

Honouring Experience: Cross-Cultural Relationships between Indigenous and
Settler Women in British Columbia, 1960 - 2009

By

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B.A. Honours, Queen's University, 2007

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Abstract

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This thesis examines cross-cultural relationships between Indigenous and Settler women to challenge the dominant historiography that has overlooked women's lived experiences, and fill a gap in the literature concerning Indigenous – Settler relations. Conceptualizing the history of Indigenous – Settler relations as microhistories, this thesis argues that an increase of in case studies that are focused on Indigenous women's experiences, is useful in order to nuance how historians think about colonialism at a macro level. Using a dialogical approach I have situated myself as a participant within the research project and was able to partake in oral history interviews with Stó:lō and Settler women throughout the lower mainland in British Columbia. Throughout my discussions, it became apparent that female cross-cultural relationships occurred at certain places. Thus, this project analyzes the nature of female cross-cultural relationships that developed because of the residential school system, community interactions and religion. Were Indigenous and Settler women able to form meaningful relationships at these sites? If so, did these relationships change over the course of the twentieth century? By focusing on Indigenous women's experiences at these sites of encounter, it will be demonstrated that Settler women's colonial mindsets did not always determine the nature of cross-cultural interactions. This project makes important contributions towards an understanding of why some cross-cultural relationships were more meaningful and reciprocal than others. An analysis of colonial discourse coupled with case studies based on oral interviews offers a complex study of how colonialism and the dominant culture were experienced by Indigenous women in British Columbia from 1960 to 2009.

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Dedication

For my family

Introduction

Colonialism in Twentieth Century Canada and Defining the Colonial Project

In 1831 a Chief Factor of the Hudson's Bay Company, Colin Robertson, and his Indigenous wife, Theresa, came to the Red River settlement hoping that Theresa might make the acquaintance of the Governor's wife, Francis Simpson. Simpson remarks, "Robertson brought his bit of Brown wt. him to the settlement in hopes that She would pick up a few English manners before visiting the civilized world ... I told him distinctly that the thing was impossible which mortified him exceedingly."¹ Simpson's comment alerts us to the work the colonial project did in producing gendered and racial hierarchies, augmented by the appearance and settlement of white women in the Canadian West during the nineteenth century. Increasingly derogatory language and segregation which reduced perceptions of Indigenous women "to beasts of burden ... sexualized them ... deprived them of their status, and ... fit them into categories," has been attributed to the settlement of the white woman newcomer in much of the historiography examining cross-cultural relationships between settler and Indigenous women.²

The literature concerning female cross-cultural relationships presents competing claims about the nature of relationships between Indigenous and Settler women. On one hand, the majority of historians who have studied these relationships argue that the arrival of white women increased racism towards Indigenous women. Alternatively, some historians who study detailed

¹Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980): 204-205.

²In Mary Ellen Kelm and Loran Townsend's book, *In the Days of our Grandmothers*, they write that ignorance of Indigenous women's voices in the historical record has had the effect of silencing and ignoring Indigenous women in political and social discourse as well. Indeed, the impact of colonialism and history that perpetuates colonial attitudes "continue to contribute to the epistemic and very physical forms of violence that Aboriginal women endure today." Mary Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend. *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Aboriginal Women's History in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006): 16.

examples of these relationships argue that bonds of femininity overwhelmed colonialism. This project considers both of these arguments, but is most concerned with the complexity of female cross-cultural relationships in a colonial setting from 1960 to 2009 in British Columbia.

The cross-cultural relationships highlighted in this project occurred between 1960 and 2009: the point at which I wrote this thesis. There are a couple of important reasons why such contemporary work must be called history that requires further explanation. While working and living with people from Stó:lō Nation, I witnessed how each person was living in an environment and participating in a culture profoundly shaped and impacted by history. The pride in reviving and reconnecting with cultural and spiritual lifeways as well as an increase in the exercise of the right to self-determination are all processes rooted in a history of colonialism for the Stó:lō peoples. To that extent, female cross-cultural relationships are both a product of the history of colonialism, and in more contemporary times, examples of a resistance to the history of colonialism. Xwě lī qwěł tēl, the honourable Steven L. Point, OBC, Lieutenant Governor of British Columbia writes in the introduction to *A Stó:lō - Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, of the impact that a history of colonialism has had on Stó:lō Nations' contemporary world. In particular, he tells a story of attending university and watching a film in a psychology course that was about racism. The film in his words, featured

[h]alf a class of students [wearing] collars, and the other half did not. The kids with collars were designated the bad kids – no good, not worth anything, lazy, stupid, in every way different from the kids without collars. The film documents the behavioural changes of the kids with collars. They start hanging their heads down. They start acting up and being bad. They do not want the collar on any more. The kids without collars snicker: “Ha, ha, look at you kids! You are bad, you have a collar on!” They point fingers at them, they throw things at them, and they laugh. As an Aboriginal person, I have had a collar on my whole life. There were times when I prayed to have it taken off. It kills me when my kids come home and tell me that they do not want to be Native. This

is what we have to live with in our own country.³

Point's experience is demonstrative of a struggle against internalized colonialism, which is very much the impact that history has had on lived realities. In the case of contemporary female cross-cultural relationships, the past forms the present.

Throughout the research process, I have been committed to oral history as a way to discuss Indigenous women's lived experiences. These lived experiences are a lens through which to study the history of colonialism. Given a gap in the literature concerning female cross-cultural relationships and oral histories, as well as little archival information in the British Columbia Provincial archives and the Stó:lō archives, the interviews I had the opportunity to be a part of were made necessary by the contemporary time period I studied. The best evidence of female cross-cultural relationships, then, are the contemporary examples from 1960 to 2009 that are rooted in a history of cross-cultural encounters.

