sir John A. Macdonald. Miss Chief’s distress is made evident by means of her smeared mascara, and affronting look, with her body positioned away from that of her ‘husband’. In the image, the Indigenous woman is dress in a modest, high-necked evening gown, with an additional black scarf held in her hand, reflecting the use of religious head-covering within a Catholic church. Likewise, as per the requirements of Timothy I, Miss Chief’s hair has been tightly pulled back, unrepresentative of the long-flowing spiritual traditions of many First Nations communities, with long hair for both men and women. Reflecting the imposing domination of man as a prior creation to woman in Genesis, Sir John is positioned in an authoritative stance, with Miss Chief placed at his foot, seated, in submission. A further Biblical parallel between A Country Wife (2016, acrylic on canvas) and Genesis is Miss Chief placement against Sir John’s body: Miss Chief is aligned with Sir John’s left rib, from which Eve was made of Adam.

However, while the physical mannerisms and qualities of the portrait are evidentiary of an idealized Christian woman, further suggestions of colonial conquest are present. The aforementioned black scarf retains a funerary element, suggesting the death of the Indigenous
woman’s independence and authority, echoed by her submissive pose under Sir John’s sneering eyes. Likewise, Sir John A.’s shadow wedding ring speaks to the practice of ‘marriage à la façon du pays’: the practice of marriage by country custom, which was a mix of European fur-trader and Indigenous females, resulting in a common-law marriage with mixed traditional rituals, often in order to gain resources and further territory (Van Kirk 1980). In such a manner, Monkman has illustrated the treatment of Indigenous women as forms of property and bargaining tools, used and abused for the accumulation of power and territory. Sir. John A. MacDonald’s involvement in such an enterprise speaks to the complicity of the government and church in the process of colonization.

However, the dislocation of Indigenous women through intermarriage during the Fur Trade era was only the beginning of the institutional degradation of traditional Indigenous Lifeways. As previously discussed, the disenfranchisement of Indigenous women through the introduction of the Indian Act, coupled with the institutionalization of Indigenous children in the Indian Residential School System, resulted in a legacy of intergenerational trauma and violence, particularly felt by Indigenous women stripped of prior authority and respect in both Indigenous and Canadian society. Monkman’s The Scream (2017, acrylic on canvas), Figure 2., graphically depicts the forcible extraction of Indigenous children from their homes and traditional land, exploited as passively as colonial forces commodified and consumed the land on which the children previously lived. With his grandmother having attended Indian Residential School, Monkman grounded his piece in his grandmother’s reflections and the truths recorded in the TRC, as well as the traditional and numerous re-represented European piece Massacre of the Innocents (Monkman 2017). While the depictions of the violence perpetrated by the Mounties and priests is clearly depicted in The Scream (2017, acrylic on canvas), the strength of
Monkman’s exhibit is the interactive nature of the pieces of art: surrounding *The Scream* (2017, acrylic on canvas) are various hand-made cradle boards, used by mothers and grandmothers for their children. Monkman stated that the used of the cradle boards was intended to “represent those missing children”, with missing cradle boards etched onto the black walls of the gallery like small, chalk-drawn coffins, reminiscent of body outlines popularized in fiction to depict murder scenes (Monkman 2017). These child-size coffins and cradles juxtapose each other, reminding the viewer of the finitude of Indigenous Lifeways at the hands of European colonizers institutions and policies: he literal death of children in the Indian Residential School systems, the metaphorical death of Indigenous identity and community.

