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Abstract

Arguably, all Canadian students should have a profound knowledge of Aboriginal peoples’ contribution to Canada’s development as the original inhabitants of Canada. However, Aboriginal peoples continue to be marginalized as though unimportant, and subordinate to other cultural groups in Canada’s culturally plural society. The Ontario mainstream education system plays an important role in perpetuating these social distances. Under the mandate of the provincial government, the public education system is responsible for the delivery of educational programming to all Ontario students.

In the 1970s, the federal government introduced the concept of multiculturalism to extend citizenship rights to all culturally diverse groups into Canadian society. To help Canada to become more competitive in a globalizing world, the government has sought to change the image of Canada as a White settler state to one of a global and multicultural society. Yet Aboriginal peoples continue to be marginalized in Canada’s socio-cultural landscape in mainstream education, regardless of heightened awareness for their rights and culture, as well as their being recognized as having the fastest growing demographic in Canada. It is in the context of multiculturalism that this thesis examines the influence of multiculturalism on Aboriginal coverage in mainstream school textbooks.

Despite Canada’s proclaimed commitment to multiculturalism, I argue that the production of educational curricula and texts still produces a national imaginary that erases the experiences and concerns of Aboriginal population. Far less effort has been made to change the image of Aboriginal people in that narrative, and how students
imagine a globalizing Canada with little attention given to the ongoing forms of discrimination that affect how Aboriginal peoples interact with the rest of the world.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

In the late 1970s, after much concern expressed by parents, students, employers, and post-secondary educators, the Ontario Ministry of Education initiated a structural review of the Ontario education system. Several major issues precipitated this development: rising unemployment rates; the increased Japanese presence in world trade; the loss of manufacturing jobs in Canada and the need to accommodate changing labour demands; increased immigration; and the growing recognition for Aboriginal rights (King 1980; O'Sullivan 1999; Ohmae 1990; Held 2002). In response to these developments, the Ontario Ministry of Education formed the Secondary Education Research Project (SERP), composed of a variety of people involved in different aspects of education, to make recommendations to improve the Ontario education system (Leithwood 1984).

Following careful examination of the secondary school system, the committee released a report in 1981 that focused on the importance of cultural content in education. Recommendations were directed at the restructuring of how, Canadian History and Geography should reaffirm the concept of Canada as a homeland for diverse peoples who can be proud of their roots and at the same time, work and live together as Canadians. The concept should be sufficiently broad to embrace the contributions of the Inuit and Indian cultures, the two founding peoples (British and French), and the numerous peoples from all parts of the world who have immigrated to Canada over the years to become part of the Canadian mosaic (Leithwood 1984: 34).
Recognizing that due to increased diversity among newcomers and recognition for Aboriginal rights, the demand intensified for the addition of cultural content in Ontario education; the SERP committee’s recommendations called for more focus on the needs of all culturally diverse groups (Committee 1981: 39).

While the committee recognized the need to develop a more culturally inclusive education system, there was a great deal of emphasis placed on Aboriginal issues in education. Some methods that were recommended included pre-service training for faculty to learn about “Native people and their culture, the work situation faced by those who live on reserve lands,” [and] counseling and support services to help Aboriginal peoples overcome the stress of transition from an education system for only Aboriginal students to the mainstream system. The report also recommended that “personnel offering guidance and counseling services to Native students either be Native or have both training and experience in working with them” (Committee 1981: 78; italics mine). Though the SERP report acknowledged the importance of providing support to Aboriginal students in their transition from an exclusively Aboriginal educational system to that of mainstream education, there were no recommendations for the development of programs or information that would enhance non-Aboriginal students’ knowledge and appreciation of Aboriginal peoples. Nor were there opportunities for Aboriginal peoples to assist in the development of Aboriginal content in mainstream programming.
Having been educated in Ontario in the 1970s and 1980s, I remember encountering some Aboriginal content sporadically throughout elementary school, but even less through high school. Elementary school coverage included learning about Aboriginal peoples in a historical context, but it was limited to the identification of Aboriginal peoples as “primitive” and “savage.” The dominant messages were that Aboriginal peoples only lived in teepees, and were usually dressed in loincloths (except for their Eskimo cousins who wore fur-clothing), and drank too much alcohol. Scholarly research confirms that this characterization was not limited to my school or community; such notions were also pervasive through most public schools in Ontario and across Canada (Valaskakis 2003; Paul 2007). Secondary school curricula proved no different and yet, for many non-Aboriginal Ontario citizens, this is the last opportunity to engage in any formal learning. Even for non-Aboriginal students who have received all their elementary and secondary education in Ontario, there is limited opportunity to learn about Aboriginal peoples in mainstream education. In fact, in the Ontario secondary education system, there are only two required courses that include Aboriginal coverage that were necessary for students to graduate between 1988 and 1999: Grade 10 Canadian History and Grade 9 Canadian Geography.

Arguably, all Canadian students should have a profound knowledge of the Aboriginal peoples’ contribution to Canada’s development as the original inhabitants of Canada, and currently as Canada’s fastest growing demographic, exceeding that of newcomers (Frideres 2008). Further, there has been a heightened awareness of Aboriginal
culture and rights partly due to several developments: the 1973 Calder Case; the 1982 repatriation of the Constitution and its mention of Aboriginal rights (section 35); the Supreme Court decisions on Sparrow in 1990 that recognized Aboriginal fishing rights; and the Delgamuukw ruling in 1987 that recognized the importance of Aboriginal oral histories (Saul 2008; Frideres 2008; Dickason 2008). Content should include information of their presence prior to European settlement, throughout the history of Canada, and up to the present challenges posed by Canada’s role as a globalized nation.

Aside from these important and historical legal events, other significant points of recognition should attract mainstream Canada’s attention: land claims issues in Ontario, including Ipperwash, Caledonia, Akwesasne, Tyendinaga, and Ardoch; and the Federal Apology to the former students of the Residential schools. Despite the Ontario government’s recognition of the importance to develop student’s understanding of the effects of globalization; or of Canada’s place in the world; and the social and cultural tools needed to be competitive within it, the education programs that evolved continued to produce a picture of Canada that did little to address the implications of these transformations on Aboriginal communities. These are some of the major issues that suggest an apparent willingness by various organs of the state, including the school system, to avoid open discussion of important Aboriginal issues (Blair 2009; Saul 2007).

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1 Following a Supreme Court of Canada hearing in 1971, the Courts ruled in 1973 for the recognition of the Aboriginal title of the Nisga’a in British Columbia. The Courts recognized that at the time of colonial settlement in the colony of British Columbia that Aboriginal title had been recognized, and had never been lawfully extinguished. The Nisga’a were recognized as a distinct culture from time immemorial.
For this thesis, I have chosen to examine how Aboriginal history, culture, and society is presented in Grade 9 Geography, the *Geography of Canada*. This is an important topic because of the role played by Aboriginal peoples in the development of Canada and ongoing discussions concerning their role in the post-colonial Canadian polity (Blaire 2009; Saul 2007). By conducting a qualitative examination of textbooks used in Grade 9 Geography, this thesis will examine the representation of Aboriginal peoples through text, image and discourse analysis. Locating this study in human geography provides an excellent avenue through which to better understand the evolving relationship through an investigation of societies’ relationship with their environments, cultures, and evolving sense of place (Knox 2007; Hay 2005).

It is in this context that this thesis examines how mainstream Ontario students are exposed to Aboriginal content. Focusing on the period between 1988 and 1999, I examine how the influence of multiculturalism and the recommendations regarding pedagogy and curricula are incorporated into educational texts; and the extent to which the incorporation of multiculturalism has influenced the way that Aboriginal communities are represented. This time period is particularly compelling for a variety of reasons: in 1982 multiculturalism was embedded in the revised Canadian Constitution; according to SERP, the Ministry of Education recognized the need to embrace the cultural diversity and contributions of the Inuit and Aboriginal peoples; however, in the context of multiculturalism Aboriginal peoples are rendered absent. As well, during the time period within the scope of this study (1988-1999), there were three different curriculum
revisions: *Ontario Schools Intermediate Secondary (OSIS)*, The *Common Curriculum*, and the *Ontario Curriculum*. Taken together, these curriculum revisions provide material representations of how state policies are integrated into the education system.

In presenting research findings, I seek to show how the prevalence of Canada’s historic imagined identity continues to profoundly influence contemporary education in Ontario. In the 19th century, nationalizing states developed collective imagined histories through the use of symbolic devices such as national chronicles, didactic monuments, and public commemorations, all of which served to nurture cultural myths and ideologies that were intended to contribute to the development of a cohesive social identity (Osborne 1988; 1992). The concept of nation-building has been a dominant idea in Ontario’s education system that continues to shape the way that Ontario students view Canadian society. Even before Confederation, Egerton Ryerson, Superintendent of Schools, concentrated on the development of an education system that focused on nurturing a shared Canadian imagined history: separate educational programming was set up for non-White students to better learn about White culture (Milloy 1999), and introduce the use of common textbooks determined appropriate by the state (Campbell 1995). These practices in education, used to influence the development of a common culture, continued through the 20th century with the appointment of Lorne Pierce as editor of Ryerson Press, and the deployment of C.W. Jefferys as illustrator. Both of these men were instrumental in proliferating their particular conceptualization of the Canadian imagination: an imaginary
that popularized and propagandized hegemonic conceptualizations of Canadian cultural identities and the notion of collection national imaginary (Osborne 2001; Campbell 1995).

Hidden within the powerful illustrations and text, the underlying objectives of the historic nation-building project can be dangerous. Symbolic devices, such as images depicting Aboriginal peoples as only static representations of the past, are underpinned by larger discourses from the time period in which they were constructed. Illustrations depicting an imagined conceptualization of the past continue to be legitimimized and rendered as part of the Canadian narrative. For instance, the Canadian imagination includes the idea that settlers are responsible for bringing order to Canada’s untouched wilderness, as well as bringing order to the noble savage (Nelles 1999); and that the contributions of Aboriginal peoples were no longer necessary following the fur trade (Innis 2001). Because historic Aboriginal identities are linked to those ideas from the past, romanticized through text and images, Aboriginal peoples become linked to an identity of stasis, and only associated to the past. Thus without a better understanding of the nuances that underpin the symbolically loaded landscape, illustrations, and text, the state education system is able to reinforce historically situated knowledges that do not necessarily challenge historic depictions of the past, and in particular Aboriginal identities.

Because the SERP committee’s recommendations focused on the development of Aboriginal programming for Aboriginal peoples, it is necessary to gain a deeper understanding of how the policies associated with multiculturalism influenced the pedagogies regarding Aboriginal peoples in Ontario education. To help Canada become
more competitive in a globalizing world, the government has sought to change the image of Canada as a White settler state to one of a global and multicultural society. The introduction of multiculturalism in 1971 was the first of a series of policies designed to instill a sense of inclusion for all diverse groups to the Canadian mosaic. However, multiculturalism is unclear in its policies, rendering the goals of such a policy as ambivalent. Scholars have attempted to challenge and gain a better grasp of the underpinnings of the concept of multiculturalism, and its influence on Canadians (Taylor 1994; Kymlicka 2003; Kernerman 2005). Regardless of the various conceptualizations of multiculturalism policies, some scholars agree that a common fundamental base on which to establish cultural practices is necessary. By examining the different approaches to multicultural theory, a common fundamental position is that multiculturalism constitutes a divisive strategy by which culturally diverse groups are marginalized. The establishment of a common base only serves to reinforce dominant ideologies of multicultural citizenship that proliferate Canada’s historic constructed identity. This is why recent scholars have been trying to arouse discussion around the complexity of Aboriginal identity and the multicultural problematic.

Despite Canada’s proclaimed commitment to multiculturalism, the production of educational curricula and texts still produces a national imaginary that erases the experiences and concerns of its Aboriginal population. My objective is to examine how the education system embraced the vision of multiculturalism, by examining how it is reflected in the curricula and Grade 9 Geography textbooks between 1988 and 1999; and
how this vision, in turn, shapes how students come to learn about and understand Aboriginal peoples in the context of globalization. In restructuring the education system, this has emerged as a significant point of concern: far less effort has been made to change the image of Aboriginal people in that narrative; how students imagine a globalizing Canada that is still embedded in a narrative that casts Aboriginal peoples as a static and immortalized *other*; and a nation that pays little attention to ongoing forms of discrimination that continue to affect how Aboriginal peoples interact with the global.
Chapter 2

Nation-building and new Canadians: Contextualizing Aboriginal identity in Canada

Deeply entrenched in Ontario’s education system is a constructed collective national imaginary, one that, paradoxically, has excluded and marginalized culturally diverse groups for the sake of nurturing a sense of cohesion between Canadian citizens. The politics of nationalism includes “forgetting of the historical and cultural idiosyncrasies of specific nation-state formations: (Ang and Stratton 1996). Indeed an arsenal of symbolic devices has contributed to the construction of a hegemonic, cultural landscape that acts as a text, and shapes how citizens think about their own identities as well as how they view the world. This ongoing nation-building project has been instilled through education. However, since the 1960s, the traditional and static constructed imagination has been challenged by dramatic changes in Canada’s cultural composition.

As Canada has become more culturally diverse, with the continuous entry of non-Western European immigrants, the federal government has moved toward reinforcing the collective national imaginary. Multiculturalism policies, rolled out by the federal government have attempted to nurture cultural inclusivity, yet are considered
assimilationist and viewed as perpetuating notions of colonialism (Schick and St. Denis 2003). By examining the evolution of immigration patterns in Canada, we are able to gain a more thorough understanding of how these policies have determined the socio-spatialization of culturally diverse groups in Canada. It is in this context that this thesis argues that it is essential for teachers in mainstream education to have a more thorough and nuanced understanding of what is presented as fact in textbooks and to provide students with the tools necessary to thoroughly assess and work through hegemonic narratives, and state sanctioned information and curricula. A review of the relevant literature on nation-building; the emerging dependence of Aboriginal people following the decline of the fur trade and the way in which historiography and historical knowledge are used to relay information to students demonstrates the extent to which hidden values of assimilation and marginalization are entrenched in multicultural education.

**Nation-building as project**

By unpacking the various concepts that contribute to the national imaginary, it is important to gain a sense of the complexities that underpin the construction and perpetuation of the nation-building agenda. Situated in “an invented history; and ground[ed] in an imagined geography” (Osborne 2001: 39), the constructed national imagination continues as a dominant meta-narrative in Ontario education. By examining the components that comprise the imagined construct, and viewing them as a palimpsest rather than a solely linear transmission of stasis, we are better able to identify and critique
how Ontario citizens’ views of Canadian history and identity are shaped, and continue to be shaped and disseminated.

The development of the national imaginary is a “willed merger of national and dynastic empire” (Anderson 1991: 84). It may be argued that the Canadian nation-building project reflects the mission of other young nation states emerging out of colonial pasts to nurture a common sense of shared history and destiny. Richard Schein (1997) points out that the components of the nation-state are “modeled after American and French influences and become modular in turn” (Schein 1997: 675): political independence; the growth of state power; the development of military might; and the consolidation of territory (Giddens 1987; Mann 1993 in Osborne 2001: 161). Somewhat paradoxically, by drawing from these constituents of Empire, these influences may be appropriated as one of the tropes for instilling a sense of legitimacy for the nascent state (Osborne 1998; 2001; 2004). The legacies of colonialism, then, remain instrumental to the institution of nation-building.

Such nationalizing states have focused on the development of a collective history that is perpetuated through shared historical experiences. Accordingly, the formation of state-nationalism makes use of “many devices and agencies to create an emotional bonding with particular histories and geographies” (Osborne 2001: 39). In particular, the late nineteenth century was witness to many exercises in the construction and celebration of “invented traditions” (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1993: 278), by “imagined communities” (Anderson 1991: 181). In Canada’s case, the construction of a transcontinental railway,
the erection of numerous commemorative monuments, and the staging of various ceremonies and pageants, all contribute to the celebration of the Canadian collective imaginary (Gordon 2001; Nelles 1999; Osborne 1992; 2001; 2004; Pearson 2002). It is in this sharing and construction of memory, or the “glue” that binds the imagined community together, where the influence of the nation-building agenda resides.