Sarah Carter's definition of the colonial project has contributed largely to how I have approached the study of female cross-cultural relationships. She uses the term 'colonial project' to describe how programs, institutions, actions and popular beliefs combined to influence the Canadian government's and dominant Canadian society's interactions with Indigenous nations. To Carter, the colonial project is not just the official actions of the government but also includes churches, extra-governmental organizations and everyday racism that works together to form a dominant Canadian society with an underlying aim of assimilating Indigenous peoples. Moreover, the colonial project was an attempt at controlling Indigenous peoples and nations to ensure settler access to lands and resources in the territory that has become Canada, and in order to legitimize the Canadian state. Carter demonstrates that the success of the Canadian state-

³ Xwě lī qwěł těl, the honourable Steven L. Point, "Foreward," in *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, Keith Thor Carlson, ed. and Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Cultural Advisor: iii.

building project was (and is) contingent on controlling Indigenous populations.

A major component of the colonial project has been the segregation of Indigenous and Settler populations. The isolation of Indigenous peoples from interaction with Settler society, except in highly assimilative environments like reserves and residential schools, was a reality for the majority of Indigenous and Settler peoples. However, while studying cross-cultural relationships, it became clear that despite a policy of segregation to bring about the assimilation of Indigenous nations, the effectiveness of the colonial project is debatable. Indigenous women and Settler women have formed meaningful relationships within and outside of colonial institutions, while resisting and surviving colonialism. Evidently, full success of the colonial project would require full hegemony.

My use of ‘cultural hegemony’ has been influenced by Antonio Gramsci, who postulates that in cross-cultural and culturally diverse communities, one social class can rule over others by working to make their ideas the norm until they are taken as universal ideologies. Moreover, the ideologies of the ruling class come to be perceived as benefiting everyone, even though they primarily benefit those in power. Hegemony denotes a common mindset on the part of colonists, men and women and the ultimate acceptance of the colonial values by Indigenous people.

But did women share the same beliefs and behaviors as men when it came to dealing with the ‘Other’? In order to call into question the nature of these cross-cultural relationships, as they exist within a dominant culture of colonialism, this paper will focus on three questions that are unanswered in much of the historiography concerning Indigenous – Settler relationships: 1) To what extent did the colonial project dictate the experiences of, and nature of, cross-cultural relationships? 2) Given that Indigenous and Settler populations were encouraged to exist in

isolation from each other how was it possible for Indigenous and Settler women to form cross-cultural relationships? Finally, 3) Can we better understand the nature of these relationships by focusing on Indigenous women's experiences with settler women? Where female cross-cultural relationships are discussed in literature, they are primarily dealt as complying with an understood narrative of colonialism. The accepted historical narrative of colonialism, understands the colonial project at a macro, or discursive level.⁴ By focusing on Indigenous women's experiences, I can demonstrate why a discourse of colonialism is not enough for a study of Indigenous-settler relations. Rather an approach that recognizes both experience and discourse demonstrates that colonialism in British Columbia never reached a point of total hegemony during the twentieth century.

To understand how colonialism persists in the twentieth century, this project features several case studies that are based on the experiences of colonialism at the level of the individual from 1960 to 2009. The colonial project has produced a backdrop of unequal power relationships, against which the following case studies must be read. Elizabeth Furniss writes, "[p]ower exists not only in the activities of the state, its agencies and institutions, and their supporting bureaucratic ideologies. It is also deeply embedded in cultural forms and practices that frame commonsense understandings of the world."⁵ I argue that despite the impact of colonialism on these relationships, there are examples of women who transcended the boundaries of colonialism to forge meaningful friendships. This thesis supports the claim that a colonial hegemony was never attained, by revealing a series of meaningful and reciprocal cross-cultural relationships that developed in the face of the colonial project. The study of cross-cultural

⁵Elizabeth Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999): 4.

relationships, also contributes to furthering an understanding of Indigenous resistance to the twentieth century colonial project. Indigenous resistance to colonialism has been studied in terms of legal, legislative and spiritual resistance, but this project will demonstrate that social relationships are another ‘space’ where resistance emerged. How Indigenous and Settler women were able to form meaningful relationships that were not always predicated on an Indigenous woman’s acceptance of Settler lifeways, in the face of a colonial project that advocated for segregation and assimilation, suggests a failure of colonial hegemony in twentieth century British Columbia. Understanding how Indigenous women have experienced colonialism adds an important missing element to the historical record because Indigenous voices shed light on experiences of colonialism, which would otherwise be forgotten. By studying the experiences of cross-cultural relationships, this project traces the history of Stó:lō women’s experiences with Settler women from 1960 to 2009 and tells us that there are examples of meaningful cross-cultural relationships where Indigenous and Settler peoples were increasingly able to resist the hegemony of colonialism in pursuit of an alternative to the colonial reality.

A Note on Vocabulary: ‘Indigenous’ and ‘Settler’

I recognize that there is power in the language I choose and therefore have thought seriously about the words that I will use when discussing individuals and groups. I do not wish to polarize people by placing them into groups, nor do I subscribe to a language that pits ‘us’ versus ‘them’ to mark cultural distinctions. For the purposes of my project, I choose to use the terms ‘Indigenous’ and ‘Settler’ as defined by the works of Taiaiaike Alfred, Jeff Corntassel, Adam Barker and Paulette Regan, but recognize that these terms are as complex as they are subtle and require further explanation. Alfred and Corntassel’s use of ‘Indigenous’ in their work; *Being Indigenous*, defines the construction of an identity that is

shaped and lived in the politicized context of contemporary colonialism. The communities, clans, nations and tribes we call Indigenous people are just that: Indigenous to the lands they inhabit in contrast to and in contention with the colonial societies and states that have spread out from Europe and other centers of empire. It is oppositional, place-based existence, along with consciousness of being in struggle against the dispossessing and demeaning facts of colonialization by foreign peoples that fundamentally distinguishes Indigenous peoples from other peoples of the world.⁶