While the last official Indian Residential School was closed in 1996, Monkman’s *Death of the Virgin (After Caravaggio)* (2016, acrylic on canvas), Figure 3., acts to remind the viewer, and further the general Canadian public, that the legacy of colonial violence has yet to meet its end. Monkman explains that *Death of the Virgin (After Caravaggio)* (2016, acrylic on canvas) is meant to “reflect on sickness in our communities. Whether it's mental illness, or the institutionalization of Indigenous people in foster care, or in hospitals, or in prisons”, a sickness that was delivered and perpetuated by means of the colonial oppression of Indigenous culture (Monkman 2017). Upon first viewing, *Death of the Virgin (After Caravaggio)* (2016, acrylic on canvas) highlights an intersection of Western medicine and traditional healing. With the visuals of spiritual practices such as smudging and the use of medicine bags, a stark contrast is made between the community love and support for the dead Indigenous girl, and the sterility of the Western medical model. However, a subtext of the colonial exploitation of the sexuality of Indigenous women and girls, is also present. Monkman explains that Caravaggio’s piece inspired reflection about “Missing and Murdered Women, young teens committing suicide in our
communities”, resulting in his depiction of a young girl in the hospital bed (Monkman 2017).
What is meaningful about this depiction is the double-meaning that emerges: while immediately the viewer is queued to think about the contemporary issues of the disproportionate violence against Indigenous women and girls, as well as the suicide epidemic ravaging through Indigenous communities in Canada, the positioning of the grieving women (one behind the other) could be seen to represent the feeling of inevitable violence, a line for the ‘Indian Squaw’ as a person of particular vulnerability to the exploitive actions of colonial enterprises.
Reinforcing this colonial constructed and sustained gender binary, are the men, most of whom’s gaze is averted from the dead girl. Through these subtle tactics, Monkman not only highlights contemporary issues of dislocation and distortion of traditional medicine practices, but also highlights the colonially constructed gender divide, a construct that proves lethal to the hyper-‘Othered’ Indigenous woman.

In order to demonstrate the continued pseudo-sanctioned state and church violence experienced by Indigenous women and girls in the contemporary setting, one might look to Monkman’s *Cash for Souls* (2016, Acrylic on Canvas), Figure 4. According to Monkman, the fleeing women/men (expressive of Monkman’s Two-Spirit identification) in *Cash for Souls* is representative of the Greek myth of ‘The Rape of the Sabine Women’, where women can be seen being violently attacked by men in prison jumpsuits (Everett-Green 2017). With Monkman’s practice of reconfiguring traditional pieces of art in mind, the nudity expressed in *Cash for Souls* (2016, acrylic on canvas) speaks to the portrayal of “disrobed female forms to underscore the psychological or erotic facets of the story”, speaking to the established association of the female body is permanently sexually available and ready to be taken (Elston 2012, 183). This suggested disposability harkens to Smith’s discussion of the ‘colonial imaginary’, where the fetishizing of
Indigenous women reflects “discursive strategies which simultaneously exoticize both female
and non-Western bodies and suppress their power”, a move necessary to maintain a Western
Christian patriarchal hegemony and social order (Elston 2012, 183).

Additionally, overhead, angels are seen intermingled with what appears to be helicopters,
reporting on the chaos. While the violence being perpetrated against the Indigenous women is
overt, the subtle inclusion of the religious and institutional involvement suggested by the angels
and helicopters arguably speaks to the ‘idling by-stander’ nature of past 150 years in Canadian
social justice. The angels seem to be condoning the violence, deserved by the apparent “Indian
Squaw” women, while the government helicopters create a supposed separation and distancing
of the state, while simultaneously allowing for the fetishized voyeurism of media coverage. In
this manner, the earlier dichotomy discussed by Swain is reintroduced, with the location of the
angels and helicopters in a hierarchical, dominant position above the Indigenous individuals,
which can be read on to a systemic societal hierarchy, economic hierarchy, as well as ‘religion’
versus ‘spiritual’ hierarchy. Likewise, Cronland Anderson and Robertson’s discoveries related to
the presences and perpetuation of the “Indian Squaw” as readily available and disposable is made
manifest through the inclusion of media sources.