However, there is a danger in relying on the social construction of imagined identities, and the way in which particular strategies are used in the development of collective imaginations. Significant moments in history are often elevated into iconic landmarks of social and national development. They are then rendered through various mnemonic devices, such as commemorative calendars, historical chronicles, portrait statues and monuments, and ritualized commemorative re-enactments. Such interventions attempt to render a collective identity, but they often serve to cast in stone, bronze, texts, and ritual values and meanings that are, thus, fossilized rather than allowed to evolve through time. Taken together, the “landscape-as-text becomes one moment framed by and constitutive of larger discourses” (Schein 1997: 675). Accordingly, students, citizens, and historians consider both the context in which such histories were constructed and established, and seek to critically analyze their continued presence in the context of their own times (Kearns 2007; Osborne 2004).

A distinction between memory and history allows historical memory to be altered when viewed through current ways of knowing (Lowenthal 1975, 1998). In current times, when memory is used to understand historical moments, it risks becoming more
oscopic and narrow-like, enabling brief moments of history to be limited and altered by the individual (Coates 2002). For example, the memory and symbolic significance of Madeleine de Verchères has remained iconic in Québec’s historical geography. Verchères, the daughter of a Seigneur is credited in fighting off the Iroquois in their attempts to raid her family’s fort in the late 17th century. Venerated as hero, symbolic devices such as monuments and the naming of streets after Verchères continue to remind Québec citizens of how settlers fought off the dangerous Iroquois (Coates 2002; italics mine), without considering Aboriginal perspectives and values. The viewing of these mnemonic devices as symbols of Québec life glorifies the colonial acts of power, superiority, and a static conceptualization of history, while on the other hand facilitates contemporary conceptualizations of historical events and relationships between different cultural groups under historical interpretation.

Some argue that by recognizing the dynamics of living history, commemorative devices provide opportunities to acknowledge and re-conceptualize former ways of viewing linear history and how culture changes through time (Manning 2003; Appadurai 1981; Anderson 1991). When we place monuments and commemorations in their original context, we gain and regain new opportunities to better understand the dynamic and constructed nature of the Canadian nation. But, as we have already seen, as texts must be interpreted, they too are unfixed. Cultural change and the decline of the British Empire have contributed to society’s re-evaluation of certain idols and ways of knowing.
Throughout the settlement experience and prior to any governance structure in the colony, engaging a sense of the colonial imagination was instrumental to attracting European settlers. Expansion to the new colony was largely reliant upon the development of an appropriative and hierarchical colonial imagination (Dominquez 1987; Valaskakis 2005). For instance, the idea of wilderness was something to be conquered by European settlers, rather than preserved and respected (Castree 2005). The use of romantic paintings was a popular way of enticing settlers during the 19th century in both Canada and across the United States (Demeritt 2001; Willems-Braun 1997). Many of these images promoted by the colonial government suggested an untouched and primordial landscape (Demeritt 2001; Neumann 1998), ripe for settlement and in need of taming (Cameron 1997; Cronon 1982; Cruikshank 2005; Castree 2005; Mackey 1999; Osborne 1992; 1998; 2006). Images depicted wonders like Niagara Falls, vast mountain ranges, and rich vegetation highlighted by luminous backgrounds, promising the anticipation of unheralded opportunities that were closely connected to God (Cronon 1995: 75, 79).

Such images that were well lodged in the collective memories of settlers reinforced notions of colonial power and hierarchy over both land and Indigenous peoples. *A View of the Horseshoe Falls of Niagara* (1799) (Fig. 2.1) points to the European perception of the Aboriginal identity. Where Aboriginal peoples were included as part of the untamed landscape, they too were considered as untamed and in need of civilization (Demeritt 2001: 27). While the focus on such primordial activities as fishing or hunting was merely exercises in artistic staffage, they did serve to imprint Aboriginal peoples’ “primitive”
role, and lowly and romanticized position in the Western cultural hierarchy (Revie 2003: 44). Certainly, they contributed much to popularizing and situating Aboriginal peoples in a permanent and unchanging part of the colonial imagination. Clearly, it is important that students be made aware of the presence of these hidden but pervasive representations of Aboriginal peoples and the putative role they are supposed to have played in the national meta-narrative.

Figure 2.1 A View of the Horseshoe Falls of Niagara, Isaac Weld 1799 (Revie 2003)
The Emergence of an Aboriginal Dependency

The relationship between nations, colonial companies, and Aboriginal peoples that evolved over four centuries, demonstrates the emergence of Aboriginal dependency in Canada. The romanticization of the apparently empty landscape, energized the material process and moral imperative for occupying the nation’s unsettled lands (Osborne 1998). Both the “staples thesis” and “mercantilism” theorize the links between Canadian economic development, global trade, and immigration and how they affected the nation’s Aboriginal peoples. Harold Innis (2001) suggests that Canadian economic development was established through trade involving such commodities as fur, fish, timber, and minerals (Innis 2001). Mercantilism illustrates the importance of the state’s control over foreign trade and access to commodities; together access to resources, and the ability to trade were thought to ensure the security of the colonial state (Stoler 1989, 2000). Since the 17th century, the development of the fur trade was the beginning of an inter-dependent relationship between European and Aboriginal cultures that lasted for over two centuries (Innis 2001; Ray 1974; Harris 2002).

However, by the late 18th century, the inter-dependency between the Cree, Assiniboine, and Ojibwe bands, and Europeans had shifted to a state of dependency. Aboriginal groups experienced a greater reliance upon the supply of such European goods as guns, ammunition, tools, tobacco, and alcohol (Ray 1974: 87; Dickason 2002). No

2 For more on Staples Theories and Mercantilism in relation to the exploitation of Canadian natural resources in colonial times see How Did Colonialism Dispossess? Cole Harris 2002, and The Fur Trade in Canada, Harold Innis 2001.
longer were European fur traders reliant on Aboriginal peoples’ grounded knowledge. A decline in the demand of furs from Europe, dwindling fur supplies due to increased trapping by White trappers, and improved transportation and hunting technologies all contributed to the decline of the importance of Aboriginal peoples to the colonial power structure (Frideres 2008; Harris 2002; Innis 2001; Ray 1974). As well, while Aboriginal allies had played a crucial role in the War of 1812, subsequently, they became less important to the security of British North America. Thus by the 1830s, the British were focusing on settling and developing the colony which included instituting a system of dispossession and disenfranchisement from Aboriginal peoples (Valaskakis 2005; Frideres 2008; Paul 2006).

**Negotiating Canada’s historic cultural landscape**

The absence of a critical analysis of the complex and often unrevealing meanings of symbolic devices have contributed to the way students learn to misinterpret, alter existing meanings, and further perpetuate dubious notions of identity. Take, for example, the images painted by the Group of Seven (Figure 2.2), which have been so closely tied to Canada’s collective identity. For some, images depicting pure and untouched northern landscapes are representative of Canadian identity while, for others, they represent contested landscapes (Osborne 1998; 2004). Erin Manning (2003) suggests that instead of adopting a linear and static view of Canadian identity through the Group of Seven’s work, a process of negotiation should occur, allowing the introduction of new ways of viewing
old ideologies. In particular, Bakhtin’s idea of chronotopes provides for an interdependency between time and space (Manning 2003). Landscapes can be regarded as such chronotopes, in that “a locality is the trace of an event, a trace of what had shaped it. Such is the logic of all local myths and legends that attempt, through history, to make sense out of space” (Bakhtin 1981 in Manning 2003: 15). Recognizing that iconic Canadian images can represent both an idyllic Canadian wilderness while also representing sites of contention, allows some degree of dialogue (Manning 2003).

Figure 2.2 Stormy Weather, Fred Varley 1921 (Tippet 1998)
In this way, Manning demonstrates a dialectical approach to viewing multiculturalism through a contemporary interpretation of landscape that subverts the unitary and naturalized narrative of Canadian nationalism (Manning 2003: 25). By highlighting artist Jin-me-Yoon’s *Group of Sixty-Seven*, in which portraits of Vancouver’s Korean community are superimposed in front of Canadian landscapes, she creates a “contentious internal liminality” (Bhabha 1994 in Manning 2003: 26). By framing images of Canada’s evolving multicultural landscape against a backdrop depicting a static and Canadian landscape, Yoon “displaces the external narrative of the nation, addressing its complexities from within, thus undermining its apparent stability and cohesion” (Manning 2003: 26).

![Figure 2.3 Group of Sixty-seven, Yoon 1996 (Manning 2003)](image)
Manning’s observation of internal liminality highlights the need to re-examine the concept of multiculturalism, and question its structure and complexities. Though Yoon’s work raises important questions about the need for more recognition of Canada’s evolving cultural landscape, it is also necessary to recognize the foundation to which these images are placed. The *Group of Sixty Seven* is more than just a call for more recognition of Canada’s changing cultural landscape; but it also suggests that cultural diversity is placed upon the very bedrock or foundation of Canadian stasis. In other words, the cores of Canadian nationalism, based on historic notions of a collective identity, are unchanging.

An examination of immigration policies in Canada provides insight into the prominence of Canada’s historic collective identity as it is entrenched in multiculturalism policies. As non-western European immigration increased and challenged traditional and static notions of the Canadian identity, the Royal Commission on Biculturalism and Bilingualism (1963) challenged the way Canadians were encouraged to think about the identities of culturally diverse groups (Mackey 1999: 63). The introduction of the *New Immigration Act* (1967) essentially removed substantial barriers to diverse groups, granting access into Canada to many immigrants that had been previously excluded because of disabilities or countries of origin (Mazurek 1986). Since the 1960s, immigration to Canada had been increasing in numbers, but also included newcomers from primarily non-European nations, marking a dramatic transition in Canada’s cultural composition from the earlier decades (Mackey 1999). Early policies restricted entry into Canada based on newcomers’ physical ability to cope with Canada’s harsh climates, as
established by the *Immigration Act* (1907, 1911) (Mazurek 1987; Kelley and Trebilcock 2010). In 1967, Canada essentially opened its doors and permitted the diversification of the cultural landscape by allowing immigrants from other non-European nations including those that had been classified as part of the Third World (Bouchard 2005).

As a result of transitioning immigration patterns, the Federal government recognized the importance of developing a framework to accommodate the multiple cultural groups. The concept of multiculturalism is confusing and a contradiction in terms: “From colonial times to the present, intellectuals, politicians of every hue, activists, state institutions, and businesses have sought to define, defend and differentiate Canadian identity” (Mackey 1999: 9). They have challenged how Canadians view their citizenship, moving the Canadian government to encourage them to assert the importance of Canada’s emerging multicultural composition. For newcomers, the idea of multiculturalism suggests that there are opportunities for the myriad of culturally diverse groups, living within a common boundary, to maintain connections with their places of origin, while also exercising their freedom to sustain religious, language, and cultural practices (Manning 2003). Recognizing that this classification was problematic and could be detrimental to the development of Canadian culture (as non-European immigration continued to increase), Prime Minister Pierre Elliott Trudeau released the first of several multiculturalism policies to be introduced over the next two decades (Mackey 1999).

In Canada, multiculturalism came into being as a logical application of federal government policy on the management of diversity. Unlike the United States, Canada has
an official ‘multicultural policy’. It is contained within a revised Canadian Constitution that “recognizes the importance of preserving and enhancing the multicultural heritage of Canadians ...[and] the diversity of Canadians as it regards race, national or ethnic origin, color and religion as a fundamental characteristic of Canadian society” (The Canadian Multicultural Act, 1988). However, while the Policy makes clear that multiculturalism is henceforth to be considered part of the official fabric of Canadian society, the goals of such a policy are ambivalent. Although in places the policy would appear to proclaim a state of cultural democracy, where no ethnic group takes precedence over any other, elsewhere it makes clear that this programme exists ‘within a bilingual [English/French] framework’. Indeed, the referential values of the terms ‘cultural groups’ and ‘other Canadians’ do not appear to include those Canadians of Anglo and Celtic origin. Within these terms of debate, as it were, culture is perceived as being located in and displayed by people who are from somewhere foreign and whose primary language is neither English nor French (Walcott, 1996; Bannerji, 1997; James, 1999). Holding that lack of knowledge of and contact between cultural groups contributes to ignorance, a condition manifested in ethnocentrism and prejudice, the policy further articulates a goal of learning about the other through cultural programmes that provide information and encourage contact. (James and Schecter 2003: 29, italics mine).

The purpose of Trudeau’s new Multiculturalism policy (1971) is perceived as serving different purposes. “The shift to multiculturalism represented an attempt to redefine the symbolic system’ of Canada” (Breton 1988: 39-40). While some argue that the
policy was meant to “undercut Québec’s demands for special recognition” (Mackey 1999: 64), others suggest that the policy was in response to the demands of the “newer ‘visible minority’ immigrants” (Angel 1988: 26). Because there remains a predominant understanding of what constitutes Canadian identity, and that it is restricted to the categorization of three dominant cultural identities, different conceptualizations of these predominant identities influence how identity is understood.

A settler colony with official policies of multiculturalism and bilingualism, Canada has an official national culture which is not ‘homogeneous in its Whiteness’ but rather replete with images of Aboriginal peoples and people of colour. The state sanctioned proliferation of cultural difference (albeit limited to specific forms of allowable difference) seems to be the defining characteristic of Canada (Mackey 1999: 8).

In other words, because culturally diverse groups are classified under overarching labels, such as Euro-Canadian, non-European immigrants, and Aboriginal peoples, there is an opportunity to avoid recognizing cultural difference. Instead, cultural groups become classified under an overarching categories such as “immigrants” or “Aboriginal peoples”; and then culturally diverse groups become clustered together in sub-groups are similar regardless of their origin, cultures, languages, religious beliefs, etc. For instance, all newcomer groups or people who have relocated to Canada from non-western European nations are classified as ‘immigrants’, while all Indigenous groups are classified as ‘Aboriginal peoples’.

While the federal government was focused on the process of situating newcomers into the mosaic of Canadian citizenship, there was some energy devoted to the growing
attention on Aboriginal rights. Following the release of the Immigration Act (1967), but before the release of the Multiculturalism policy (1971), the federal government issued the White Paper (1969). It proposed that Aboriginal peoples be included into mainstream Canadian society, replete with all the opportunities and benefits of mainstream Canadian society” (Turner 2006: 16). Following consultations with Aboriginal peoples, the government purported that the White Paper could potentially “solve Canada’s century-long Indian problem, yet Aboriginal views were nowhere to be found” (Turner 2006: 16, 19; italics mine). The White Paper proved to be a failed attempt at working toward any significant political changes for Aboriginal peoples. When the federal government followed up with multiculturalism, it was viewed as nothing more than a way to further marginalize Aboriginal peoples from the mainstream.

Recognizing that the federal government was making few efforts to better recognize Aboriginal peoples in a multicultural context, some Aboriginal groups realized that they would need to initiate their own grass roots initiatives. For instance, the publication, An Unjust Society by Cree writer Harold Cardinal, initiated momentum for Aboriginal rights, empowering four national Indigenous groups in Canada: The Native Council of Canada; the National Indian Brotherhood, later to become the Assembly of First Nations; the Native Women’s Association of Canada; and the Métis National Council. Though Aboriginal groups were consulted and eventually contributed to the reshaping of the repatriated Constitution in 1982, the legacies of colonialism underpinning multiculturalism continued to persist. “Colonialism has stained the legal and political
relationship; its main consequence has been that Aboriginal peoples have been physically, politically, and socially relegated to the margins of Canadian society; … [and] have not participated effectively in the legal and political practices of the Canadian state” (Turner 2006: 30). These few examples of some Aboriginal initiatives serve to demonstrate the extent to which Aboriginal peoples have recognized how they are rendered absent in the context of multiculturalism.

It is in the examination of multiculturalism as a concept that we recognize that *multi*-culturalism in Canada is not necessarily all encompassing or inclusive, but definitive and particular in its approach. For many Canadians, they are not necessarily aware that Aboriginal groups are not part of the multicultural narrative. Aboriginal groups, such as those in the political sphere, provide an example of the location of non-dominant groups in relation to dominant policy-makers. While immigrant groups are included within the mandate of Canada’s Multiculturalism policies, Aboriginal nations in Canada continue to be ignored or considered to be outside of the multiculturalism sphere. Recognizing that these policies distinguish Aboriginal peoples from both dominant and immigrant groups supports the importance of examining the different constitutive forces that contribute to cultural ignorance and marginalization.
Chapter 3

Nationalism and new identities in Ontario textbooks

The Ontario education system participates in cultivating and perpetuating of the historic collective Canadian imaginary, despite dramatic shifts in Canada’s cultural landscape over the last fifty years. Though culturally diverse groups have become increasingly more present in the negotiations of a contemporary collective Canadian imagination, there continues to be a significant influence over cultural identities that are entrenched in colonialisms. The Ontario education system has played a key role in the perpetuation of such ideologies through the organization of the structure of the education system and the way in which information has been delivered to students through time.