The term ‘Indigenous’ was popularized in the 1970’s at the insistence of the American Indian Movement and National Indian Brotherhood.⁷ In some ways the term ‘Indigenous’ is problematic because it groups many distinct populations together “whose experiences under imperialism have been vastly different.”⁸ However, it is a term that I chose to use because it “internationalizes the experiences, the issues and the struggles of some of the world’s colonized peoples.”⁹ Linda Tuhiwai Smith explains that Indigenous peoples who have faced imperialism and colonialism, are united in a pursuit of self-determination. In fact, “the final ‘s’ in ‘indigenous peoples’ is about self-determination: right of peoples to self-determination, also used as a way of recognizing that there are real differences between different indigenous peoples.”¹⁰

The word ‘Indigenous’ is an umbrella term, but is powerful insofar as it can unite groups of people and nations who have been

subjected to the colonization of their lands and cultures, and the denial of their sovereignty, by a colonizing society that has come to dominate and determine the shape and quality of their lives, even after it has formally pulled out.¹¹

In order to describe non-Indigenous peoples that live on the land mass known as North

⁶Taiaiake Alfred and Jeff Corntassel, “Being Indigenous Resurgences against Contemporary Colonialism,” in *Government and Opposition*, 40: 4 (2005): 597.

⁷ The National Indian Brotherhood transitioned into the Assembly of First Nations in 1982.

⁸Linda Tuhiwai-Smith. *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. (London: Zed Books, 1999): 7

⁹Tuhiwai-Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*: 7.

¹⁰Tuhiwai-Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*: 7.

¹¹Tuhiwai-Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*: 7.

America -- and thought of here as Turtle Island¹² -- I use the word ‘Settler’ as defined by Adam Barker and Paulette Regan. As a term, ‘Settler’ is used in a more complex way than simply non-Indigenous. Non-Indigenous refers to the people who have come to live on this land, but their cultural and linguistic homelands are elsewhere.¹³ Barker remarks that only associating ‘Settler’ with non-Indigenous “ignores the complexity of settler society and culture itself, and normalizes non-Indigenous society, preventing much useful analysis.”¹⁴ Rather, ‘Settler’ will be used here to denote “people who occupy lands previously stolen or in the process of being taken from their Indigenous inhabitants, or who are otherwise members of the ‘Settler society’ which is founded on co-opted lands and resources.”¹⁵ Moreover, I use the term ‘Settler’ to call attention to the power, privilege and history that is “vested in their [our] legacy of [as] colonizers.”¹⁶ It is important to recognize that these definitions are neither complete nor comprehensive and that many hybrid identities exist. Indeed, Alfred and Corntassel write that “[t]here are, of course, vast differences among the world’s Indigenous peoples in their cultures, political-economic situations, and in their relationships with colonizing Settler societies.”¹⁷ However, in order to illuminate the power dynamics at work in British Columbia there is a need to “draw a distinction between Indigenous inhabitants of the general continental area (...) and those whose heritage

¹²The term “Turtle Island” is a concept and belief embedded in Indigenous consciousness used here to describe the landmass that is known as North America. ‘Turtle Island’ describes a commonly held Indigenous worldview that describes Indigenous peoples’ relationship to the land. I use it here to de-centre Western geographical dominance and remind readers that there are alternatives to understanding our relationship with the land we currently are on.

¹³ Tuhiwai-Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*: 7.

¹⁴ Adam Barker, *Being Colonial: Colonial mentalities in Canadian Settler society and political theory*, Master’s Thesis (University of Victoria, 2006): 2

¹⁵ Barker, *Being Colonial: Colonial mentalities in Canadian Settler society and political theory*: 2.

¹⁶ Tuhiwai-Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*: 7.

¹⁷ Alfred and Corntassel, “Being Indigenous Resurgences against Contemporary Colonialism,” 597.

originates elsewhere.”¹⁸ Simply put, by defining Settler society and Settlers, I hope to reveal a power relationship that privileges individuals because of “imperial oppression of the original inhabitants of a territory – “colonizers, forced to exploit in order to enjoy the fruits of colonialism.”¹⁹ Recognizing individuals’ and groups’ positions in the historical power relationships that exist in Canada is important in the pursuit of decolonization.

As a Settler Canadian from Six Nations territory in Southern Ontario, I recognize my position in the history that I study and take seriously my responsibility not to engage in a colonizing history, whereby some historians are

content to focus only on creating biased stories about the past and would be happy if modern Native people would stop dwelling on the transgressions committed by long-dead colonists and get on with life.²⁰

While writing and researching, I am a visitor on Straits Salish and Coast Salish territory, as well as participating in discussions as a visitor to Stó:lō territory, and I feel lucky to have been able to spend time on this coast. I have worked to situate myself in this history because I understand that “complex histories and cultures and devastating past (and present) relations with non-Natives” have shaped modern realities for Indigenous people.²¹

Theoretical Framework and Methodology: Reconciliation, Decolonization and Dialogism

Some historical writing has sought to understand different cultures for the purpose of

¹⁸Barker, *Being Colonial: Colonial mentalities in Canadian Settler society and political theory*, article: 2.

¹⁹Barker, *Being Colonial: Colonial mentalities in Canadian Settler society and political theory*, article: 2.

²⁰Devon Abbott Mihesua, “Should American Indian History Remain a Field of Study?” in *Indigenizing the academy: transforming scholarship and empowering communities*, Devon Abbott Mihesua and Angela Cavendor Wilson, eds. (Lincoln: University of Nebraska, 2004): 145.

²¹Mihesua, “Should American Indian History Remain a Field of Study?” *Indigenizing the academy: transforming scholarship and empowering communities*, eds. Devon Abbott Mihesua and Angela Cavendor Wilson: 146.