Similarly, Figure 5 depicts Monkman’s Le Petit dejeuner sur l’herbe (2014, acrylic on
canvas), overtly inspired by Edouard Manet’s Le Dejeuner sur l’herbe (1862-1863, oil on
canvas), depicts Indigenous women, namely prostitutes, entering and exiting the ‘West Hotel’ in
the North End of Winnipeg. Having arrived in an expensive car, one can imagine that a white
settler heterosexual male is currently ‘serviced’ within the (appropriately, to emphasis the
Indigenous women’s displacement) Eurocentric ‘West Hotel’. In a consistent tone with Cash for
Souls (2016, Acrylic on Canvas), Monkman has depicted traditional Christian angels flying
above the wreckage of women lying in the street, suggestive of not only “Christian ideology transplanting itself in to North America”, but also a yearning for spiritual transcendence, return to the safety and interconnection felt on Indigenous lands (Monkman 2017). However, Monkman’s *Le Petit dejeuner sur l’herbe* (2014, acrylic on canvas) additionally acts as a form of resistance to the aforementioned museum colonial history. Monkman’s distorted women are done with a purpose to critique the fetishizing of ‘primitivism’ in the work of Modernist painters, such as Picasso: “I use these images of Picasso’s female nudes to talk about the violence against the female nude, to talk about the violence against Indigenous women” (Monkman 2017). By ‘chopping up’ and disfiguring the women in the piece, Monkman highlights the disposability of Indigenous women, especially when stereotyped as the dirty ‘Indian Squaw’, crumpled as if a piece of trash to be discarded and forgotten. By reclaiming the artistic style of a Modernist artist such as Picasso, Monkman engages in resurgence through art, disempowering colonial rhetoric and traditional forms of fine art, and reintroducing the Indigenous imagination as one of resilience to be recognized beyond the role of ‘Other’.

While the depictions of the desecration of Indigenous lifeways Monkman provides highlights the horrors of colonial hegemony for Indigenous women, and the greater community at large, the subversive nature of the works acts as a type of empowerment and resurgence for First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples. M. Melissa Elston’s analysis of Monkman’s work asserts that “Monkman is not only toying with established genres by producing these canvases; he is also challenging visual narratives…[this is] a survival tactic” (Elston 2012, 181). What is achieved, according to Elston is “a shift from object-status to subject-status”, meaning that the appropriation of traditional European painting techniques is not an intended rejection, but instead a reclaiming process (Eston 2012, 181). As with the aforementioned discussion of media
representation, artistic representation attracts an audience, informing its viewer of a narrative, and in this case, a counter-narrative. This speaks to a larger endeavour of museology in contemporary Canada, due to “Museums and public monuments…[having] come to serve as primary barometers of the manner in which public institutions—and by association, their governmental sponsors, interpret laws and policies related to cultural diversity” (Phillips 2011, 4). When traditionally accepted pieces of ‘historic art’ are reinterpreted, responsibility must be taken by actors in the contribution to the stereotypes produced by policies and practices that allowed for the formulation of ideologies represented and revered in these ‘historic’ artistic forms. As such, while Monkman’s work is painful, it is equally powerful.

Conclusions

Through consideration of Kent Monkman’s “Shame and Prejudice” exhibition, the infiltration of the hegemonic colonial Christian Eurocentric construction of the ‘social imaginary’ of Canada into Indigenous communities proves to be detrimental to self-determination and sovereignty of Indigenous Peoples, as well as disruptive to Indigenous identity formation, resulting in a legacy of intergenerational violence and trauma. When the ‘Indian Other’ is represented back to the colonial audience, the horrific results of assimilationist policies and institutions that have distorted the lives of Indigenous Peoples in Canada for the past 150 years and beyond, forcing a self-reflectivity onto the audience of ways by which Canadian society perpetuates colonial ideologies and actions.