The development the Canadian national imaginary has been important as part of the mission of the Ontario public education system from the earliest days of organization under the leadership of Egerton Ryerson. As early as 1846, Ryerson’s primary focus for Ontario education was to develop a suitable labour force, and to build social cohesion amongst the growing settler population (Houston 1987; Oliver 1984). Adopted by the colonial intelligentsia, from the Irish education model, the education system was initially
designed exclusively to develop elite children as Upper Canada’s future leaders (Houston 1988; Davies 1999). As the Minister of Education in Upper Canada from 1842 to 1876, Ryerson’s vision included the development of an inclusive education system that accommodated both race and class (Sears 2007). Part of his plan included a non-denominational school separating church and state. However, his conceptualization of inclusivity was limited to the predominantly White Christian settler community forming in Ontario; and although his ideas were considered progressive for the time, they set a dangerous and enduring paradigm within Ontario education.

Ryerson’s conceptualization of social cohesion was divisive and racializing, segregating non-White students from the White mainstream students (Oliver 1984: 8). Hegemonic ideals of the responsibilities and purpose of the education system instilled implicit boundaries between groups of students. Dominant White Euro-Canadian students were separated from non-White students in both the physical separation of teaching locations and through the pedagogies regarding the segregated groups. During the mid 19th century, non-White students were racialized through the separation of Black from White children into different classrooms, and also the placement of Aboriginal children into boarding schools (Carney 1995; Houston 1988).

The establishment of Aboriginal boarding schools in 1845 was considered a method of aggressive assimilation, instilling in Aboriginal children the fundamentals of Christianity, labour education, and foreign languages (Fournier 1997; Carney 1995; Brehaut 1984; Mackey 1999). These Residential schools were the main form of educating
Aboriginal students for over a century, until 1974 when the last institution closed in Ontario (Nations 2010). In Residential boarding schools, Aboriginal students were distanced, not only from their cultures, but also from the other students within the mainstream education system. Forbidden to practice non-Western languages or traditions while in the Residential schools, Aboriginal students, able to return home each summer, found themselves in a social void and distanced from their own cultures (Atleo 2008; Ghosh 2004; Milloy 1999). Such segregation contributed to the development of an epistemological ignorance sustaining dominant groups. Though Residential schools are not necessarily within the scope of this research, acknowledging their existence provides us with another example of how Aboriginal cultures and traditions were separated from the mainstream system. The separation experienced by mainstream and Aboriginal students, arguably, facilitates a culture of ignorance that prevented mainstream students from associating with or learning about Aboriginal students through day-to-day contact.

Despite the recognition of the legacy of problems arising from the segregation of Aboriginal students in the Residential School system, the state has also allowed the continuation of socially separating Aboriginal students from the mainstream through a jurisdictional divide in the education system³. When the education system was decentralized and transferred to the provincial governments by the British North America Act (Constitution Act 1867), control over Aboriginal peoples (and also their education)

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³I refer to all other non-Aboriginal groups as the rest of Canadians as an alternative to using the term the dominant majority. Currently, a great deal of literature refers to Euro-Canadians as “the dominant majority”, however with the extent of non-European migration continually increasing; I hesitate referring to the White Western population as dominant. For more on this please refer to Citizens Plus: Aboriginal Peoples and the Canadian State, Cairns, 2000.
continued to remain under the federal government (Mazurek 1987; Mazurek 1986). Aboriginal education under the federal system is more common in remote locations across Ontario and on several reserves in the far north. This education system includes instruction in various Aboriginal languages, but only extending to grade six in some locations, while up to grade nine in others (Dickason 2002). Once Aboriginal students complete their education under the federal system in their local communities, they are faced with the decision to relocate to another community, essentially forced to decide between culture and family, and education (Laczko 1995; Mailhot 2006). So, when Aboriginal students choose to continue their schooling, and are ready to continue under the mainstream system, non-Aboriginal students have had very little exposure to Aboriginal cultures and traditions. Most difficulties encountered by Aboriginal students are upon entering the mainstream education system in Grade 9 (Valaskakis 2005). The challenges of transitioning to the mainstream system posit a series of difficulties that are encountered by Aboriginal peoples as they are thrust into a foreign education system, and with students that have minimal knowledge of their culture and traditions. The lack of exposure to knowledge of Aboriginal cultures by mainstream students is a key argument of this thesis.

While some Aboriginal students choose to continue with their education past Grade 6 and/or 9 the onus is placed on the individual Aboriginal student to blend into the mainstream system, whereas most non-Aboriginal students are never faced with having to transition over to an entirely foreign education system. The largest numbers of Aboriginal
students drop out of the education system at the point where they are required to enter the mainstream system. Dickason (2002) points out that between 1951 and 1964 there was a 94 percent dropout rate of Aboriginal students from across Canada, before they even reached high school (Dickason 2002). School statistics reveal only the numbers of Aboriginal students that have not completed high school. However these numbers fail to explain why Aboriginal education rates are disproportionate to the rest of Canadian society (Mackey 1999; Laczko 1995). Also, not typically included as part of the statistical analysis is in fact that most of the Aboriginal students that had not fully completed the requirements set forward by the mainstream system were educated in Residential schools.

So, while a review of the Residential school system, and the jurisdictional divide for Aboriginal students is not necessarily within the scope of this research project, it is necessary to point out that these ways of separating Aboriginal from mainstream students only serve to exacerbate the problems of ignorance that extend from a lack of Aboriginal exposure to other students.

It is worth recognizing that it was not until after 1999 that the Ontario government made attempts at introducing a suite of educational programmes that were directed toward the preservation and perpetuation of Aboriginal cultures. A brief survey of this programming revealed that despite the Ministry of Education’s intention to make a concerted effort to address the need for Aboriginal educational content, this effort again demonstrates how Aboriginal content is kept out of the mainstream. While this suite of Aboriginal-specific programming is considered as part of the mainstream education
system, it is offered to only sporadic locations across Ontario: primarily schools located in remote Northern and Aboriginal communities that host Aboriginal-specific programming, limiting access of Aboriginal cultures and traditions to non-Aboriginal students. Even with the development of a more intensive Aboriginal-specific programming, there continues to be a social divide through the way in which this sort of programming is offered⁴.

**Textual imaginary**

Textbooks in Ontario education have played a significant role in delivering common information, deemed important by the state to students across the province. Over time various efforts have been made by the Ministry of Education to introduce textbooks that would include relevant content, but also continue to embrace the national imaginary. In 1846, Ryerson received authorization to develop a provincial regulatory board that would govern the selection and authorization of textbooks for use in Ontario schools. Each year, the regulatory board was asked to compile a list of textbooks deemed suitable for Ontario schools; but only textbooks selected from these lists were eligible for state subsidization (Anderson 2003).

This implementation of common textbooks posed several challenges in determining what common criteria was to be included. Because Ryerson’s main objective

⁴ For further information on more current Aboriginal content in mainstream education, refer to the Ontario Ministry of Education website: ([http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/](http://www.edu.gov.on.ca/eng/)), under Aboriginal education.
was to deliver common information to students, the Board of Education had to rely on the
conditions of supply. Providing enough textbooks to schools across the province left the
Board of Education with no other alternative than to purchase its supply first from Ireland,
and then eventually from the United States (Parvin 1965: 35). After twenty years of
distributing foreign-published textbooks, the Board of Education acknowledged that to
fulfill their mandate of contributing to the development of a socially cohesive agenda, they
needed to begin distributing textbooks with more relevant Canadian content (Parvin 1965:
39). Because part of the mandate of the Federal government, the local (Ontario) education
system was focused on nurturing a sense of social cohesion. Textbooks began including a
definitive nationalist component that was linked to “an exercise in patriotic or civic
propaganda” (K. Osborne 2002).

The appointment of Lorne Pierce to Ryerson’s publishing company in 1920 was
integral to the reinforcement of the Canadian imaginary in textbooks. Immediately
following his arrival at Ryerson press, Pierce, committed to building the concept of
cultural nationalism, and “rapidly [made] himself a central figure … [among] a web of
popularizers and propagandists who served as the channel whereby the work of Canadian
artists and intellectuals was funneled to the people” (Campbell 1995: 94). Pierce believed
in the power of literature and art to “foster national myths, heroes and symbols” (Campbell
1995: 94). Aspiring to cultivate his vision of cultural nationalism in textbooks, Pierce hired
artist, C.W. Jefferys in 1930 to enhance his bold nationalist messages with particularly
mythic illustrations (Campbell 1995: 93).
Visual imagery

The addition of C.W. Jefferys’ images to textbooks had a profound impact on the way students began interpreting and understanding the Canadian national imaginary. The addition of images to textbooks enhanced and altered the embedded narratives through a visual interpretation of the artist: Jefferys’ mythologizing interpretation of the Canadian imaginary embodied his particular interpretation of Canada’s national identity.

Some argue that artists have had a powerful role in this process as interpreters of the essence of the experience of nationhood. Often, artistic imaginations are rooted in their lived-in worlds and their creative responses may informally contribute new and insightful dimensions to their culture-group’s identification with their locus (Osborne in Baker and Biger 1992: 232).

His interpretations became iconographic tropes of salient points in history, such as settlers’ expansion to the West and the contact between settlers and Aboriginal peoples, and even a symbiotic relationship between French and English colonizers (Campbell 1995).

Jefferys’ role was more than that of illustrator, but of mythmaker. He was driven by the desire to re-create historic images that “[got] away from dull vignettes of historic events … [and] make them step down off their plinths and live” (Campbell 1995: 99). His work illustrated his own rendition of the relationships between Aboriginal peoples, and “early discoverers and missionaries from objects found by digging the sites of their habitation” (Jefferys 1942). Jefferys essentially sculpted Canadian historic figures in
stigmatized roles featuring Aboriginal peoples as primitive, and White men as heroic and courageous. His portrayal of the relationship between Étienne Brûlé and the Aboriginal peoples, as depicted in Figure 3.1, emphasized a difference in the social spatiality between different cultural groups: the Aboriginal figure stands behind and below Brûlé as though subordinate, looking up to him for guidance. Powerful images altered the way students viewed and learned to understand the role of Aboriginal peoples and colonizers that lead us to “question the values of the artist and his contemporaries” (Campbell 1995: 101). From the 1930s to the 1960s textbook publications under Lorne Pierce (accompanied by the illustrations of Jefferys) remained the most popular textbooks in the Ontario education market, embedding notions of colonialism, heroism, and the primordial.
Hidden values in textbooks

The shifting cultural polity in the 1960s, 1970s, and 1980s precipitated the need to challenge the existing post-colonial imagination and pervasive notions of Empire. The first studies in the 1960s that touched on the marginalization of culturally diverse groups in textbooks were conducted in Manitoba (Clark 2007). Unsettling findings pointed out the racialization of cultural groups in textbooks, and in turn, sparked a large-scale review in Ontario in the 1970s. Part of the 1971 Ontario Human Rights Commission report on Aboriginal content in Ontario textbooks examined the difference between history
textbooks between 1911 and 1931, and those that were presently in circulation. Earlier textbooks reviewed in the study described Aboriginal peoples by “their dark complexions and coarse dark hair”, and characterized their behaviour as “lazy and childlike” (Clark 2007: 95). The Commissions inquiry revealed that in the textbooks published in the early 1970s there was a noticeable use of less harsh language than those previously in circulation; however, the findings of both the Ontario and the Manitoba studies continued to draw attention to the “negative stereotyping, errors of fact, and glaring omissions” (Clark 2007: 99) Though it was considered that the position on the language used in defining Aboriginal peoples had improved, the discourse that presented Aboriginal cultures remained influenced by the dominant White Euro-Canadian perspective, and absent of Aboriginal contributions.

The realization of non-material representations of the colonial imagination, which began building momentum in the 1970s, prompted further studies into the need for more cultural content in education. The education structure provided an ideal platform for students to gain a more, well rounded understanding of culturally diverse students through engagement, however, the prevailing system was set up in such a way that Western methods were presented as norm (Rezai-Rashti 2008; Schick and St. Denis 2003).

This means that the hegemonic curriculum developed through the state education system comes to define ‘knowledge’, marginalizing other experiences and ways of knowing the world. This has specific implications for class, gender and ethnic inequality as particular ways of learning and particular kinds of knowledge – most often associated with middle and ruling classes, men and people from particular European backgrounds – acquire official status while others are relegated to the sidelines (Connell 1993: 37).
While this research may have generated attention to the need for greater Aboriginal awareness in textbook coverage, colonial narratives continued to suffuse the values by which Aboriginal coverage is implemented.

The use of less abrasive language in the 1980s might suggest that there were significant improvements over previous textbooks. A study of Ontario History textbooks in 1981, revealed that there were additions to Aboriginal coverage in relation to the overall amount of content: perceived improvements were credited to both increased awareness and improved scholarship on Aboriginal peoples in Canada (Clark 2007). Some argue that the use of less dehumanizing language and more generalized ways of referencing culturally diverse groups through the 1980s were attributed to more awareness of racial issues (Montgomery 2005: Dove 2005). However, this way of thinking is problematic and dangerous as it pays little attention to day-to-day banal racism (Rezai-Rashti 2008), while reinforcing dominance and racial ignorance (St. Denis and Schick 2003).

Within colonial power, lies a misconception of what constitutes racism preventing those within the education system from highlighting all but the extreme and publicized cases (Montgomery 2005). In their examination of social science textbooks, Rezai-Rashti (2008) argues that banal forms of racism go unnoticed by most mainstream students because their conceptualization of racism derives mostly from the news media (Rezai-
Rashtī 2008). Because the news media typically highlights the more extreme measures of violence and racism, then students tend to associate racism to only violent acts. When students are then only exposed to extreme cases, daily forms of racialized behaviours are not recognized, enabling the proliferation and perpetuation of an epistemological ignorance (Selznick 2002; Cherubini 2008; Clark 2007; Bailey 2007; Martin Alcoff 2007). Thus daily acts of racism that are not physically violent go unrecognized by most students (Rezai-Rashtī 2008).

When examining the role of education in cultural awareness, hidden values are constituted through action and/ or inaction, inclusion and/ or absence. Arguably, it is dangerous enough to altogether ignore racial and culture issues (St Denis and Schick 2003); however, it is even more damaging to touch upon and minimize the magnitude of racist behaviours. For instance, by considering how mainstream Canadians have been taught to think about the Residential School experience: the majority of Canadians are more familiar with the Apology and the Common Experience Payment by the federal government, rather than with the horrific details of the lives of the students (Llewellyn 2002). Depending on how and if this incident may be introduced as part of Aboriginal coverage determines how mainstream students will think about Aboriginal peoples and the experiences of Aboriginal students from the Residential School system. In examining the textbooks in this research project, it is not only important to identify the overt forms of prejudice, but it is imperative to think about what is absent from the way information is relayed in textbooks.
Methodology

Contemporary research requires a compilation of various conceptual approaches and methods of inquiry. The study of people, places, discourses, and landscape all contribute to a more in depth understanding of environment, social process and experiences (Hay 2005). A study of the Ontario education system is crucially important as it provides insight into the effects of the social, political, and economic activities of Ontario on education, and suggests how education in turn affects daily life. Changes in the Ontario education system are cyclical, and also demonstrate the influence and relationship between governance and politics. As an apparatus of the state, the education system reveals how, from the early stages of organized government, the colonial discourse remains as a fixed variable of education. By examining the hidden elements of the various components of the education system, such as the content of policies, curriculum, and textbooks, even under increasing global economic pressure, the influx of non-European immigrants, and more recognition for Aboriginal rights, there remains an underlying presence of the colonial imagination that continues to determine the way Ontarians are informed about how to view the world.

Textual Analysis

The focus of this study is on the particulars of how a required high school geography course and its accompanying documentation, one way or another, exposes students to the
history and role of Aboriginal peoples in Canada: Grade 9 Geography – Geography of Canada – covers both physical and human aspects of the subject, introducing secondary school students to a wide variety of topics within a geographical framework about Canada. The course is required for all Ontario students graduating with an Ontario High School Diploma. My analysis includes textual analysis, image analysis, and discourse analysis of the various documents and books that all contribute to the programs’ development and delivery. These documents include policy documents from the federal and provincial governments, textbooks from the Grade 9 Geography program extending from 1988 to 2002, and systems put in place that direct the educational process. Included in this research is a review of a comprehensive and collaborative series of policy documents, curriculum, and textbooks that include text and images. First, it was necessary to conduct a holistic overview of the collection, while searching for salient themes (Merriam 1992).