“coexistence and humanistic enlargements of horizons, and the will to dominate for the purposes of control and external domination.” The impact of histories that perpetuate colonial attitudes “continue to contribute to the epistemic and very physical forms of violence that Indigenous women and men endure today.”²² Recognizing that writing potent political histories can be used to “create social change and promote justice,” I intend to write in the spirit of decolonizing and “just reconciliation” scholarship.²³

This project is both a macrohistorical and microhistorical project. When I write about the discourse of colonialism, I am conceptualizing a historical narrative of colonialism at a macrohistorical level. Macrohistory is useful because it answers “the question “what?”” and therefore helps to establish the context under which cross-cultural relationships were experienced.²⁴ The work that I do to compare the colonial discourse and experience, brings a macro understanding of colonialism into discussion with micro examples of colonialism. The case studies serve as microhistories, which “reveal and to some extent unravels, the complexity of historical events and helps us to answer the question “why?”” The idea behind microhistory is that close observation reveals insights that are often missed at a more general, or macro, level.”²⁵ As indicated by the literature review to follow, an approach that studies both the discourse of colonialism and the experience of colonialism serves to demonstrate how the colonial project was constructed in an attempt to make it hegemonic in British Columbia.

Historian Sarah Carter writes that negative representations of Indigenous women have

²²Mary-Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend. *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Indigenous Women's History in Canada*, (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006): 16.

²³Kelm and Townsend, *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Indigenous Women's History in Canada*: 16.

²⁴John Sutton Lutz, *Makuk*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2008): 12.

²⁵Lutz, *Makuk*: 12- 13.

proven to be “extraordinarily persistent” in Canadian society.²⁶ The significance and dangers of these representations rests with their ability to “perpetuate inequalities in Indigenous/EuroCanadian relations.”²⁷ Jean Barman echoes Carter’s assertion, and demonstrates that the persistence of these negative images and representations in contemporary society have impacted many Indigenous women’s lived realities. This was evidenced by the 1996 case of Catholic Bishop Hubert O’Connor. Bishop O’Connor insisted he had not raped or assaulted four Indigenous women, rather he had been seduced; “the temptation exercised by their sexuality was too great for any mere man, even a priest and residential school president, to resist.”²⁸ The development and propagation of such negative representations of Indigenous peoples – here, Indigenous women in particular – have been of great interest to many historians both in Canada and the United States in the recent past. These historians have situated the creation and perpetuation of Indigenous women’s negative representations in stereotypes and imagery that have developed since contact with Europeans. Further understanding of the nature of cross-cultural relationships that developed between Settler and Indigenous women will help to elucidate the roots of negative representations, with the hopes of informing reconciliatory policies.

In Devon Abbott Mihesuah’s article, “American Indian History as a Field of Study,” she writes that ignoring Indigenous women in historical writing, treats them as invisible entities and

²⁶Sarah Carter, “Categories and Terrains of Exclusion: Constructing the ‘Indian Woman’ in the Early Settlement Era in Western Canada,” in *the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Indigenous Women’s History in Canada*, Mary-ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend, ed. (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 2006): 163.

²⁷Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*: 106.

²⁸Jean Barman, “Taming Indigenous Sexuality: Gender, Power and Race in British Columbia, 1850-1900,” in *the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Indigenous Women’s History in Canada*, ed. Mary-ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend (Toronto: The University of Toronto Press, 2006): 271.

has very much impacted their lived realities: the reality of rape is one example of the violence that Indigenous women encounter that Jean Barman discusses in reference to the Bishop O'Connor case.²⁹ For these reasons, not only will sources be conceptualized as utterances in a dialogical process, but the spirit of my research and the product of that research, is to partake in a dialogue of decolonization in pursuit of just reconciliation between Settler and Indigenous peoples.

Having heard Paulette Regan speak in late September 2007 at a conference in Lytton, British Columbia, I became increasingly interested in the ability of Settler Canadians to form alliances with Indigenous peoples in a process of decolonization with the hopes of genuine reconciliation. I was reminded that Settler Canadians and Indigenous peoples are involved in a relationship that needs to be constantly addressed and discussed if it is ever to be a healthy relationship. Regan's words encouraged the audience to envisage their individual liberation as bound up in the liberation of their communities and their nations in pursuit of collective decolonization. To be sure, "[o]ur respective paths in this struggle are different, but the goal is the same – transforming the social and political landscape to enable us to co-exist peacefully."³⁰ Regan addresses the genuine lack of dialogue when discussing Indigenous—Settler history, in pursuit of achieving a discourse of Indigenous – Settler decolonization. Regan's works have reminded me that "[i]t is the gap between what we (as non-Indigenous people) think we are doing- which is engaging with good intentions in an intercultural dialogue, and how Indigenous people experience that same event as a manifestation of deeply ingrained institutional

²⁹Barman, "Taming Indigenous Sexuality: Gender, Power and Race in British Columbia, 1850-1900," in *the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Indigenous Women's History in Canada*, ed. Mary-Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend: 153.

³⁰Paulette Regan, "A Transformative Framework for Decolonizing Canada: A Non-Indigenous Approach" Indigenous Governance Doctorial Student Symposium, (University of Victoria, January. 20, 2005): 5.

colonialism and attitudes.”³¹ In form and content, this project has been written in the spirit of genuine intercultural dialogue.

Methodologically, dialogism offers the opportunity to conceptualize relationships between Indigenous and Settler women as fluid spaces where meaningful cross-cultural interactions took place. When considering sources such as diaries, life histories, oral histories and oral testimonies, the dialogue that occurs must be understood on two levels: within the source itself and between multiple sources. Mikhail Bakhtin’s concept of dialogism is useful because he defines dialogism as the “relation of every utterance to other utterances.”³² Todorov’s interpretation of Bakhtin’s work, argues that an exchange of responses between two speakers demonstrates the dialogical process, or intertextuality. Intertextuality, then, is the relationship between “[t]wo verbal works, two utterances, in juxtaposition, [when they] enter into a particular kind of semantic relation, which we call dialogical. (30:297). Dialogical relations are (semantic) relations between all the utterances within verbal communication.”³³ When dialogism is understood as “the interactive aspect of speech,” both the speaker and the listener become involved in a relationship whereby

Relations between A and B are in a permanent state of formation and transformation; they continue to alter in the very process of communication. Nor is there a ready-made message X. It takes form in the process of communication between A and B. Nor is it transmitted from the first to the second, but constructed between them, like an ideological bridge; it is constructed in the process of their interaction.³⁴

When considering dialogism, Bakhtin argues that “[t]he speaker seeks to orient his discourse...