Through Kent Monkman’s A Country Wife (2016, acrylic on canvas), Cash for Souls (2016, acrylic on canvas), and Le Petit dejeuner sur l’herbe (2014, acrylic on canvas) the subjugation of Canada’s Indigenous populations becomes manifest, not only through a historical hierarchical prioritization of Christian morality, but also by means of the physical assault and
destruction of Indigenous women and girls. By examining the historical contributing factors to the forceful assimilation of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples in Canada, through Monkman’s pieces *The Scream* (2017, acrylic on canvas) and *Death of the Virgin (After Caravaggio)* (2016, acrylic on canvas), as well as the continued depiction of stereotyped Indigenous women in various media sources, Monkman’s “Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience” is brought into a wider social context, beyond the confines of art history or museology. Through an examination of the regulations imposed by the Indian Act, a particular dislocation of Indigenous women from their traditional roles and identities becomes manifest. With such a historical context in mind, further layers of religious ‘Othering’ and regulation emerge by means of the Book of Genesis 1 and 2 of the Old Testament, and Timothy I of the New Testament, establishing the dual powers of governmental and religious institutional control in the process of colonization in Canada.

**Chapter 6: Conclusions: Reclaiming the ‘Other’ through Resurgent Recognition**

In their piece “Writing Against Othering” Michal Krummer-Nevo and Mirit Sidi assert that “in qualitative research [minority groups] have the opportunity to experience recognition, acknowledgment, and empathy. In this respect, knowing the Other possesses a potential for emancipation from binding stereotypes”, acknowledging that scholarly research has the potential for expanding knowledge, providing avenues for change, and ensuring the agency of all individuals involved in the research endeavour (Krummer-Nevo and Sidi 2012, 299).

For this reason, increased attention must be given to a re-construction of the ‘Other’, not as some distant enemy, but instead as an ally and fellow member of humanity, deserving every dignity as the identified ‘Self’. In order to move in this direction for future research, the privilege
of the academia must be recognized and resourced in a manner that is outward facing and on an equal plane with research subjects.

Having examined central theories of ‘Othering’ in Western thought, specifically that of G. W. F. Hegel’s (1770-1831) *Philosophy of Mind* (1817) and *Phenomenology of Mind* (1807), Edward W. Said’s *Orientalism* (1978) and Benedict Anderson’s *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (1983), visions of the ‘Other’ were entrenched in the ‘colonial imagination’ of Western society, projecting and concreting prejudices and stereotypes that sustain power imbalance and injustice at the personal, institutional, and spiritual level. When the West is entrenched in the psychological, social and political role of the superior ‘Self’, the inferior ‘Other’ is methodologically cemented in the negative characteristics of James Waller’s *Becoming Evil: How Ordinary People Commit Genocide and Mass Killings* (2005), namely: Us-Them thinking, dehumanization, and blaming the victim.

However, this dichotomization of the ‘civilized’ West and ‘savage’ ‘Other’ is particularly evident when taken in consideration of the unjust treatment of First Nations, Métis and Inuit Peoples on Turtle Island, in the ‘dominion’ of Canada. As with Krumer-Nevo and Sidi’s warning to scholars to take heed of the biased tradition of Western academia, Indigenous and allied scholarship and perspectives responding to the processes of colonization, resulting in the experience of ‘Othering’ perpetrated against Indigenous populations in Canada, demonstrate the resilience of the Indigenous spirit. Tomoko Masuzawa’s *The Invention of World Religions: Or, how European Universalism was Preserved in the Language of Pluralism* (2005) specifically addresses the processes of categorization and control that have been enforced by colonialist mechanisms against Indigenous Peoples and Nations internationally, highlighting the contraventions and differences between Western thought and Indigenous Traditional Knowledge.
and Lifeways, as explained by both N. Scott Momaday’s “Native American Attitudes to the Environment” (1976) and Vine Deloria Jr. and Daniel R. Wildcat’s *Power and Place: Indian Education in America* (2001).

Instead of succumbing to the pressures and powers of colonial processes of ‘Othering’, Indigenous scholars, including Vine Deloria Jr.’s *We Talk, You Listen: New Tribes New Turf*, Linda Tuhiwai Smith’s *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples* (1999), Glen Sean Coulthard’s *Red Skin, White Masks: Rejecting the Colonial Politics of Recognition* (2014), and Leanne Betamosake Simpson’s *As We Have Always Done: Indigenous Freedom through Radical Resistance* (2017), have re-assessed, re-claimed, and re-surfaced to strengthen Indigenous identities and communities in the face of colonial oppression. Calling on all Indigenous Peoples, and allies, on Turtle Island, the aforementioned scholars, activist, and visionaries proclaim the need for ‘resurgent recognition’, taking back the power of self-determination and agency through a return to traditional Lifeways and Knowledge, as well as a celebration of Indigenous culture as an ever-changing and evolving aspect of contemporary society in Canada.