In selecting the data for analysis, several factors influenced the samples chosen for the research. Between 1988 and 1999, there was a great deal of attention placed on education reform in Ontario. Following the release of the SERP report (1984) until 1999, the Ontario Ministry of Education released three curricula: The Ontario Schools Secondary and Intermediate (1988); The Common Curriculum (1993); and the Ontario Curriculum (1999). Also, coinciding with this period of education reform, there were three different shifts in political leadership in Ontario: the election of the Liberals (1985); the New Democrats (NDP) (1990); and the Progressive Conservatives (PC) (1995). Because the Ministry of Education is a branch of the Ontario government, the elected
officials have some influence over the actions of the Ministry. Understanding that each of these political parties resides as different points on the political spectrum, I was interested in identifying differences between their approaches to education since during each political term, curricula was being reformed.

Also, under the guise of the Ministry of Education is the textbook authorizing system, *Circular 14*. According to policy, textbooks that have not been approved by the *Circular 14* committee on an annual basis are not authorized for use in Ontario schools, and also are not eligible for funding. Under the *Circular 14* regulations, from 1988 to 1999, despite the release of three different curricula cycles, there were only eight textbooks authorized for use in Ontario schools. Each of the textbooks were authorized for use under more than one curriculum policy, suggesting that either curricula had not been substantially revised, or the content in textbooks was ambiguous enough that it could qualify for authorization over long periods of time. Regardless, it was necessary to further examine these eight textbooks for the Aboriginal content.

Within a textual analysis, content is shaped by thematic and embedded narratives that surface through the way in which information is placed (Eubanks 2004). But the meanings within text or images are not necessarily restricted to the themes and embedded narratives that surface: there may be hidden or implicit meanings, coded language, or meaningful silences and absences (Hay 2005; Kearns 2007). Establishing the contexts relevant to particular texts requires situating them and their authors in place and time, with attention to the influences playing on them (Mayhew 2007; Osborne 2001). Context
requires attention to the events, political and social influences of the given time (Osborne 1998; 2001; 2004; Eubanks 2004).

The framing of narrative and expressing through particular language contributes to the way in which we go about understanding particular concepts and processes. Donna Haraway’s “situated knowledges” provide a useful method of approaching universal ideas. By situating knowledge that is accountable to a particular position reveals how “all knowledge is the product of specific “embodied knowers,” located in particular places and spaces” (Hay 2005: 252). The use of particular words, for example, can locate a text in a time, reveal the “positionality” of the author, while also situating it within particular moral and political allegiances (MacLure 2003; Hay 2005).

**Image Analysis**

Image analysis provides additional opportunities for analysis through visual influence and interpretation (David 2000). I suggest that textbook images are influential for two principal reasons: first, young people are highly impressionable due to their inexperience and the trust they typically have for teachers and adults (Gewirtz 2006); and textbooks sanctioned by the Ministry of Education are legitimized by their link to the state (educational) institution (Stack 2006). Since the majority of textbooks used in schools, and all of the textbooks funded by the government, are sanctioned, most textbooks in the Ontario education system are likely to be perceived as legitimate by the general public.
Content including images will generally go unquestioned and, therefore, taken as a truth by its readers.

When images are taken as truth, content becomes naturalized and perpetuated. Burnett (1995) argues that images and photographs act as a pivotal point in the relationship between sight and meaning (Burnett 1995). Images plant a vision in our minds connecting words to sight; these images connect with “pre-rational forces”, and ‘desires and fantasies, and even more fundamentally with our anxieties and fears” (Robins 1996: 64). Historically, images in texts construct Aboriginal peoples as savages and warrior-like (Paul 2006; Frideres 2008; Clark 2007; Valaskakis 2005). It is these images in the public discourse that naturalize an identity that has nothing to do with current reality, and little to do with what actually transpired. Other features of image analysis derive from the selection of images included in certain documents and textbooks, as well as the way in which they are presented. Coding, or how literature is framed, encourages researchers to not only view the form of the image, but also to interrogate what the image suggests (Rose 2001). This method of analysis looks at the relationship of the image to others around it, the occasion in which it is presented, and the captions that accompany the image (Rose 2001; Burnett 1995). Images are a significant component to content analysis. However to gain a full perspective of content, text and image analysis should also incorporate the wider ideologies at work in society (Rose 2001).
Doing Discourse Analysis

Discourse analysis has increasingly been used as a valuable research method within the social sciences to dissect, disrupt, and review what has been considered common-sense and naturalized (MacLure 2003; Bazerman 2004). Discourse analysis provides an in-depth view and multidimensional view of the various influences affecting the development of the components of a system. The development of a dialogue that extends beyond the emergent and explicit meaning of texts and images facilitates a better understanding of the processes that contribute to the establishment of a system and its impacts. By applying traditional forms of text analysis to interpretations and criticism, discourse analysis offers researchers the opportunity to consider the social, political, and economic contributions and effects on education, thereby broadening our understanding (Bazerman 2004).

Discourse analysis focuses on the examination of “relations between statements; relations between groups of statements thus established; relationships between statements and groups of statements and events of a quite different kind” (Foucault 1972 in Rose 2001: 137 ). The analysis of discursive statements through a study of social context, the way in which statements are made and by whom, and also the inter-relationship between statements, images, and the way text and image are presented advances an understanding of how information is coded and delivered (Bazerman 2004; Rose 2001).

Applying discourse analysis to the collection of documents comprising the Ontario education system’s Grade 9 Geography program enhances our understanding of the effects
of the Ontario Ministry of Education approach in teaching students about the role of Aboriginal peoples in Ontario society. To better gauge the likely impact of the Grade 9 Geography texts on students, it is necessary to break down the various components that contribute to the development of the education system, including policies, the development of textbooks, and how Grade 9 Geography, in its entirety, is delivered to students.

The use of particular language situates points in time, revealing the positionality of the author. The addition of images to textbooks only served to enhance the embedded narratives through a visual interpretation of the artist. For instance, adding the images of C.W. Jefferys to the textbooks in the 1930s enriched the way students viewed the Canadian nation. Jefferys’ mythologizing interpretation of the Canadian imaginary enhanced the way he portrayed much of Canada’s salient points in history. Through these iconographic images students have learned about settlement, expansion to the West, and contact between settlers and Aboriginal peoples. These images continue as a predominant reflection framing early Canadiana. Discourse analysis is also necessary in gaining a more thorough understanding of the multidimensional view of how various influences affect the development of a particular system. Together these methodologies are particularly useful in understanding the embedded and complex messages hidden with the pages of state authorized textbooks. In terms of this research, it is necessary to have a thorough understanding of the entrenched notion of nation-building as the education system becomes challenged by a changing multicultural landscape. By demonstrating the
influential roles of both Pierce and Jefferys in establishing a visual conceptualization of the Canadian imaginary, I will turn to the influence of multiculturalism on the inclusion of cultural diversity in education in Chapter 4.
Chapter 4

Multiculturalism and Aboriginal identity: Mapping the socio-spatial imaginary

Aboriginal inclusion in Ontario’s mainstream education system has been a story of absence and bias, involving the segregation of Aboriginal peoples from mainstream schooling, and the Euro-centric conceptualization through particular text and images of Aboriginal peoples in curricula and textbooks. Together, these ways of differentiating Aboriginal cultures have contributed to the cultivation of a social distance between Aboriginal peoples and the rest of Canadian society. One would think that, due to Canada’s increasing cultural plurality and recognition of culturally diverse groups, that Aboriginal peoples would also be included in these efforts. However, the introduction of multiculturalism has paradoxically exacerbated the social distance between dominant groups and Aboriginal peoples.

The introduction of multiculturalism has had a profound influence on how Ontario students understand cultural diversity. In embracing multiculturalism, the Ontario
education system has made a concerted effort to include cultural content in mainstream programming. However, methods used to incorporate cultural programming have arguably objectified cultural diversity, and served to exacerbate social distance between culturally diverse groups and those considered dominant. The education system is in a particularly unique and difficult position in the transformation of the Canadian polity to one of a multi-cultural society: it is not only responsible for disseminating policies of the state, but it is also responsible for their proliferation. Though we may criticize the way in which the Ontario education system distributes cultural content, it is necessary to examine multiculturalism more thoroughly to gain a better understanding of its influence over the way students learn about cultural diversity, especially under the meta-narrative of the Canadian nation-building agenda.

In this chapter, I argue that through the education system, multiculturalism has (re)conceptualized the socio-spatialization of Canada’s cultural polity. Because multiculturalism is directed toward the relationship between descendants of Canada’s original settlers, English and French, and newcomer groups, Aboriginal peoples have been rendered absent. This socio-spatial division has not only marginalized culturally diverse groups from the mainstream but has also reinforced cultural silos that define and differentiate culturally diverse groups; (re)established culturally hierarchies, and reaffirmed the power of Whiteness in Canada. This socio-spatialization is reflected in education policy through the objectification of culture and the marginalization of difference. Though the rhetoric of multiculturalism was designed to redefine the symbolic
system of Canada’s cultural polity, and eliminate ethno-centric differences, it paradoxically assimilates and differentiates.

**Identifying the need for culture in education**

Education plays a particularly integral role in the institutionalization of culture in Ontario. The incorporation of cultural content in education was viewed as a necessity in the development and nurturing of a socially cohesive society. The implementation of cultural education was viewed “as enlightenment rather than social control, offering people access to beauty, insight and the wisdom of the ages. With this approach, teaching invited students into the space of culture, offering them a hand towards the community of the enlightened” (Stuckey 1991:114). The institutionalizing of multiculturalism helped to ensure that the proliferation of appropriate messages was passed on according to the goals of the state.

Multiculturalism may take the form of revising the education curriculum to include the history and culture of minority groups; creating advisory boards to consult with the members of minority groups; recognizing the holidays of minority religious groups; teaching police officers, social workers, and health-care professionals to be sensitive to cultural differences in their work; developing regulations to ensure that minority groups are not ignored or stereotyped in the media; and so on (Kymlicka 2001: 42).

However, the incorporation of multiculturalism, as imposed by the state, is often in accordance with ideologies of “colour-blindness or race consciousness, of integrationism, assimilationism, separatism, or nativism” (Delaney 2002: 7). As a powerful and effective
tool of the state, therefore the education system serves to rationalize the “meaningful and political (economic and cultural) [ordering of] social worlds” (Outlaw 2007: 200). Though not necessarily a new concept to Ontario education, the institutionalization of culture was challenged by the changing immigration patterns in the 1960s.

Two separate and earlier inquiries into the importance of culture in education have informed the education system as to the importance of including cultural content (through acknowledgment), while also reinforcing assimilative processes. The Royal Commission on National Development in the Arts, Letters, and Sciences (1951) (more commonly known as the Massey Commission) was initially intended to reinforce the importance of nurturing a sense of national cohesion, while working in conjunction with, and upheld through military might (Sears 2003: 95). The report released at the height of the Cold War emphasized the importance of building a united national imaginary, that was cohesive in its citizenship, and secure in its identity (Wallerstein 1995 in Isin and Woods 1999).

The Royal Commission on Living and Learning (1968) (also known as the Hall-Dennis report) was a subsequent investigation of the direction of education, which suggested that the education system prepare for and manage the ensuing fractures anticipated by the shifting cultural landscape (Education 1968). This report emphasized the importance of cultural integration, while recognizing and incorporating elements of cultural diversity (Leithwood 1984; Sears 2003). However, this notion that Canadians could share a “common life with other citizens [was] at the expense of what ought to [have been] a deeper affirmation of difference” (Beiner 2006: 24). Instead of encouraging
society to openly recognize plurality, culture, and identity, these elements were conceptualized as static and represented by symbols, languages, dialects, and dress, in relation to dominant Euro-Canadian norms (Delaney 2002).

**Culture as additive**

In the late 1970s, the education system adopted several recommendations made by the *Living and Learning* Commission report, and introduced the concept of cultural programming into its existing structure (Sears 2003). Once the recognition for cultural programming was embraced by the education system, school boards were given a mandate to *add* cultural content to existing curriculum (Harper 1997). The introduction of several publications: *People of Native Ancestry* (1975, 1977, 1981), *Canada’s Multicultural Heritage* (1977), and *Black Studies* (1983) (Earl 1997), were some examples that sought to foster sensitivity to, and respect for, ethno-cultural differences, in addition to promoting the integration of minority students within the dominant educational framework (James and Schecter 2003: 29). By adding cultural programming to an existing system, the Ontario education system assumed responsibility for the reinforcement of dominant narratives.

Through the 1970s and 1980s, teachers were given the power to determine the cultural content that would be included as part of mainstream programming. The inclusion of cultural content, though not yet mandatory, authorized teachers to implement what cultural programming they deemed relevant (Harper 1997; Anderson 2003). While
some scholars suggest that the purpose of multicultural programming in education is to “teach students to value cultural differences, to understand the meaning of the culture concept, and to accept of others’ the right to be different” (Gibson 1984: 98), students are given few tools by which to make informed interpretations. Teachers played a significant role in determining what cultural content was integrated into the existing curricula (St. Denis and Schick 2003). Responsible for introducing content, and helping students decipher between the collection of fragmented and constructed conceptualizations, teachers incorporated cultural content by introducing mere sound bites and brief anecdotes of culture to the context of the nation-building narrative (Smolicz 1985: 455).

Earl (1995) argues, that although teachers are given an opportunity to determine what content should be added to curricula, they tend to select what they regard as familiar and important, and draw only from particular content that they themselves were exposed to as students (Earl 1995). While some teachers made concerted efforts to incorporate cultural programming into curricula, cultural content continues to be presented in relation to prevailing dominant norms. Stuckey (1991) argues that teachers approach cultural content as a “safe [and] benevolent inside: the place where we are and a place others might be persuaded to inhabit” (Stuckey 1991: 114; italics mine). Pinto (2005) suggests that the discretion of teachers to determine what content is included and excluded constitutes “indoctrination” (Pinto 2005: 13). Regardless of how the introduction of cultural content into mainstream education is interpreted, what teachers choose to select as important has
a significant impact on how students go about learning about the culturally diverse society in which they live.

The way in which cultural content was presented also emphasized the objectification of diversity. Articulated through different modes of expression, culture became defined and objectified by such elements as food, costume, festivals, folklore, artistic expressions, and religious symbols and practices (Earl 1995; James and Schecter 2003). The introduction of multicultural curriculum was introduced as an additive rather than through an integrative process (Earl 1995: 200; italics mine). Socially centered ideological elements differentiate between different diverse groups, and reinforced spaces of power that exist in ‘everyday’ educational activities (Delaney 2002).

Programmes were normally seeking to foster sensitivity to and respect for ethno-cultural differences. To promote intercultural tolerance, school boards designed curricular interventions that engaged students in ‘heritage studies’ reading, ‘multicultural literature’, participating in ‘multicultural days’ and going on field trips to ‘cultural communities’ (James and Schecter 2000: 29).

Activities that were thought to promote a sense of tolerance have paradoxically provided a place where culture is objectified and cast as different in relation to what is expected from, and determined by the dominant society.

**Contextualizing Canada’s cultural landscape**

Though the need for cultural content has been embraced by the education system, it is necessary to contextualize the socio-spatialization of cultural groups in Canada. Canadian
society has always had diversity in its cultural composition, but the state has enabled a hierarchical structure that oppresses and marginalizes certain groups of citizens (Moore 2001: 177). In the context of “social, historical, and material practices of nation building” (St Denis and Schick 2003), the Canadian population has arguably been divided into three separate, but unequal cultural silos: each with their own set of requirements and privileges.

By briefly reviewing some relevant changes to immigration policies over the course of the 20th century, a distinct pattern emerges in how the state has contributed to and maintained the “production of dominance through difference and in particular the production of Whiteness” (St. Denis and Schick 2003: 5). The Immigration Act (1919) included a required literacy test for all immigrants as well as a tiered system that favoured certain countries of origin over others. Selected countries included Britain, the United States, the Irish Free State, Newfoundland, Australia, and New Zealand (Bouchard 2005; Mackey 1999). In the height of the Cold War, in 1952, the federal government revised its immigration policies to include northern and eastern European settlers as part of a mission to populate Canada’s prairie-west. During this stage, Ukrainian and Polish immigrants were approved for entry into Canada based on the similarity of their European backgrounds and their ability to adapt to the seasonal climate (Saul 2007). By highlighting the experiences of Ukrainian immigrants to the prairies in the 19th century, many of these newcomers went to great lengths in Anglicizing their names in an effort to “achieve a certain shade of idealized Whiteness” (St. Denis and Schick 2003: 3). These
earlier immigration patterns demonstrate the particularities that are associated with being part of the dominant White culture; and reinforce the role of state intervention in the classification of particular and subordinated cultural categories.