³¹Regan, “A Transformative Framework for Decolonizing Canada: A Non-Indigenous Approach,” 1.

³²Tzvetan Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle*, (University of Minnesota, 1984): 60.

³³Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle*: 61.

³⁴Medvedev 1978:204, as quoted in Todorov, *Mikhail Bakhtin: The Dialogical Principle*,: 55.

in relation to the horizon of the other, the one who does the understanding.”³⁵ Dialogism, then, signals the existence of a relationship that develops through discourse.

Michael Harkin engages with dialogism to explain the type of relationships that developed between the Heiltsuk people in British Columbia and Euro-Canadian newcomers. His analysis of dialogue is significant to the pursuit of discerning a comparative methodology for diaries, life histories, and oral testimony, for he employs Bakhtin’s concept of dialogue to examine cultural contact. Here Harkin argues that, “[i]n the changing discursive context of cultural contact, unique utterances were always innovative, changing and expanding the dialogic space.”³⁶ Within this process of expanding the dialogic space, dialogue consisting of utterances, was shaped by the “new other,” meaning European newcomers and the Heiltsuk people “irreversibly changed the meaningful context” of both their lived experiences.³⁷ Harkin is suggesting that the colonial project did not function as a monologue, because all parties that came into contact influenced one another and contributed to a unique colonial discourse. While colonizers attempted to portray the colonial project as a monologue- thereby denying “that there exists outside of it another consciousness with the same rights, and capable of responding on an equal footing,” – there are many examples of different points of contact which challenge the hierarchy and hegemony of monologic discourse.³⁸ When dialogism is applied to analyze the discussions featured in the following chapters, Settler and Indigenous women’s experiences can be envisioned as expressions of the “product of the whole complex social situation in which it has occurred.”³⁹ Further, providing that a dialogue does exist within these sources, a comparison

³⁵Mikhail Bakhtin, as quoted in Lutz, *Makuk*: 21.

³⁶Harkin, *The Heiltsuks: dialogues of culture and history on the Northwest Coast*: 72.

³⁷Harkin, *The Heiltsuks: dialogues of culture and history on the Northwest Coast*: 72.

³⁸Harkin, *The Heiltsuks: dialogues of culture and history on the Northwest Coast*: 72.

³⁹Lutz, *Makuk*: 22.

between diaries, life histories and oral testimonies, can reveal the degree to which the colonial discourse influenced individual's experiences and certainly challenges the historiography that celebrates the hegemonic and hierarchical successes of the colonial project.

Dialogism, as a methodological approach, will also be applied in a very practical manner since the case studies featured in this project are the results of oral history interviews that I participated in with the hopes of contributing to filling a gap in the literature concerning cross-cultural relationships: the experiences of Indigenous women. I approached oral history as a source where a person expresses first hand experiences in a narrative form. Oral history is recognized as a subjective account,

which is similar to a spoken autobiography but often treated as a narrative. There is no formal process of transmission from generation to generation. Through oral histories people attempt to make sense of the meaning of events. Oral history is a transactional event based on collaboration between narrator and interviewer and concerned with "how people perceive their roles in the context of historical time."⁴⁰

Julie Cruikshank's work with oral histories has largely influenced my decision to root the majority of my research in oral history accounts of female cross-cultural relationships. Cruikshank asks how people use oral histories' and oral traditions' "ideological, symbolic, and metaphoric meanings to talk about the past."⁴¹ Furthermore, Cruikshank notes that academics who participate in oral history are becoming more vocal of Western ethnocentric bias found in written documentation, and argue that these Western sources must be read with an understanding

⁴⁰ Joan Lovisek, "Transmission Difficulties: The Use and Abuse of Oral History in Aboriginal Claims," *Papers of the Algonquian Conference*, 2002 (33): 265.

⁴¹ Julie Cruikshank, "Invention of Anthropology in British Columbia's Supreme Court: Oral Tradition as Evidence in *Delgamuukw v. B.C.*" (*BC Studies*, #95, *Anthropology and History in the Courts*, 1992): 25-42. As quoted in Brian Calliou, "Methodology For Recording Oral Histories in the Aboriginal Community," (*Native Studies Review*, 15:1, 2004): 77.

of the context that they were written in as well.⁴² Given that I am committed to studying the relationship between the Canadian State and Indigenous peoples through the lens of cross-cultural relationships and because there is only a small field of literature that studies female cross-cultural relationships with a focus on Indigenous women's experiences, oral history has allowed access to a unique set of experiences. However, despite the credibility of oral history in some circles, there remains a debate about the legitimacy of using oral history sources.

Brian Calliou writes that some academics view the use of oral history with skepticism. An example of the debate that surrounds the validity of memory questions "the fallibility of human memory or the possibility of misunderstanding events as retold over a number of generations."⁴³ Much of the suspicion concerning oral sources stems from a belief that oral histories are "unreliable or unable to offer the truth about the past. This attitude persists notwithstanding that some oral histories have been found to be as accurate as the written word in relating the truth about past events."⁴⁴ Again, Julie Cruikshank's work is useful to turn to when faced with these arguments. In her article, "Invention of Anthropology," Cruikshank argues that

Aboriginal oral tradition differs from western science and history, but both are organised systems of knowledge that take many years to learn. Oral tradition seems to present one way to challenge hegemonic history. It survives not by being frozen on the printed page but by repeated retellings. Each narrative contains more than one message. The listener is part of the storytelling event too, and a good listener is expected to bring different life experiences to the story each time he or she hears it and to learn different things from it at each hearing. Rather than trying to spell out everything one needs to know, it compels the listener to think about ordinary experience in new ways. Storytelling is possibly the oldest and most valued of the arts and encompasses a kind of truth that goes beyond the

⁴² Cruikshank, "Invention of Anthropology in British Columbia's Supreme Court: Oral Tradition as Evidence in *Delgamuukw v. B.C.*" (*BC Studies*, #95, *Anthropology and History in the Courts*, 1992): 25-42. As quoted in Brian Calliou, "Methodology For Recording Oral Histories in the Aboriginal Community," (*Native Studies Review*, 15:1, 2004): 77.