Utilizing the disproportionate number of Indigenous women and girls who experience gendered-violence as an example of the extreme nature of ‘Othering’ achieved through governmental and religious institutions and assimilationist policies, the effects of colonial violence and the experience of the ‘Other’ is demonstrated to be an issue of prevalence in many Indigenous communities. However, this is not just an ‘Indigenous issue’. Both the historical and contemporary, overt and implicit, contributions of Canadians to the stereotypes and prejudices furnished against Indigenous women as either fetishized ‘Indian Princesses’ or ‘dirty Squaws’ have contributed to the increasing destitution and destruction of Indigenous communities and
identities. This expression of the commodification and consumption of Indigenous women’s bodies can be metaphorically understood as the dispossession of Indigenous nations of their land, sovereignty and personhood; to perpetrate violence against the Indigenous individual is to perpetuate the ‘colonial social imaginary’.

With such an understanding of the Canadian public’s overt and implicit contributions to the colonial agenda, Kent Monkman’s exhibition “Shame and Prejudice: A Story of Resilience” is able to show the spiritual and cultural destruction of Canada’s First Peoples, delivered and justified by means of Christian visions of the ‘idealized civilized woman’. What also emerges is the consideration of an ‘Othered’ position that encompasses inferiority as ‘savage’ versus ‘civilized’, Woman versus man, and ‘Self’ versus ‘Other’ (in the sense of Hegel’s misconstrued recognition of mutual self-consciousness, unachieved in the colonial imagination), informing Indigenous identity and community cohesion. While this is an important aspect of the history of assimilation by church and state in Canada, the realities of such stereotypes and mistreatment continue on today.

Recognizing the lack of scholarship in the area of Indigenous identity and resurgence, as well as a deficit of Indigenous Traditional Knowledge educational training for both Indigenous and non-Indigenous populations in Canada, the public platform of the museum acts as a possible positive milieu for processes of self-reflection related to colonially-charged behaviours, acknowledgement of the reality of alternate histories in Canada, and acts of resurgence by Indigenous Peoples for Indigenous Peoples that will allow for reconciliation to flourish and thrive. According to Ruth B. Phillips’ Museum Pieces: Toward The Indigenization of Canadian Museums (2011), “Museums and public monuments, it seems, have come to serve as primary barometer of the manner in which public institutions- and, by association their government
sponsors, interpret laws and policies”, reinforcing the centrality of the museum as an arena for excising power, as previously by Tony Bennet (Phillips 2011, 4). While museums retain a legacy of colonialism, as reflected in Phillips assertion of public spaces reflecting government sponsorship, Indigenous resurgence by means of creativity subverts aspects of this control. By reclaiming their authority as the curators, the artists, the creators of their own legacy and future, Indigenous Peoples not only reoccupy public spaces, but also repossess the very institutional mechanism that categorized and ‘primitiv-ized’ them. Mirroring the colonial vision of the ‘Indian Other’ back onto the dominant Settler-European audience, Indigenous creators disturb the status-quo in a manner that forces the ‘colonial social imaginary’ to reassess their role in the imperialist enterprise.

It is with hope that with more radical advocates like Monkman, the endeavours for the resurgence of Indigenous voices, and projects of reconciliation, will come to fruition.
Appendix

Figure 1.

Figure 2.

The Scream (2017, acrylic on canvas).
Figure 3.

*Death of a Virgin (After Caravaggio)* (2016, acrylic on canvas).
Figure 4.

*Cash for Souls* (2016, acrylic on canvas).
Figure 5. 

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