As in other colonizing states, the concept of Whiteness has served to reinforce inherent spatializing strategies (Stoler 2000; Walker 2004; Spencer 1994). The practice of Whiteness is more complex than the mere categorization based on skin colour, but a process by which colonizers proceeded toward reinforcing superiority. In Canada, the “dynamic role of the White group interests need to be recognized and acknowledged as a central causal factor in generating and sustaining White ignorance” (Mills 2007: 34). The “myth of tolerance and nationhood is instantiated through the images, landscapes, scenarios, historical events, national symbols, and rituals, which … represent the shared experiences, sorrows and triumphs, and disasters, which give meaning to the nation” (Mackey 1991: 2). The reinforcement of superiority extends from the selective memory of White group interests and their desire to preserve a collective and imagined national identity.

In reinforcing the superiority of the dominant White groups, Canadian citizens are arranged within one of three cultural silos:

i) Mainstream Canadians, or according to Eva Mackey: “Canadian-Canadians” (Mackey 1999:89)\(^5\);

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\(^5\) Contrary to how Mackey argues that the dominant Canadian group, when defined, is un-hyphenated, and considered the neutral core of Canadian identity, I would suggest that the dominant Canadian group should also be classified as a cultural group even though there is a hierarchical differentiation that exists between Canadian-Canadians, and the other two cultural classifications.
ii) Immigrants or newcomers; and

iii) Aboriginal peoples.

Culturally separate delineations are clear in their differences, and serve to reinforce the notion of Canada’s cultural mosaic (Mackey 1999: 2). The mainstream group is comprised of the descendants of Canada’s founding nationalities: English and French (James and Schecter 2003). This core group is rationalized as superior, and celebrated as the root of Canadian identity, whereby all other groups are defined in relation to this dominant group (Mackey 1999). Newcomers, delineated as either ’imports to Canada or foreign” (James and Schecter 2003: 29), are classified as “immigrants”. These immigrants are typically those who have arrived in Canada under the immigration policies that permitted entry to those that were not necessarily from western-European nations. Though some of these immigrants are not necessarily differentiated from Canada’s dominant groups due to their skin colour, they are considered excluded from the nation’s White polity, cast under the newcomer umbrella due to cultural practice, and/or religious differences (Bailey 2007: 79). And, the third cultural category includes all Aboriginal identities, regardless of whether they are Métis, Inuit, or First Nations (Valaskakis 2005; Saul 2007; Frideres 2008).
Spatializing cultural classifications in the context of multiculturalism

As I have introduced in Chapter 2, the introduction of multiculturalism in 1971 was designed as a way of guaranteeing “equal rights that respect the multicultural heritage of Canadians” (Canada 1971). Though contemporary conceptualizations of multiculturalism can be viewed as vastly different from the more overtly racist and assimilationist policies of earlier governments, there remains an abiding concern to nurture a sense of social cohesion among all Canadian citizens.

Regardless, the fundamental framework of multiculturalism points to an assimilatory process that seeks to integrate culturally diverse groups into the mainstream collective imaginary. The concept of multiculturalism rests on a foundation of commonality, social cohesion, and the collective Canadian national identity, and is like a “bandage in Canada’s national fabric” (Mackey 1999: 67). Not necessarily challenging the historic nation-building agenda, the ideology of multiculturalism is government rhetoric that seeks to reinforce social cohesion, hierarchy, and the national imaginary for the sake of the state (James and Schecter 2003; Mackey 1999). By reinforcing what is common between groups, the state implies that “equity and mutual tolerance have been already accomplished” (Bickmore 2006: 361). When commonality is not at the core of the multicultural agenda, then difference is viewed by the state as threatening to the core of national cohesion (Ley 2003). Measures of cultural diversity that “heighten the salience of ethnicity in public life are [considered] divisive” (Kymlicka 2001: 36), Difference, conceptualized through “such [characteristics] as skin colour, language, religion, dress,
and foods … register [as though] they are studied from the seemingly homogeneous and stable platform of ‘mainstream’ White urban culture” (McGuinness 2002: 100).

Multiculturalism then, in its most fundamental form draws on the importance of commonality between culturally diverse groups, yet paradoxically marginalizes and differentiates. The diffusion of diverse cultures, as a process of multiculturalism, becomes an assimilation project by the state (St. Denis and Schick 2003). Because multiculturalism is proposed as a way of ensuring cultural equality and integration, “it was hoped [by some] that, over time, these other people, mostly immigrants and refugees, would abandon their foreign cultural practices and adopt those that were culturally Canadian” (James and Schecter 2003: 34). Beiner (2006) points out that the assimilative processes at work in multiculturalism, inevitably lead to oppression and enforced homogenization of cultural difference (Beiner 2006).

**Conceptualizing multiculturalism**

A comparative analysis between three different interpretations of Canadian multiculturalism, that of Charles Taylor, Will Kymlicka, and Margaret Moore, demonstrates that though the federal government has made a concerted effort to instill the concept of multiculturalism as a way of including and integrating culturally diverse groups in Canadian mainstream society, the underpinnings of multiculturalism essentially serve to reinforce notions of the nation-building agenda. As long as multiculturalism
policies reinforce the Canadian imaginary, then there will continue to be a socio-spatial
distance that informs public education and Canadian society.

For philosopher Charles Taylor, multiculturalism should welcome cultural
contributions and collaboration between culturally diverse groups, yet while remaining
focused on preserving a dominant culture. Taylor argues that culturally diverse groups
should be recognized on an egalitarian basis, rendering “second class citizenship” as non-
existent (Moore 2001: 693). The recognition that culturally diverse groups occupy equal
space welcomes the opportunity for important dialogue to occur between groups.

However, Taylor’s notion of equality is built upon a foundation that he models on a
common form of patriotism, and one that is similar to that of post-revolutionary France:
for cultural groups to enter into a dialogue amongst equals, they must first establish a
common and patriotic view of citizenship. As many scholars argue, Taylor’s position of
liberal culturalism is a concept that supports Québec’s desire to remain autonomous from
the rest of mainstream, English Canada (Moore 2001). Taylor’s positionality on
citizenship is problematic in the examination of multiculturalism in the rest of Canada,
where an imagined identity has been cultivated for the purpose of bringing a new nation
together rather than the preservation of an established cultural identity as is found in
Québec. For Taylor, multiculturalism works best when there is a strong cultural
foundation in which the majority should demonstrate a culture of openness and
generosity, and of spirit toward minorities” (Bouchard and Taylor 2008).
Kymlicka’s positionality is similar to Taylor’s emphasis on commonality, yet with less concern in preserving the collective imagined identity than he is in developing a more contemporary model built upon post-colonial ideologies and individualism. In other words, as Taylor’s position is informed by French Canada’s cultural link to France, Kymlicka views Canadian multiculturalism as functioning on a more individual basis of cultural recognition. Cognizant of the multiplicity of cultures, Kymlicka argues for recognition of individual rights in a multicultural context, pointing out that newcomers should ideally integrate into the dominant mainstream culture at their own discretion and not coerced. While “a liberal form of nationalism does not [necessarily] attempt to coercively impose a national identity on those who do not share it” (Kymlicka 2001: 39), he calls for a revised form of citizenship that essentially encourages the development of a new Canadian national identity: one that is not necessarily hinged upon antiquated notions of the Canadian imagination. Kymlicka’s vision for moving toward a contemporary multicultural society lies in that “the interests we share in common are much more important than the identities that divide us, and that liberal culturalism is therefore distracting us from our more important common interests as fellow human beings” (Kymlicka 2001: 42).

In turn, Moore’s notion of the more collective idea of liberal nationalism, suggests it should be a reasonable expectation that newcomers adapt to the existing dominant culture (Moore 2001, 2003). Moore asserts that while a common national identity is necessary for the achievement of the goods of liberal justice and democratic governance,
recognition of their individual differences is essential (Moore 2001: 178). Members of ethnic minorities, according to Moore, then are only able to practice individual rights: they can request “tolerance of their culture difference, but cannot be accorded equality as members of minority groups” (Asad 1993: 174). Thus “membership in the national group is not restricted to those of a particular race, ethnicity, or religion” (Kymlicka 2001: 40), but restricts cultural and/ or traditional group activities from becoming included as part of the imagined Canadian identity. For scholars such as Moore, the institutionalism of culture is essential for the survival of Canadian nationalism. “Promoting integration into a common societal culture has been seen as essential to social equality and political cohesion in modern states (Miller 1995 in Kymlicka 2001: 26).

By highlighting the thoughts of Taylor, Kymlicka, and Moore, I suggest that multiculturalism is essentially a method employed by the state to re-define the dominant nation-building meta-narrative in the context of a globalizing world; and to reinforce the dominance of White Canada. Though each of these scholars interprets multiculturalism differently, they are all in agreement that recognition of cultural diversity is built up from a common foundation of social cohesion and in alignment with the fundamentals of the historic Canadian imagination.

**Aboriginal peoples in a globalizing world**

If multiculturalism reinforces the socio-spatial differentiation between the mainstream and newcomers through the processes of the nation-building narrative, then it is necessary
to question the influence of multiculturalism on Aboriginal peoples. Because the concept of multiculturalism projects a notion of promoting a better understanding between newcomers and mainstream, Aboriginal peoples, though considered “culturally diverse”, are immediately rendered absent from this equation. Because such a policy is able to determine what groups “belong” and those that do not, multiculturalism is a manifestation of “hierarchies of political, cultural, social, and economic power” (Isin and Woods 1999: 57). Trudeau’s underlying objective in establishing a multicultural framework sought to establish and disperse equal political power; however, this notion of power was reserved for only English and French societies (Francis 1992). This distinct socio-spatial division between the dominant groups and those culturally diverse groups that are cast as subordinate is similar to other post-colonial states that left “the Indigenous fractured and contested without being assimilated” (Kumar 2002: 86). Though the process of assimilation has become a signifier of the post-colonial nation-building strategy, the segregation of an entire cultural category from the mainstream in the context of multiculturalism demonstrates the extent to which Aboriginal peoples have been marginalized, and according to Cole, is a form of cultural genocide (Cole 2007).

The distinction drawn between the rights afforded to newcomers and Aboriginal groups is profoundly influenced by the colonial past, with the intention of preventing any dramatic changes to Canada’s future. A change to the structure of Canada’s socio-cultural hierarchy has serious ramifications for the nation-state if group rights were to be considered equal. Faced with the demands for more equality between cultural groups, the
state recognizes that in granting group rights to diverse cultural groups, there is also the opportunity for newcomers and Aboriginal groups to interpret these rights in a different way from each other (Isin and Woods 1999). Because Aboriginal peoples are uniquely tied to territory, granting Aboriginal group rights within the multicultural framework poses a possible major disruption to the historic notion of the Canadian nation-state (Isin and Woods 1999). For instance, the 1997 court decision regarding Delgamuukw, and the acceptance of Aboriginal oral histories as an appropriate method of testimony, which contributed to the settling of the Nisga’a Treaty, set a serious precedent that ultimately threatens to alter the course of Canadian history (Frideres 2008).

Not only does this ruling have serious implications for a shift in the power structure between Aboriginal peoples and the dominant groups, but it also raises serious questions about the legitimacy of the nation-state and the different role of cultural groups. Consider the implications of Aboriginal citizenship as they are tied to territory. In the case of the Nisga’a Treaty, where the Nisga’a were granted the right to have their own central government with the “authority to make laws concerning social services, adoption and health services, as well as tribal jurisdiction over education” (Frideres 2008: 207). This ruling is significant to the longstanding legal and social persecution of Aboriginal peoples in Canada; and “if the treaty, which included financial compensation, land, and some self-government rights, is imitated, it may change dramatically the political structure of the nation-state” (Isin and Woods 1999: 65). As well, consider the possibilities: if the same rights and obligations are granted to both newcomers and
Aboriginal groups, then the outcomes of this treaty settlement could have serious implications for other culturally diverse groups in Canada.

**Aboriginal peoples in multicultural education**

By applying what we now understand of federal multiculturalism policies to Ontario education, the education system has contributed to the marginalization of Aboriginal peoples in two ways: through the legitimation and proliferation of information delivered through public school curricula (Kumar 2002); and through the authority granted to teachers to determine what content is suitable for students, and how it is delivered. “One of the key problems is that official multiculturalism is not really very pluralistic. It allows for a profusion of difference in the margins while preserving in the centre a liberal vision of national cultural and shared values” (Sears 2007: 146).

“The education system has a built-in mandate to legitimate the existing (inequitable) social order” (Curle, Freire, and Caltung 1974 in Bickmore 2006: 361), reinforcing dominance, while marginalizing difference. Even when the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples requested of academic institutions that they “decolonize their traditional presumptions, curricula, research, and teaching practices in order to live up to their obligations, mission statement, and alleged priorities for Aboriginal peoples” (Ministry of Supply and Services Canada 1996: 454 in Walberg 2008: 102), there was a continued absence of Aboriginal programming for mainstream students (Anderson 2003). Though board policies included the participation of
“representatives of Aboriginal, racial, and ethnocultural groups [to] participate in the development and review of policies and practices” (Education 1993), action for implementation was left to particular groups that did not necessarily include Aboriginal representation. The opportunity for the education system to continue with its normalized routine of being able to add cultural content at its own discretion; while encouraging the development of culturally specific educational program to the discretion of the different cultural groups suggests that either the education system is not interested in nurturing a more democratic approach to education, which would incorporate cultural content with the mainstream; or that there is an underlying objective of the state to prevent such changes to the education system.

For multiculturalism to be viewed as anything but an assimilatory process, the system needs to allow a more critical democratic engagement from diverse groups rather than serve as a reminder that culturally diverse groups “are not from here” (Mackey 1999: 90). A democratic approach encourages and accepts contributions by culturally diverse groups rather than limiting the participation of these groups to that of being merely recipients of state policy. With few opportunities in the system that make way for more democratic contributions, culturally diverse groups are left to develop their own systems and approaches, external to those imposed by the state (Freire 1985; Apple 1985, 2001, 2006).

Again, this externalized approach to challenging a state system, such as education, only serves to further reinforce the social distance between the dominant mainstream
groups and those that have been marginalized. Though this may generate a space and momentum for diverse groups to navigate through the “cracks in the edifice” (Bickmore 2006: 361), there needs to be willingness by the state for the exploitation of such opportunities. As pointed out in Chapter 3, Post-1999 Aboriginal educational programming provides one example that has evolved from the ignorance toward Aboriginal inclusion in mainstream education. However, this programming fails to rectify the problem of a lack of Aboriginal exposure for mainstream students. If mainstream students are still not exposed to Aboriginal content, then mainstream and newcomers will continue to have limited access to and knowledge of Aboriginal contributions to Canadian society.

**Conclusion**

By examining the influence of multiculturalism on the pedagogies regarding Aboriginal peoples, I have demonstrated that multiculturalism has exacerbated how Aboriginal peoples are socially distanced through mainstream education. Categorized within a cultural silo, and distinguished as culturally separate from both the dominant mainstream and newcomer groups, Aboriginal peoples are absent within the dialogue of multiculturalism.