⁴³ Calliou, "Methodology For Recording Oral Histories in the Aboriginal Community," (*Native Studies Review*, 15:1, 2004): 77.

⁴⁴ Calliou, "Methodology For Recording Oral Histories in the Aboriginal Community," (*Native Studies Review*, 15:1, 2004): 78.

restricted frameworks of positivism, empiricism and “common sense.”⁴⁵

There is a real need for oral history to provide primary research material regarding female cross-cultural relationships because there is very little historical record of female cross-cultural relationships, and where there is a record, it is recorded from a Eurocentric perspective.

Waziyatawin clearly states the necessity of the study of oral history when she writes,

Would historians attempt to write a history of Germany without consulting any German sources? Would a scholar of Chinese history attempt to write Chinese history without consulting Chinese sources? Why is it that scholars in American Indian history have written so many academically acceptable works without consulting American Indian sources? Is it simply because most of our sources are oral rather than written?⁴⁶

Taking seriously the concern that ignoring Indigenous sources could perpetuate “ingrained institutional colonialism” this project was carried out, and is presented, in the spirit of respectful, decolonizing scholarship. With support from the University of Victoria’s Office for Community Based Research Summer Internship Program, I was able to live and work with Stó:lō Nation for the month of May 2009, returning throughout the summer and into the fall. By returning to the community, I was able to begin to build a relationship with the people I had the opportunity to interview and work with. A large component of why I was trusted and welcomed into the community, is due to the work that Professor John Lutz and Professor Keith Carlson have done with Stó:lō Nation. By establishing a longstanding and respectful relationship, new students in the community are made to feel welcome, aided and guided in their research endeavours.

The interviews that I conducted generally occurred after having been introduced by a community member, a staff member from the Stó:lō research and resource management centre,

⁴⁵ Julie Cruikshank, “Invention of Anthropology in British Columbia's Supreme Court: Oral Tradition as Evidence in *Delgamuukw v. B.C.*,” (*BC Studies, Anthropology and History in the Courts*, 1992): 33 – 34.

⁴⁶ Angela Cavender Wilson, Waziyatawin, “American Indian History or Non-Indian Perceptions of American Indian History?” in Devon A. Mihesuah, ed. *Natives and Academics: Researching and Writing About American Indians* (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 1998): 23 – 24.

Professor Lutz or Professor Carlson. I would then establish an interview time and location, which often occurred in the homes of the women with whom I was speaking with. The giving of gifts is an important practice with the Stó:lō to show gratitude, so I offered a small gift at the time of the interview and honoured each person I had the opportunity to speak with at the end of my time in Stó:lō territory, as a part of the University of Victoria and University of Saskatchewan Ethnohistory Field School potlatch.

The discussions began as structured interviews with a set list of questions concerning cross-cultural relationships. However, in keeping with my commitment to learn about women's experiences, the interviews were left open-ended. The open-ended nature of the interviews made the experience seem like a discussion, whereby all present parties actively participated and were impacted by the communication of histories. I explained to the women and children I spoke with that the questions were meant to guide the discussion, for the purpose of speaking with them was to hear about their experiences and that I was interested in learning about whatever they felt compelled to share. When discussions were left open-ended, dialogue developed. I learned to listen wholistically: not just for memories that related to my research, but for the histories that were being communicated, and ask questions based on the direction of the discussions.

For some of the discussions, I was accompanied by other field school students from the University of Saskatchewan and University of Victoria. Over the eleven years that the field school has been running, it has become a practice to interview in groups, and an expectation from the Stó:lō peoples that more than one student would be present. Carolyn Bennett, a student from the University of Saskatchewan who studied the St. Mary's marching band, and Amber Kostuchenko a past field school student who has developed strong ties within members of the Stó:lō community who I was interested in speaking with, were present at some of the

discussions. Their involvement in these discussions was much appreciated and we all collaborated to make gifts, take families dinner before the discussions, travel together and help each other ask questions or follow up on ideas during discussions. In compliance with research guidelines from the Stó:lō Research and Resource Management Centre and the Human Ethics Research Board at the University of Victoria, I gained the consent from each participant to record the interviews. Once the interviews were complete, I began the important task of transcribing each interview word by word and then listening to the interview again to make sure I had transcribed correctly. The transcripts were then returned to each participant and they maintained the right to request that sections of the interviews be omitted from the official transcription, for up to two months after they received their copies. Upon completion of this project, they will each receive a copy.

The work that I present in the following chapters is heavily reliant on the oral interviews in which I participated. It is important to state that I was a participant in the interview process and that my words came into dialogue with the people with whom I was speaking. As a result of the unique nature of oral research, this project addresses the concern that when oral histories are written down they lose what makes them unique as oral sources: the expressions of the speaker, tone of voice, pauses and emotions. In order to present oral histories in a way that does justice to the source, I have included transcribed quotations from the interviews in the text, and offer the full discussion on the accompanying DVD. When you reach a point in the text where there are quotations I have indicated which track to play on the accompanying DVD, allowing you to listen to the interview. This decision about format will allow my words to come into dialogue with the words of Indigenous women while they share their experiences. Thus, the content and format are designed to bring about genuine cross-cultural dialogue. It is my hope that the

incorporation of a creative approach to oral history will be welcomed as an attempt to expand the presentation of historical works.

Conceptualizing colonialism as a dialogical process does not connote an equal power relationship between Settler and Indigenous peoples. Rather, “the power imbalances in that dialogue, expressed through wage work and welfare as well as in many other ways, were precisely what accounts for the dispossession/subordination of Indigenous Peoples.”⁴⁸ The concept of dialogue also refers to the “full range of communication (including violence) [meaning] no such power equality between the parties is implied.”⁴⁹ John Lutz examines power imbalance as expressed through wage work and welfare, however, an interest in Settler and Indigenous women’s dialogue is another example of an area of power imbalance that is both consistent, and in opposition, to expected colonial dialogue. Moreover, the existence of a dialogical relationship indicates that a colonial hegemony was never actually realized because Indigenous cultures were not destroyed. Indigenous peoples were subjected to “domination without hegemony,” which has profoundly shaped their lived experiences as colonial societies have attempted to exert hegemonic control.⁵⁰ Perceiving Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships in terms of dialogue suggests that the process of colonialism was continuously shifting and fluid, which creates the space for discussions of decolonization and reconciliation. Applying this logic to the study of relationships that existed between Settler and Indigenous women, allows my research to examine the type of dialogue that occurred in the hopes of uncovering nuances and complexities, thereby diversifying the historical record concerning Settler – Indigenous relations.

⁴⁸Lutz, *Makuk*: 22.

⁴⁹Lutz, *Makuk*: 22.

⁵⁰Lutz, *Makuk*: 26.

Chapter Overviews

Chapter 1 begins with a review of the literature concerning female cross-cultural relationships between Indigenous and Settler women, in order to establish the context under which cross-cultural relationships have been experienced. This chapter has been divided into four sections, beginning with how historians have defined the colonial discourse. Then I move to a discussion of how historians have begun to de-centralize the colonial discourse when writing the history of cross-cultural relationships. The idea of de-centralizing the colonial discourse refers to writing histories that are not complacent with colonial values, but rather challenge the tradition of writing histories that have abetted in the perpetuation of colonial mindsets. The third section looks at the historical record of female cross-cultural relationships and argues that without the inclusion of women's experiences, the historical record falls to a reliance on the colonial discourse. Paying close attention to where women enter into the historical narrative concerning colonialism, I argue that a study of cross-cultural relationships is best served when historians take into account both the colonial discourse and lived experience. Discursive analysis alone, risks the potential of overlooking significant individual experiences, which prove the fluidity of colonialism in Canada. As mentioned above, the purpose of exposing the fluidity of colonialism is not to downplay colonial violence, but rather to reveal how the complexity of colonialism functions. Studying how Indigenous women experienced cross-cultural relationships is one way of demonstrating the fluidity of colonialism throughout the twentieth century. Thus, the final section addresses literature that has focused on the experiences of female cross-cultural relationships, in order to de-centralize the colonial discourse and question the ultimate success of the colonial project.

Chapters 2 through 5 are structured around sites of encounter: the places where Settler

and Indigenous women interacted. The sites emerged from the discussions I participated in throughout the spring, summer and fall of 2009 in Stó:lō Territory. The Stó:lō, a British Columbia First Nation, has territory that extends from the Fraser River Canyon, up the Fraser River Valley and to the Pacific Ocean, as well as the east coast of Vancouver Island.⁵¹ The purpose of breaking my study down and looking at case study examples is to communicate lived experiences of those who were involved in relationships, despite narratives of colonialism which tend to situate Settler women in a position of power and privilege and have made Indigenous women invisible.

The first site I discuss is that of Residential schools. The Roman Catholic Boarding School at Mission, British Columbia, was attended by many of the women with whom I spoke. Discussions with Leona Kelly, Marcie Peters and Virginia Joe have painted an interesting picture of what life was like at St. Mary's. In conjunction with Joan McGeragle, a childcare worker at St. Mary's, these women have provided insights about the nature of cross-cultural relationships and the ability to develop meaningful engagements in an institution designed for assimilation.

The second site is that of community interactions. In order to understand what cross-cultural relationships looked like when they were not formed at an assimilative institution, I questioned how Settler and Indigenous women interacted informally at a community level. I drew on Elizabeth Furniss' concept of a dominant culture and her case study of contemporary racism at William's Lake in British Columbia, as a framework for this chapter. Community interactions that developed at St. Mary's Roman Catholic School, relationships that have

⁵¹The interviews featured in this project were conducted between May 2009 and November 2009 as part of the University of Saskatchewan and University of Victoria Stó:lō Ethnohistory Fieldschool. My participation in the Fieldschool and my ability to continue to travel to Stó:lō territory throughout the summer and fall of 2009, was made possible through the University of Victoria's Office for Community Based Research Summer Internship program.

developed because of membership clauses in the Indian Act and Bill C-31, An Act to Amend the Indian Act, and the unique relationship between Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, are all featured in this chapter as examples of community cross-cultural relationships.

Lastly, I discuss religion as a site of encounter. While religion -- in the form of Christianity or organized missionization -- can be conceived of as an institutionalized site, it has also been considered as having influenced the formation of relationships outside of the walls of a religious or spiritual institutions and rather at a community level. Relationships have been formed between women based on shared spiritual beliefs as well as maintaining a respect for different religious beliefs. Reserve churches, residential schools and community interactions are the three areas where religion has facilitated female cross-cultural relationships that are looked at in this chapter.

Mary-Ellen Kelm's work regarding the published letters of Margaret Butcher has been a major influence in how I have conceptualized cross-cultural relationships. Kelm writes that Butcher was well aware of her purpose as a missionary woman, and that this purpose precluded her ability to ignore the structures of colonialism in terms of her engagements with Indigenous people. Considering Kelm's conclusions about Margaret Butcher's adherence to her role as a missionary at residential school, the historical record regarding Settler women's roles, purposes and perceptions of Indigenous women has been well served in the recent past.