Though Aboriginal peoples have been recognized as a particular and socially distanced cultural group in Canadian society, their presence in mainstream pedagogy is limited. The education system is a legitimate state institution that makes concerted efforts
to include cultural programming as an addition to its existing curricula. However, the education system continues to approach cultural education through a nation-building framework that considers the national imaginary as fundamental to its programming. In this context, cultural programming objectifies cultural diversity, and in turn has contributed to emphasizing the cultural differences between different groups. The emphasis placed on difference, while the state argues that multiculturalism is a way in which to promote a cohesive society, only serves to highlight differences, that in turn cast culturally different people aside. The emphasis on what is the norm, coupled with the diffusion of cultural diversity only serves to exacerbate the socio-spatial differentiation that restricts the opportunity for mainstream students to learn about Aboriginal peoples in a fair and equitable way. Furthermore, it maintains a hierarchical structure in Canada that reinforces dominance and Whiteness. In Chapter 5, I will illustrate how the story of absence and bias of Aboriginal peoples is materialized through the content of state-authorized Grade 9 Geography textbooks.
Chapter 5

Mapping curriculum on authorized textbooks in Ontario: 1985-1999

Textbooks are a material product of state policies, and the influence of society, the economy, the effects of globalization, and technology. By examining the policies that govern the availability of textbooks in Ontario schools, the influence of the Ontario textbook publishing industry and the way in which curriculum is mapped onto textbooks over the course of three different curriculum policies (OSIS 1988; the Common Curriculum 1993; and the Ontario Curriculum 1999) I will demonstrate that the focus on how the local Ontario and Canadian economic structure supersedes that of the importance of cultural integration in education. Changes are identified in each subsequent Ontario curriculum policy in the three areas of local economies, the exploitation of Canada’s natural resources, and global economic interdependency (Beck 1992). However, cultural content continues to be segregated from mainstream coverage, and when included, it is objectified and framed in its own section of the textbooks as though it remains static and unchanging.
This analysis is based upon eight Grade 9 Geography textbooks that are authorized for use in Ontario secondary schools by the Ontario Ministry of Education. The textbooks, listed in Table 5.1, are approved for use through the Circular 14 textbook regulatory policy. From 1988 to 1999, there were only eight geography textbooks authorized for use in Ontario. It is suggested that because textbooks are so closely linked to curriculum policies that either the fundamental underpinnings of the different curriculum policies are essentially similar, or that the Circular 14 regulatory committee allows textbooks to remain in circulation when they are not necessarily suitable. More particularly, by examining each of the textbooks for Aboriginal content through text, image, and discourse analysis, I argue that Aboriginal peoples are identified as existing in only three particular points in time through Canada’s history: the distant past; first contact to the end of the fur trade, and as contemporary contributors to Ontario’s economic structure. These themes perpetuate their segregation from mainstream society and the way in which Aboriginal identities are objectified in relation to dominant mainstream groups. Though numerous opportunities exist to include Aboriginal content in mainstream textbooks, these opportunities continue to be unfulfilled.

**Circular 14: Regulatory policy and public education gatekeeper**

The Ministry of Education has been governing the supply of textbooks through Circular 14 for over 150 years. Circular 14 did more than ensure the standardization of authorized textbooks; it also regulated private textbook publishers. Textbook content contributes to
the development of a common and imagined identity as publishers cast their own interpretation on ambiguous guidelines; and following the Ministry’s lead, minimize the relevance of local and significant events. The regulation of the textbook industry, though beneficial for the development of a common education system (especially in such a diverse and geographically vast province), reinforced state control by enabling textbook content to be manipulated for the benefit of the state by the Ontario Ministry of Education.

The vision of Canadian content is reinforced in both the writing and printing stages of publishing. Circular 14 required that writers be Canadian citizens, while textbooks were to be printed and bound in Canada “wherever possible” (Education 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996). This requirement suggests that content focuses on the development of Canadian content incorporating the perspective of the Canadian imaginary, rather than taking into consideration any unique and particular contributions that culturally diverse Canadian authors might be able to add to the textbook content. Publishers even go so far as to select writers that are aligned with particular viewpoints that are more likely to receive approval by the Circular 14 committee (Pinto 2005). As an added safeguard, publishers routinely hire the same authors to write, or amend previous additions, aware that these writers are familiar with the authorization process and willing to work within these parameters.

Content is somewhat compromised in exchange for efficiency and lower publication costs. Publishers looking for ways to reduce production costs, either manipulating content from existing textbooks, or adopting textbooks written specifically
for other regions of Canada (Clark 2007). To comply with ambiguous Circular 14 regulations, publishers point out that it is simple to adjust content to adapt to regional differences. Under Circular 14 guidelines, loosely defined concepts, such as “written where possible by a Canadian Citizen” (Education 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996), make it manageable to alter content. I argue that by this stipulation, publishers are able to provide opportunities for textbooks to be written by Canadians in a diverse context; however, it is also necessary for publishers to develop content that is widely marketable, and able to remain in use for long periods of time allowing textbook publishers to determine what content is Canadian. Often, textbooks are brought in from other provinces that are able to fulfill policy guidelines, and sometimes even the United States, once relevant Canadian content is inserted where applicable (Pinto 2005).

Publishers view this practice to be a means of producing textbooks more efficiently under Circular 14 regulations. Authors are then only required to rewrite certain parts of the textbook (paid only for the work they perform), rather than engaging in an entirely new writing project, allowing publishers to produce textbooks at a much lower cost. This cost saving approach to publishing benefits both the initial book publisher, as well as the secondary publishers who are adapting existing textbooks.

When cost saving becomes a priority in the textbook publishing industry, and is facilitated through loosely defined regulatory policies, there is an opportunity for the type of information included in textbooks to become focused on a broader, more general scope. Also, textbooks authorized by Circular 14 regulations require publishers to meet
efficiency guidelines that compel publishers to ensure that textbooks be written in such a manner that content remains relevant, and is able to remain in circulation for more than a year (Education 1990, 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996). For publishers, therefore, there is motivation in producing an initial textbook that will appeal to a broader customer base. By having content that is more widely applicable to a greater audience, publishers are attracted to these textbooks that require less adaptation.

When there is an opportunity for publishers to apply less adaptation to textbook content, because of the inclusion of broader themes more relevant and localized content can become compromised. For example, textbooks that include content on Aboriginal peoples in Canada tend not to change this information for an Ontario produced textbook because it is acceptable to classify Aboriginal content under a greater Canadian umbrella (Clarke 2007; Haigh 2002). Publishers, through experience, understand that broader coverage of Canadian Aboriginal peoples is acceptable under Circular 14 regulatory policies and as a result do not look for more localized or updated content to replace these sections of textbooks.

Guidelines for textbook content, promoting efficiency and appealing to broader audiences are likely to benefit the Ministry of Education more than the practice of teaching and learning. The Ontario government subsidizes the cost of only the Circular 14-approved textbooks. Those textbooks not included on the annual Circular 14 lists are not covered under provincial government subsidies, making them much more expensive and effectively discouraging teachers from looking beyond the Circular 14 approval list
for alternative texts. Most teachers will rely on texts supported through public funding, and also, in turn, due to their close correlation to standardized curriculum, use publicly subsidized textbooks as a de facto curriculum (Pinto 2005).

The ambiguity of regulatory policies within Circular 14 contributes to the way the Ministry of Education maintains control over the content delivered through textbooks to Ontario students. The policy also encourages publishers to interpret the terms of the policy and then manipulate business practices to navigate the system while also generating enough revenue to remain competitive. Consequently, Circular 14 made it difficult for those who might have any interest in providing alternative content, perhaps local and current, in textbook form.

The Ontario textbook industry

It is argued that state imposed regulations and subsidizations, in a period of neo-liberal restructuring, have created conformist textbooks that render a dominant Canadian imagined identity that is a dangerous and inaccurate reflection of current Canadian society (Manning 2003; Mackey 1997). But what would an alternative approach to education look like, and how could that be managed without any Canadian requirements for the textbook publishing industry? What impacts have textbook regulations had on Canadian textbook publishing? And how have Canadian publishers survived and prospered in an environment that is exceedingly global, while being forced to comply with local objectives?
A closer examination of the textbook industry in Ontario highlights the fiscal pressures experienced within the industry that have, for over thirty years, forced publishers to respond to the global publishing market while also meeting provincial education mandates. This section first examines the influence of globalization and the trans-nationalization of the corporation on Ontario’s textbook industry, and the role of the state in ensuring Canadian contributions to Canadian textbook content. Then, I will argue that the Ontario Ministry of Education works in collaboration with Ontario textbook publishers, making it possible for publishers to exist and prosper in the highly competitive publishing world, while also ensuring that publishers satisfy minimum Canadian content requirements. The relationship between the Ministry of Education and transnational publishing houses contributes to the development of a generalized and static view of the Canadian imagined identity.

As early as 1969, it was recognized that much of Canada’s cultural content, introduced to students came from textbooks produced by foreign publishing houses (Lorimer 1984). Concerned that if Canadian publishers lost control over content, then foreign interpretations of what constituted Canadian-ness would alter Canada’s collective imaginary. Recognizing that “[w]henever a country’s national consciousness sags and its sense of cultural identity vanishes: the resulting vacuum will sooner or later be filled with a cultural idealism imported from somewhere else” (Education 1968). Yet, as Rowland Lorimer (1984) points out, even though some provinces required Canadian content,
including Canadian authors, only about 15 percent of textbooks met these requirements, with most books still being produced overseas (Lorimer 1984: 289).

It was not until the mid 1970s that the federal government acknowledged the importance of supporting the Canadian textbook publishing industry. A report released by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) in 1975 cited concerns for the state regarding the direction of Canadian education under the influence of foreign contributors (Development 1975). In response to the OECD report, Canadian Secretary of State, Hugh Faulkner, emphasized that through textbooks, there needed to be a reification of what it “means to be Canadian” (Lorimer 1979). In 1980, a few grants were offered to Canadian publishers by the state to encourage the development of Canadian content. Though the state was contributing the preservation and development of the textbook industry, their level of commitment merely sustained existing publishers rather than contributing to their growth or development (Lorimer 1984: 295).

In 1979, the Secretary of State, John Robarts, after thoroughly reviewing the somewhat weak publishing regulations in Canada, and additional critical reports by the OECD, challenged each of the provinces to build on the existing education system by investing in the provincial textbook industry (Lorimer 1984, 287). An injection of $4.5 million for the entire industry across Canada, including $1.5 million directed toward Canadian textbook publishers, was viewed as a positive step in preventing the foreign dominance of the textbook industry. As Québec and western provinces concentrated on building their publishing industries, Ontario sought to develop more local, provincially
focused content. But efficiency was the dominant shaping force. In Québec, the province would allow schools to purchase only from licensed bookstores. Western provinces also received more provincial funding, and directed much of their attention to the development of a more locally cultivated cultural content. In fact, Alberta invested substantial sums of money into the development of distinctly western content (Lorimer 1984).

Even with different strategies undertaken by the different provinces to ensure the sustainability of their local publishing suppliers, transnational firms continued to merge. Many of these major firms, shifting ownership maintained publishing houses in Canada, but also in other areas of Europe and the United States. In Canada, Thomson absorbed such publishing firms as Gale Research, Bowker, and South-Western Wadsworth; in Britain, Penguin absorbed NAL, and Viking Press; and in West Germany, Beterlsmann absorbed many non-education publishing companies (Pinto 2005). The international business of mergers made it necessary for Canadian publishers to ensure that production methods met the necessary criteria in Ontario to be eligible for use in the province’s schools.

The continued mergers and acquisitions, Circular 14 regulatory policy, and the infusion of state subsidies for the textbook industry challenged the way in which textbook publishers approached the inclusion of Canadian content. Because Canadian content was encouraged where possible, it was not until there was an influx of state funding that publishers altered how they approached the inclusion of Canadian content. With the infusion of state subsidies into the Ontario public education system, publishers were
required to be more accountable in fulfilling certain objectives; the inclusion of Canadian produced Canadian content was not only required, but its inclusion was being monitored by the state.

Under the revised structure of the Ontario textbook industry, firms began grasping for additional ways to be more efficient and competitive. Firms that produced textbooks for core courses were highly competitive, since Circular 14 typically only included between six to eight titles each year for core courses, such as Grade 9 Geography. Firms that were engaged in the intense competition for core courses were forced to turn to other avenues in which they could become even more efficient. Furthermore, deeper cuts to school budgets in the mid 1990s under Harris’ Progressive Conservative government created even tighter school board constraints on textbook purchases. Knowing that school boards had limited funds allotted to the purchase of textbooks, publishers were aware of the need to maximize sale margins (Pinto 2005: 64).

**Mapping the Canadian economy through textbooks**

The Ministry of Education recognized the need to acknowledge the loss of manufacturing jobs within the revised curriculum policies upon the release of the *Common Curriculum* in 1993 (Anderson 2003; Earl 1995). The *Common Curriculum* required teachers to impose upon students a re-evaluation of their roles as participants within society in a time of rapid and exceptional change (Cartwright 1988:21). In particular, students were expected to understand the importance of entrepreneurship and co-operative
employability skills in consideration of the growing service industry (Education 1993: 72, 73, 75). It is clear that the provincial and federal governments recognized the importance of entrepreneurs as contributors to developing the private sector (Apple 2001, 2006; Gidney 1999). The Ontario government’s contributions through the subsidization of new business ventures and also to the growth of existing small businesses are demonstrated in Canada: Land of Diversity (Clark 1989: 255).

Through an examination of the third curriculum document, the Ontario Curriculum, there is a noticeable shift in the way in which the curriculum is written to respond to the challenges posed by the global economy and the loss of local manufacturing; and continuous growth to cultural diversity. The Ontario Curriculum requires students to incorporate questions of local economic sustainability by turning to the advancement of cultural-based tourism initiatives (Education 1999: 13). Curriculum designers objectified certain cultural activities as a point of interest to boost tourism, and the development of local heritage; social life and services, and the arts and literature (Education 1999: 10). During this period, many cities began turning to the tourism industry and the (re)creation of historical imaginaries to boost consumerism and consumption (Hannigan 1998; Zukin 1995). Referred to as the “fourth sector” of the economy to accompany the former primary, secondary, and tertiary sectors, the “experiential” economy was directed to consuming culture, performance, and heritage in a post-industrial Canada (Osborne 2007).
The development of the tourism industry and the subsequent objectification of cultures, as part of Canada’s contemporary approach to economic development is evident through approved texts. The development of local culture through music, the arts, fitness, and travel within Canada all contribute to the development of “important forces in our society” (Draper 1990: 145). However, the explanation of these cultural forces is done through the objectification of culture and only from a Western Anglo-European viewpoint. Examples of what are considered as local culture include images of Roy Thomson Hall in Toronto (home to the annual Christmas music concert featuring Handel’s Messiah), and the Confederation Arts Centre in Charlottetown (home to Anne of Green Gables Musical) (Draper 1990: 145). Anne of Green Gables, mythical icon of early Canadiana, contributes to the sustainability of the colonial Canadian imaginary (Draper 1990: 145). An emphasis on exploiting a constructed Canadian icon as a way to develop local economies only further demonstrates how the state is willing to objectify the colonial imaginary to support economic development.

**Perpetuating the imagined Canadian identity through education**

A notion of the imagined Canadian identity, linked to romanticized ideas of wilderness, the grandeur of landscape, the ordering of the untouched and uncivilized, and evident through subsequent curriculum revisions, is mapped onto the relevant textbooks. The imagined Canadian identity is introduced in the curriculum through physical, social, and political ideas that lead students toward the development of a strong sense of nationalism.
Each subsequent curriculum policy continued to project these historical ideas without a critical (re)assessment of how contemporary influences might properly alter mainstream education through time. The OSIS curriculum suggests that students “appreciate the diversity and grandeur of Canadian landscapes …” (Education 1988b: 30), and furthermore “recognize the interactions among physical, cultural, political, and economic factors that help to define the boundaries of regions” (Education 1988b: 33). Various images portray a romanticized and vast Canadian landscape, while commemorative plaques and national icons keep the historical notion of nation-building current and in the mainstream.
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Table 5.1 Circular 14 Approved textbooks from 1989 to 2002
In *Across Canada* (1987), for example, the pre-European, Canadian landscape is described as “quiet and almost empty” (Hannell 1987: 96), suggesting that land was unused and open for settlement, and that Aboriginal peoples were not present. Images in *Contact Canada* (1988) and *Investigating Canada* (1990) include several colour photographs and paintings of a variety of different landscapes across Canada portraying a sense of spaciousness, grandeur, and the pristine (Cartwright 1988: 94, 95, 111; Draper 1990: 48, 200). *Contact Canada* devotes two pages to colour photographs of mountains, a Boreal forest, a prairie farm scene, and an aerial view of the Arctic (Cartwright 1988: 41). The images illustrate the diversity of the Canadian landscape, as well as vast tracts of land that are uninhabited. Without any text to accompany these images, information provided to students about the prairies remains limited to associating the early and continuing opportunities for farming, as well as the hardships endured by settlers in the prairies to the Canadian identity, rather than incorporating information about land use prior to settlement. The absence of any allusion to Aboriginal peoples, while highlighting the availability of expansive tracts of land, suggests how Aboriginal inhabitants and their dispossession from the prairies were ignored. This singular and narrow perspective on the prairies, without the inclusion of additional content glosses over a rich history of early land uses such as hunting and gathering by Aboriginal peoples in the prairies (Frideres 2008).

The vague learning outcomes included in the curriculum requirements and the associated textbooks contribute to the continuation of linear conceptualizations of how
students go about understanding Canadian identity. The *Common Curriculum* (1993) requires that students “know about the history of Canada and understand the perspectives of the different groups who played a part in that history” (Cartwright 1988: 70). Predictably, perhaps, this is, again, exemplified by the old and familiar tropes of Group of Seven renderings of the Canadian landscape they imagined and popularized. Images in *Investigating Canada* (1990) capture an alternative and romantic view of the Canadian landscape, while contributing to the perpetuation of an iconographic and static interpretation of the Canadian imagination. Images contribute to defining identity at a particular point in time, so by associating an image to the Canadian identity that was painted in the early part of the 20th century, it becomes associated with a Canadian identity as it was at the time of the particular painting (Osborne 1987; 2001). As argued above, when identity continues to be associated with just one time period, it becomes static and unrepresentative of current verities (Anderson 1991; Casey 1993; Livingstone 1995). Thus Lawren Harris’ *Eclipse Sound and Bylot Island* (1930) (Fig 5.1) and *Cathedral Lake Peak, Lake O’Hara* (1927) (Fig. 5.2) by J.E.H. MacDonald both demonstrate images of identity in the period when they were painted and, as such, demonstrate an important point about the evolution of an evolving native view of Canada. An examination of the images also posits whether or not they resonate with an emerging identity of Canada in a trans-national world (Osborne 1987; 2001; 2004; 2006; 2007; Mackey 1999; Noble 1994).
Figure 5.1 *Eclipse Sound and Bylot Island* (L. Harris 1930)

Figure 5.2 *Cathedral Lake Peak, Lake O'Hara* (J.E.H. MacDonald 1927)
The objectification of cultural diversity and newcomers in curriculum

Within Ontario curriculum guidelines, cultural diversity comprises two different and objectified categories: immigrants and Aboriginal peoples. They are both categorized as being different from the dominant White population and are placed as such in separate curricular silos. Over the course of several curriculum reform cycles, the continued separation between dominant White groups and cultural groups reifies this spatial differentiation as the norm. Furthermore, as discussed in Chapter 4, the classification of culturally diverse groups as inclusive of mostly newcomers emphasizes how Aboriginal peoples are then categorized as different than both dominant groups and newcomers.

Students learn to recognize and identify difference based upon observable differences, without learning how to recognize and integrate different experiences. The OSIS curriculum defines and identifies culturally diverse groups through the way they dress, their traditions, and their festivals (Education 1988: 33). For example, in Across Canada (1987) coverage closely aligned with curriculum is demonstrated by the contemporary portrayal of a Hungarian group engaging in traditional folk dance and crafts while wearing ethnic costumes (Hannell 1987: 103). Only a single caption above the group of photos states: “Immigrants coming to Canada bring with them a great variety of ethnic traditions” (Hannell 1987:103). There is no acknowledgment of a particular nationality.

The Common Curriculum provides a noteworthy example of a more integrative approach to cultural inclusion that attempts to reduce the degree of segregation of cultural
groups from mainstream content. It requires that students “investigate past and present
global issues and demonstrate knowledge of the relevance to Canadian concerns”
(Education 1993: 71). In This Land of Ours: A New Geography of Canada (1991) the
disenfranchisement of Japanese immigrants during WWII is addressed through an
explanation of the dispossession and sale of their homes and their forced relocation to
interior British Columbia camps (Krueger 1991). In Canada: Exploring New Directions
(1990), the American Revolution and the relocation of United Empire Loyalists to
Canada is given as an example of a global issue, symbolizing how the Canadian
government extends a safe harbor when people are experiencing violence in other
countries (Hildebrand 1990: 97). Again, this idea of Canada as a safe place for
immigrants and refugees is iterated through the description of the arrival of WWII
refugees when most of Europe lay in ruins (Clark 1989: 124). These examples
demonstrate a close correlation between curriculum and textbook content.

The marginalization of Aboriginal peoples as more other than the others

A thorough review of Aboriginal coverage through each of the three curriculum policies
and the relevant textbooks demonstrates how the Ontario education system continues to
objectify and keep cultural groups, especially Aboriginal peoples, marginalized within
mainstream education. Of the objectives listed in the three curriculum policies, few
require Aboriginal coverage. Within the OSIS curriculum, of seventeen different
objectives only two are devoted to Aboriginal peoples. The objectives require that course content

i. Acknowledge values and attitudes that underlie decisions made by Native peoples about their lives and their futures (33); and

ii. Recognize the place of Canada’s Native peoples in Canada’s cultural mosaic (33).

The coverage requirements listed in the *Common Curriculum* include only three outcomes,

i. Demonstrate an understanding of the Native experience in Canada prior to European contact and from contact to the early twentieth century;

ii. Demonstrate knowledge and appreciation of the role played by Native peoples, other founding groups, Canadian institutions, and the international community in the development of Canada; and

iii. Reflect on and discuss issues related to Native identity and the future development of Native societies within Canada, North America and the world.

The *Ontario Curriculum* includes the least amount of Aboriginal coverage, in alignment with the vague nature of the overall document. Coverage is reduced to one objective: students are to “demonstrate an understanding of the ways in which the traditional ecological knowledge of Aboriginal peoples influences how they interact with their environments, including their concepts of place, wilderness, and boundaries” (1999: 15).

Examining the requirements of each of these curriculum documents, the curriculum requires textbook writers to incorporate Aboriginal coverage in a historical context and how their past has in turn influenced contemporary Aboriginal life and society.
A thorough analysis of Aboriginal coverage in all eight of the Circular 14 approved textbooks from 1989 to 2002 reveals a similar approach for the inclusion of Aboriginal coverage. Some common elements used in each of the textbooks include the separation of Aboriginal content from the rest of the mainstream information. For example, information that includes discussions of Aboriginal history, culture, contributions to Canada’s development, and/or the current state of Aboriginal peoples is contained within an exclusive and separate section of each of the textbooks devoted to cultural diversity and/or Aboriginal peoples; while also segregating any relevant Aboriginal association from mainstream coverage. None of the textbooks within this study have attempted to integrate Aboriginal content in other relevant sections such as the environment, natural resources, the economy, or global issues. Also, there has been no effort to provide any Aboriginal perspective. Furthermore, Aboriginal content is even segregated from discussions involving other cultural groups, casting Aboriginal peoples as separate than groups that have been othered from mainstream content. Ironically, despite the curriculum rhetoric, Aboriginal peoples are again marginalized, and further distanced than the rest of culturally diverse groups in Canada.

**Aboriginal peoples in the distant past**

have all included a brief history of the arrival of Aboriginal peoples across the Bering Strait, although at significantly different times through history. In Canada: Exploring New Directions (1990), coverage indicated that Aboriginal migrations occurred only before the arrival of the first Europeans in 1500 AD (Hildebrand 1990: 85). Across Canada: Resources and Regions (1987) provides a definitive period in time approximately 10 000 years ago during the Ice Age, when Indians and Inuit arrived in North America across the Bering land-bridge in the Arctic (Hannell 1987: 85). Natives are reported to have arrived in Canada during the last Ice Age, crossing the Bering Strait approximately 25 000 years ago in Canada, Land of Diversity (1989) (Clark 1989: 98); and 27 000 years ago in Investigating Canada (1990) (Draper 1990: 252). These four textbooks, published relatively close together, demonstrate the absence of consistent and reliable information. Toward the end of the 1980s, scholars had determined that Aboriginal peoples had crossed the land-bridge at the Bering Strait approximately 30, 000 years ago (Dickason 2002; Ray 1996; Venne 2004). Though it is important that Grade 9 Geography textbooks provide information on the arrival of Aboriginal peoples to Canada long before the arrival of Europeans, the lack of consistency between different authorized textbooks published within a relatively close time period suggests weaknesses of scholarship or oversights within the Circular 14 approval system.

Furthermore, historical Aboriginal content in textbooks is legitimizd and perpetuated through its association to state education, as well as through written text. When information is delivered to students through the state education system, by teachers
regulated under state restrictions that allow them to teach students, and who are supported by the availability of state authorized textbooks, students rarely criticize content (Clark 2007). The way textbooks and content are legitimized through the state, renders historical Aboriginal and oral histories absent (Valaskakis 2003; Paul 2007; Stoler 1989; Venne 2004; T. King 2005). When historical information is accepted as truth, it fails to take into account that the source of this information is subjective to Western ways of understanding. As discussed in the Chapter 2, the perpetuation of historical content through written text is enabled by the way in which authors situate Aboriginal history on a linear time line, and limit historical content to that which has been derived from Western scientific methods of understanding artifacts and other archaeological data. It fails to incorporate other methods that introduce Aboriginal traditional knowledge and memories.

**Aboriginal content up to 20th century**

The analysis of Grade 9 textbooks in this project demonstrates how Aboriginal peoples are situated at particular points in a linear history and that this historically defined identity is transported to, and positioned in, contemporary times. It is then that Aboriginal peoples are discussed in more contemporary context, which includes post-colonial conceptualizations of Aboriginal identity. This section will demonstrate how representations of Aboriginal culture as primitive and savage-like are reinforced through state authorized school textbooks.
These textbook portrayals highlight Aboriginal peoples’ dependence on hunting, fishing, and reinforce an image of an identity that is different in relation to Western methods of accessing food supplies, such as through shopping. Similarly, the absence of other themes also contributes to limiting perceptions of the Aboriginal identity and ways of life. Little attention is paid to the important role of Aboriginal peoples during the fur trade through their traditional knowledge and specialized transport and hunting skills. Nor is attention paid to their technologies of sustenance that were committed to ecological sustainability. Rather, a frequent assertion in textbooks suggest that Aboriginal peoples are responsible for long-term environmental degradation such as the current lack of salmon in some areas of British Columbia (Hannell 1987), as well as the eventual near extinction of bison through the prairies (Clark 1989: 99; Krueger 1991: 88). The absence of additional information informing students of Aboriginal methods of survival and their collective approaches to living, suggests haphazard and reckless ways of living that degrade the environment which, is in reality, fundamentally paradoxical to Aboriginal practice (Paul 2007; Valaskakis 2003).

Through *Canada: Land of Diversity*, *Canada: Exploring New Directions* and also *This Land of Ours: A New Geography of Canada*, Aboriginal identity is defined by both image and limited to examples of dwelling types, food, transportation methods, and clothing according to geographical region (Clark 1989; Hildebrand 1990; Krueger 1990); while limited information differentiating the various groups is supported through primitive images without any accompanying explanation. Pacific Coast, Plateau, Plains,
Eastern Woodlands, Subarctic and Inuit are identified as the Aboriginal peoples of Canada (Clark 1989; Hildebrand 1990; Krueger 1990), while few details other than those associated with Aboriginal people of the Pacific Coast are provided. Attention is directed to such facts as salmon being their main food source, the dugout canoe as their method of transportation, and wooden lodges as their traditional dwelling. These constitute the extent of information provided about Aboriginal people that live along the Pacific Coast (Clark 1989: 100).

Simple black and white sketches accompany each characteristic emphasizing the historic nature of each description. Though sketches accompany some written text in these examples of identity, the combination of image and text together provide a sense of Aboriginal identity that may be different than if it were a stand-alone image without text, or a description of Aboriginal identity. For example, the combination of text and image together influences the way we may think about the content of either the image alone, and/ or just text. By combining these two elements together, meanings are altered and often granted more legitimacy (Rose 2001). In other words, by accompanying images based upon Western notions of identity, together the content of the image and text allow students to situate Aboriginal identity in relation to what they know socially and culturally. A similar chart including few details is also used in Canada: Exploring New Directions identifying various key characteristics to define Aboriginal identity. For example, and in comparison to the information included in Canada: Land of Diversity, Pacific Coast Indians ate mostly a variety of seafood, living in large plank houses and
lived along the rugged coast (Hildebrand 1990: 86). A black and white photograph of a Nootka woman dressed in clothing “made from bark” (Hildebrand 1990: 86), accompanied by a caption explaining that she was a traditional gatherer of bark provides the only visual representation of a Nootka woman in the entire textbook and is the only representation of Nootka culture.

Figure 5.3 A Nootka woman of the Pacific Coast (Krueger 1991: 89)
As well, the composition of the image suggests that the *personal* and particular identity of the women in not necessarily as important as the portrayal of a *primitive* identity. The person in the image is standing off to the side, making it difficult to view her face. These few pictures and limited commentaries of Aboriginal peoples prior to the 20th century are the only evidence of Aboriginal tradition, history, or presence in Canada. Not only do they fail to offer adequate information such as the significance of important traditions such as the potlatch, for example, but also they suggest that Aboriginal peoples did not contribute to the development of Canada past the beginning of the 20th century. For the most part, the majority of Aboriginal content in textbooks revolves around defining Aboriginal identity, from the point of contact with European settlers and fur traders in the 18th century, leading up to the end of the fur trade.

**Aboriginal peoples in current times**

Aboriginal peoples appear again in limited areas of textbooks, but as integrated members of contemporary society. I argue that because of the significant focus on Aboriginal identities of the past, these Western, defined Aboriginal identities underpin contemporary conceptualization of Aboriginal identity for students. The absence of Aboriginal content that extends from the 18th to the 19th centuries suggests that Aboriginal people were non-existent and unimportant to the development of Canada, between the fur trade and contemporary times. While each of the eight textbooks within this study recognizes the
role of Aboriginal peoples within a contemporary context, each text limits its approach to Aboriginal content through a Western perspective.

Contemporary conceptualizations of Aboriginal peoples engaged in the modern economy suggest that they are dependent, assimilated, and subordinate. Dependency is demonstrated through the way in which remote Aboriginal communities rely on assistance and receive food. An image of an airplane bringing in supplies to a remote location demonstrates how contemporary Aboriginal communities are dependent on modern methods of transportation and external support (Hannell 1987: 92). The portrayal of smiling Aboriginal children in a grocery store shopping imbues a sense that these children are happy with this modern system as opposed to traditional ways of hunting and fishing (Draper 1990: 313). This is the perspective of contemporary life in northern Aboriginal communities to which students are exposed, a perspective that makes no critical reference to how this dependency evolved and/or an analysis of why formerly independent Aboriginal people have become reliant upon external supplies.

Dependency on a state-supported welfare system is also portrayed through the inclusion in textbooks of high unemployment and welfare statistics. Canada: Exploring New Directions, states that Aboriginal peoples have a difficult time “holding down a job” (Hildebrand 1990: 89). Without adequate explanation that supports what is revealed in the statistics, such as a 95 percent unemployment rate on reserves, quantitative representations on their own portray a bleak situation for Aboriginal peoples. Devoid of any additional information, the unfortunate circumstances, including the lack of
opportunities resulting from the Federal government’s establishment of Aboriginal reserves on unproductive lands; and the lack of adequate Aboriginal coverage in the state education system that continues to render Aboriginal peoples as invisible to mainstream society, suggests that the poor economic conditions were possibly preventable, leaving only Aboriginal people to blame. This also fails to reflect the number of Aboriginal peoples living in urban areas. Currently, in Ontario, more than 50 percent of all Aboriginal peoples live in urban areas (Paul 2006).

Past misconceptions and the perpetuation of ignorance have contributed to contemporary views of how Aboriginal people have become dependent upon the welfare system in Ontario. Portrayed in Across Canada as being a drain on the state, Hannell argues “early attempts to give aid to the Indians in the form of welfare did not solve their problem” (Hannell 1987: 98). A generalized statement directed toward all Aboriginal peoples is problematic in that it excludes non-Aboriginal peoples and their welfare dependency; and it reinforces a hierarchy between Aboriginal peoples and the state, essentially reinforcing colonial mechanisms. A schematic diagram that illustrates the various areas where Aboriginal people require assistance and also what opportunities they have failed to exploit suggests that Aboriginal peoples are solely responsible for their failures within a Western context and have no one else to blame but themselves (Hannell 1987).

Further, Aboriginal identity is classified and perpetuated through a Western lens stigmatizing Aboriginal peoples by their appearance, links to alcohol abuse, and their role
in public protests. Again in *Across Canada*, the front page of the chapter on Human Diversity features three colour images of three young boys. Under each image a caption attempts to define each boy’s nationality: “An Indian, an Inuit, and A (sic) person from Southeast Asia” (Hannell 1987: 85). These images are problematic for a variety of reasons and contribute to the perpetuation of ignorance and racism. First, the images define each boy by virtue of their perceived appearance. Without any additional background information, including a source for each image, students are asked to define identity by image without additional support.

![Image of three young boys](image)

**Figure 5.4 a) An Indian; b) An Inuit; c) A Person from Southeast Asia (Hannell 1987: 85)**

Alcohol abuse is associated with Aboriginal peoples in Canada through examples of higher than average statistics of incarceration, diabetes, and domestic violence.
(Dickason 2002; Knopf 2008; Valaskakis 2003; Silman 1997). Although these statistics reflect problems experienced by Aboriginal peoples, there is a tendency for Western society to identify Aboriginal peoples by their relationship to alcoholism, which only serves to perpetuate these stereotypes. Thus, in *Canada: Land of Diversity*, attention is drawn to the topic of alcohol abuse by placing this information under bold and enlarged title: *Native Peoples and the Land*. The image of a sign stating in bold red letters, "NOTICE: This is a dry camp possession or consumption of alcohol in any form will be cause for immediate dismissal. The Management, Esso Resources Canada Limited (Clark 1989: 115)." The caption beside the image states, "Alcohol abuse is a common problem in many areas of the Far North" (Clark 1989:115). The text accompanying this image includes a hypothetical situation describing development in the north that is met by concerned citizens. There is no other information explaining the image. The image is from the wall of the Esso Corporation, and refers to rules set out in the camp by the corporation. The only other information in the text states, "Alcoholism will likely become a bigger problem" (Clark 1989: 114). This image and caption are problematic in that they perpetuate Aboriginal stereotypes about Aboriginal alcohol abuse. There is no explanation about how alcohol was first introduced to Aboriginal communities or about the lack of community services in remote locations available for alcohol abusers. Also, this image is of a corporate site and has nothing to do with an Aboriginal community. The author suggests that since there is alcohol mentioned at a northern site, it has something to
do with an Aboriginal community and nothing to do with the employees who are sent there to work from other parts of Canada.

As Aboriginal people have worked toward bringing more awareness of the effects of colonialism, much of Western society continues to associate the Aboriginal voice with public displays of protest. Other textbooks that have been analyzed associate Aboriginal demonstrations as deviant and disruptive and feature images of Aboriginal peoples engaged in them as disruptive to the social construction of Western civilized order (Paul 2007; Fletcher 2000). Thus Canada: the Land and its People features a single black and white photograph of a group of Aboriginal peoples engaged in what appears to be a demonstration. Two Aboriginal women are holding placards stating, “Trudeau sold our rights”, and “Treaty and Aboriginal Rights to be entrenched in the Constitution” (Last 1985: 54). The textbook fails to provide any context or explanation as to why Aboriginal women might be engaging in a public demonstration. Further exacerbating the notion that the textbook is focused on the act of demonstration by Aboriginal peoples, the image is positioned directly above text that is bolded and in large font: “Values and Tensions” (Last 1985: 54). Although there is no explanation of what Aboriginal people are demonstrating about, the association of the bolded title and the image implies a negative message of protests.

Textbooks have also Westernized Aboriginal concepts of place, essentially misinforming students of the significance of place in Aboriginal cosmologies. By ignoring Aboriginal conceptualizations of the importance of territory, the significance of
a particular place is challenged when *Across Canada* features a discussion of the relocation of a small Inuit village in Northern Canada (Hannell 1987: 91). Emphasis is focused on how the Canadian government had the foresight to recognize unsafe and unsanitary conditions, and consequently relocate the community to another location nearby. To students, this may be viewed as a positive and humanitarian act, yet there is no recognition of the cultural significance of place for Aboriginal peoples or the disruption to their way of life as they are relocated. As Basso (1996) points out, for Aboriginal peoples, the significance of place supersedes time, and it is often difficult for non-Aboriginal peoples to comprehend the significance of place in contrast and relation to Western ways of understanding time over place (Basso 1996). *Canada: Exploring New Directions* focusing solely on Western ways of thinking about place and supports the importance of boundaries and ownership by stating that, “land always comes with a deed” (Hildebrand 1990: 111). The notion of all lands being owned goes against traditional Aboriginal ways of thinking: whereby Aboriginal peoples are engaged within a relationship with the land, land that sustains life, and where all people are responsible for the wellbeing of the land that is not ownable (Valaskakis 2003).

*Contact Canada* (1988), on the authorized list until 2002, provides the most obtuse form of ignorance in its portrayal of Aboriginal content. It creates a fictitious Aboriginal territory, Inuvial, which depicts Aboriginal society from pre-contact to contemporary times (Cartwright 1988: 271). It is accompanied by an equally fictitious map of the territory and provides scenarios describing the challenges of this hypothetical
Indigenous ways of life. Several key points are similar to Aboriginal life in the North such as the dependency on the modern amenities of processed and packaged food and power resources. However, there is no explanation as to why the author opted to discuss Aboriginal life through a fictitious lens and why he/she fails to inform students that the contents are not based on an actual northern Aboriginal community. A review of the entire textbook reveals that this is the only section that incorporates fiction. To most experienced analysts, it is obvious that the content is loosely based upon a remote Northern Aboriginal community. However, there is no way for students to discern what parts of this section are legitimate. This only proves to contribute to existing confusion about Aboriginal peoples in an education system that is already silent or misinformed on Aboriginal content.

**Conclusion**

This chapter has demonstrated that, even when well-intentioned, state-authorized textbooks, are commissioned and produced, the marginalization of Aboriginal content persists. By closely examining Aboriginal content for its placement within the textbooks, I have identified three particular time periods in which Aboriginal content is limited: The distant past that discusses the arrival of Aboriginal peoples across the Beringia Strait as far back as 30,000 ago; the contributions of Aboriginal peoples up to the end of the fur trade, when traders no longer relied on Aboriginal assistance in navigating the wilderness; and then again when Aboriginal peoples reappear in contemporary times as participants in
the current economy. The suggestion that Aboriginal peoples are marginalized in mainstream Ontario textbooks involves more than just their mere absence from the entire content. The argument is also made regarding the way in which Aboriginal content is included in mainstream education as far more damaging through the specific means of presentation in the text.

The textbook analysis was limited to examining eight Grade 9 Geography textbooks authorized for use by the Ministry. Because it also aligns textbook content with three different curriculum reform cycles from the same time period, it is necessary to point out that of the eight textbooks, five remained in circulation over the course of all three curriculum reform periods. Also, there were no new textbooks authorized for use for Grade 9 Geography after 1991. This means that during both the Common Curriculum (1993) and the Ontario Curriculum (1999) cycles, the only textbooks that remained in circulation would have been out of date, as they were initially authorized for use according to their alignment with OSIS (1988) curriculum.

The analysis of Grade 9 Geography textbook content, though revealing a great deal about the explicit way in which Aboriginal peoples are marginalized through the content illustrates how the Ontario education system has embraced, and is committed to the perpetuation of nation-building. Not only do textbooks demonstrate important information in what they include, but also through the absence of content. Furthermore, the implicit messages such as the use of out of date textbooks, textbooks that coincide with several different reform cycles, reveal the extent to which content is generalized and
produced in such a way that they are able to relay what information is deemed necessary about Aboriginal peoples and the Canadian imaginary, while remaining in circulation over longer periods of time.

Finally, the way that content focuses on the importance of advancing student’s knowledge about the changing economic structure of the Ontario education system is also revealed in the way in which textbooks supply is managed. Clearly, textbook publishers have been forced, through the regulations of Circular 14, to adapt textbook content to include more pertinent information about the global economic pressures on society, and to meet the need for students to learn about the global economic condition. But there also lies within the way in which textbooks are supplied communicates another underlying message that suggests that Canada’s image in the globalizing world not only influences what we think about, but also how we go about understanding.
Chapter 6

Conclusion

Despite the Ontario education system’s commitment to embrace cultural diversity, Aboriginal peoples continue to be marginalized in mainstream education. My examination of Grade 9 Geography curricula and textbooks between 1988 and 1999 has demonstrated that Aboriginal coverage in education has perpetuated and proliferated the historically constructed, and static identity of Aboriginal peoples as developed when nation-building became a high priority for the Canadian government beginning in the 19th century. This perpetuation of the social construction of Aboriginal peoples as they were conceived as the nation-building agenda was building momentum is particularly problematic, especially since they were portrayed as primitive, subordinate, and savage-like (Nelles 1999; Osborne 1992; Valaskakis 2005; Paul 2006). The education system has been instrumental in perpetuating ignorance in relation to how mainstream students have learned about the social construction of Aboriginal peoples.

From the inception of Ontario’s organized mainstream education system, Aboriginal peoples have been segregated from mainstream students. As early as the mid-
19\textsuperscript{th} century, Aboriginal students were segregated in a separate Residential schooling system that was designed to “reliev[e] [Aboriginal children] from the influences of Indianism and bring them under those of civilization” (Milloy 1999: 28). Though I have not discussed the Residential Schools in great depth, recognizing the significance of separating Aboriginal students from those in the mainstream is important. It highlights that from the earliest days of Ontario’s education system, mainstream students had minimal exposure to Aboriginal cultures, traditions, and oral histories.

Ontario students tended to rely on mechanisms within the organized education system to learn about Aboriginal peoples. The use of common textbooks to disseminate information across the province has played a particularly important role in perpetuating historic Aboriginal identities that had been constructed during early contact between settlers and Aboriginal peoples. When Egerton Ryerson was superintendent of Ontario schools through the mid 19\textsuperscript{th} century, he argued that textbooks were ideal media for the distribution of common, but relevant information about building a cohesive Canadian society to students across the province. Over time, textbooks have also continued to embrace the national imaginary. As nationalizing states have emerged out of colonial pasts they have focused on the development of a collective history to nurture a common destiny. Embedded in the nation-building narrative was the notion that Aboriginal peoples were closely linked to the wilderness of the new colony: as wild and in need of order and civilizing (Cronon 1995; Demeritt 2001). Such images were well lodged in the collective memories of settlers, and then legitimizd and reinforced through the education system.
The appointment of Lorne Pierce and C.W. Jefferys by Ryerson’s publishing company in the early part of the 20th century reinforced these dominant Aboriginal stereotypes. First, Lorne Pierce, appointed as editor at Ryerson Press, sought to advance his conceptualization of the nation-building agenda through text (Campbell 1995). Then, as editor, Pierce hired C.W. Jefferys, as illustrator. Jefferys’ illustrations profoundly altered the way Ontario students viewed and understood Canada’s history (Osborne 1992). The mythic images of Aboriginal peoples exposed students to a particular perspective of Aboriginal peoples, as conceived by Jefferys during their early contact with settlers. Because these symbolic devices continue to act as text, they contribute to the perpetuation of the constructed collective memory that has shaped the way Canadians have learned about Canadian society and culture (Osborne 2001). Though these symbolic devices, such as didactic monuments, are a common feature in the Canadian landscape, they are “constantly being re-negotiated to cultivate a people’s identification with the nationalizing-state through foundation myths, heroic narratives, the personification of assumed national qualities” (Osborne 2001: 9). Yet, they also serve as a reminder of the development of the national imaginary and the notion that this historic national imaginary is necessary to Canadian in the context of multiculturalism.

The emphasis placed on perpetuating the historic Canadian imaginary, is arguably at the core of the concept of multiculturalism. The introduction of multiculturalism in the 1970s was considered by many to be a positive step toward the recognition of culturally diverse groups, including Aboriginal cultures and identities across Canada. Introduced as
a response to dramatic changes in Canada’s cultural composition, multiculturalism sought to recognize the evolving culturally diverse heritage of Canada, as well as instilling citizenship rights where no ethnic groups would take precedence over another. And though the education system has made a concerted effort to incorporate cultural content since the 1970s, the way in which it has or has not incorporated Aboriginal content has clearly been directed by multiculturalism policies.

In this thesis, I have demonstrated how in the context of multiculturalism, Aboriginal peoples have been rendered absent, and not considered a priority for inclusion in mainstream education. Regardless of efforts to incorporate Aboriginal content, there is no real necessity for education to merge Aboriginal coverage into mainstream programming. However, after carefully unpacking the multicultural policies, and how they have been interpreted and incorporated into public education, I have argued that multiculturalism paradoxically defines, differentiates, and marginalizes immigrant groups, while rendering Aboriginal peoples absent. The concept of multiculturalism has reinforced cultural hierarchies and the dominance of Whiteness through the evolution of immigration policies, and in particular how it requires education to incorporate information about immigrant and Aboriginal groups. Directed toward establishing a relationship between descendents of the original settler groups: the English and the French, and those groups that are classified as newcomers: non-western European immigrants, Aboriginal peoples have been rendered absent from any part of multicultural policies. This method of completely casting aside cultural groups, by segregating cultural content, highlighting
diverse cultures and traditions as anomalous to what is considered the norm, and marginalizing the requirements for teachers to incorporate Aboriginal content, supports Cole’s (2007) claims that multiculturalism is indeed a form of cultural genocide (Cole 2007).

There appeared to have been some semblance of recognition for the need to increase the inclusion of Aboriginal content in mainstream education in the 1980s. With supplementary publications to mainstream education about Aboriginal peoples; and acknowledgment for increased Aboriginal content in mainstream education, according to the SERP report, there continued to be few requirements for more integrated Aboriginal coverage in curriculum, reform documents, and textbooks. Though the SERP committee made recommendations in 1981 that Canadian History and Geography programming should “embrace the contributions of the Inuit and Indian cultures” (Leithwood 1984: 34), the SERP committee’s suggestions were directed toward Aboriginal students rather than those in the mainstream.

My examination of the curricula and textbooks in the years following the report demonstrates that these recommendations were no more than rhetoric, and that Whiteness in education has continued to be the norm. Until there is reconceptualization of multiculturalism that incorporates the voices of culturally diverse peoples including those of Aboriginal groups, then education will continue to proliferate the messages of the historic national imaginary rather than that which reflects the current multi-cultural Canadian state.
The Project of Nation-building and recommendations for future research

In 1991, the Federal government entered into a Royal Commission on Aboriginal peoples to address the many issues surrounding Aboriginal identity and status in Canada. After an extensive process that resulted in numerous recommendations, the government, to date, has failed to implement any initiatives that could better integrate Aboriginal culture and identity as part of mainstream Canadian culture (Valaskakis 2005). Rather than considering Aboriginal peoples as part of Canada’s mainstream imaginary, the nation-building framework continues as it was intended: nurturing a sense of social cohesion and a commonality among Canadian citizens, but within a bicultural framework. Under this imagined framework, Aboriginal peoples remain in a silo, insulated from becoming part of any mainstream model that might recognize differences.

The education system has, in turn, followed up with initiatives that would introduce more Aboriginal programming to mainstream education. However, rather than developing Aboriginal content in mainstream curricula that could expose more mainstream students to Aboriginal cultures and identities, the education system has continued to view the need for more “Aboriginal education” as a problem to be addressed for the sole benefit of additional educational opportunities for Aboriginal peoples rather than to improved Aboriginal coverage for those in the mainstream. The Ontario Ministry of Education has invested in the development of a more intensive Aboriginal-specific programming in the form of a suite of Aboriginal programs offered by the Ontario
Ministry of Education. However, there continues to be a social divide through the way in which this sort of programming is offered. Post-1999, the introduction of Aboriginal programming directed toward the preservation and perpetuation of Aboriginal cultures, traditions, and languages has been introduced to a limited group of students in sporadic northern and remote locations. While being promoted as Aboriginal-specific programming that has been included as part of the mainstream Ontario education system, the opportunities for mainstream students are limited to locations where Aboriginal students are the majority.6

A brief review of curricula and textbooks from 2000 to 2010 reveals that there has been an even further emphasis on the development of the Canadian national imaginary: a focus on commonality, the importance of integration into the mainstream as contributors to Canada’s economic well-being. Curriculum reform has been limited to revising out of date policies, and this had had the effect of flattening the already sparse cultural content that existed in prevailing policies. Teachers are encouraged to turn students’ cultural focus outward toward the more global sphere rather than directing them to recognize the shift in the local cultural landscape.

As textbooks continue to be aligned with curriculum, and there is a continuous and increasing pressure for publishers to more efficiently produce books, textbook content continues to reinforce the concept of Canada’s economic development over the

6 The data supporting this was received from the Ontario Ministry of Education, and poses an opportunity for further research in the geography of Aboriginal education in Ontario.
recognition of cultural diversity in a global context. Essentially, the bottom line of
efficiency in a global context is underpinned by national social cohesion.

I would like to recommend an examination of the evolution of the next generation
of curricula and textbooks in the 21st Century. Without consideration for the re-evaluation
of the concept of multiculturalism, then curriculum, textbooks, and even educational
opportunities using new technologies, education policies will continue to cast culturally
diverse groups aside from what is deemed as mainstream, rendering them as though they
are absent and redundant.
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Textbook Resources


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