This research project pursues an expansion of the historical record by including Indigenous women's perspectives of Settler women, while simultaneously acknowledging the strictures of colonialism and segregation that impacted these cultural interactions. The purpose of including case studies in my research is not to generalize about cross-cultural relationships that developed in British Columbia between 1960 and 2009, but rather to contribute knowledge

about the constant construction of the colonial project. By imagining Settler women and Indigenous women's reminiscences in dialogue with one another, it is conceivable that meaningful relationships could develop, which refute the trajectory of colonialism. However, there are few sites of cross-cultural interaction because of a deliberate process of state isolation between Indigenous and Settler populations from each other. A great deal of these interactions occurred in colonial institutions where hierarchical relationships deliberately limited the opportunities for cross-cultural friendships on the basis of equality. It is no surprise that meaningful cross-cultural relationships were rare. It is only in the last thirty years that friendships have become less rare, owed mostly to the erosion of hierarchies within the major assimilative structures. Indeed, these case studies and the examples of relationships that transcended colonial expectations indicate that colonialism in British Columbia needed to be constantly worked on and never fully developed. By demonstrating the fluidity of the colonial project through the lens of experience, history can serve as an advocate for decolonization and help create the space for more meaningful, genuine and respectful relationships on this land.

Chapter 1

Context for Twentieth Century Cross Cultural Relationships

Our voices and objections have largely been stilled this past century. We are a people and culture in flux. There have been a few, faltering voices that have reached publication in our recent past. Some attempt to come to grips with this transitional phase, and others, just to let the world beyond us know that we are still here – wounded, perhaps dazed (bedazzled?), but re-organizing, analyzing, planning, strengthening, and, here.⁵²

D.A. Maracle’s words that appear in Lee Maracle’s *I am Woman*, tell of the construction and malleability of the Canadian colonial project and its inability to erase Indigenous peoples and cultures. The relationships that have developed between Indigenous and Settler women throughout the twentieth century are tangible ways to measure a continuity of Indigenous lifeways, cultures and histories despite the onslaught of Western ideologies of modernization and progress that define state building throughout the nineteenth and twentieth centuries. Here, I look at two different ways that historians have written about colonialism: discourse and experience. By highlighting different ways that historians ‘talk’ about the colonial project, I will demonstrate that a study of cross-cultural relationships works to refute the existence of a colonial hegemony in twentieth century British Columbia. I will examine the historical context for female cross-cultural relationships, taking seriously the argument that oral histories and testimonies must be contextualized in order to authentically convey in words women’s experiences that I discuss later in this project.⁵³

⁵²D.A. Maracle, as quoted in Lee Maracle, *I am Woman*, (North Vancouver: Write-on Press Publishers, 1988): x.

⁵³Julie Cruikshank, with Angela Sidney, Kitty Smith, and Annie Ned, *Life Lived Like a Story: Life Stories of Three Yukon Native Elders*, (Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press and Vancouver: UBC Press, 1990): 346. Cruikshank writes that for historians to “interpret any account, written or oral, a student of the past must evaluate the context in which the document

In this chapter, I focus on revealing a backdrop of colonialism against which cross-cultural relationships have been experienced and written about. To achieve this goal, I have divided the chapter into four parts. I begin by defining the colonial discourse and how it has been propagated through histories, focusing specifically on the argument that race and gender hierarchies were used to ‘Other’ Indigenous women. I then turn to a discussion of the recent and current work by historians who are identifying, locating and de-centralizing the colonial discourse in works that deal with cross-cultural relationships between Indigenous and Settler women. The third section looks at the early literature and primary sources concerning cross-cultural relationships between Indigenous and Settler women in British Columbia. Lastly, I make a case for the inclusion of more experiences in historical discussions of colonialism. A major question directing my research has been to establish whether a colonial context determines the nature of cross-cultural relationships? Therefore, a study of colonialism that both addresses the colonial discourse and considers how colonialism impacted and shaped individuals’ experiences within a colonial environment is desirable.

What is the Colonial Discourse?

In many ways, the stories we tell about the past form our understandings of that past. The way that historians have studied and written about colonialism has structured how we think of it today. For the purposes of my analysis here, I examine two different ways that historians have studied colonialism: both a macro-historical (from the top down), and micro-historical (from the bottom up), approach. Envisioning the different ways that historians have discussed colonialism as both macro- and micro-histories is useful because such an analysis implies that

was recorded. (...) Oral storytellers seem well equipped to correlate seemingly unrelated ideas and show their interconnections; researchers who try to “winnow” facts may be less successful” (346).

colonialism has functions at different levels. In this section, I focus on the macro and how a top-down approach has impacted the colonial discourse.⁵⁴

Catherine Hall argues that historians have typically understood the colonial discourse as a variety of textual forms in which the colonizer produced and codified knowledge about non-metropolitan areas and cultures, especially those under colonial control.⁵⁵ Historians have relied on a particular narrative to study the discourse of colonialism in which “fundamental features of colonialism were clearly present in the extension of the power of the Canadian State and the maintenance of sharp social, economic and spatial distinctions between the dominant and subordinate populations.”⁵⁶ Early histories of Indigenous-Settler relations relied upon a colonial narrative, thereby overlooking how it was experienced.

By highlighting the work that was required to maintain and extend the colonial project in Canada, it is evident that colonialism never attained hegemonic rule. The construction of

⁵⁴The phrase ‘colonial discourse’ is used to identify a way that historians talk about Indigenous peoples that has been recycled, reused, and ignorant of Indigenous voices. ‘Colonial discourse’ is best described as a “Western discourse about the Other,” which is “supported by institutions, vocabulary, scholarship, imagery, doctrines, even colonial bureaucracies and colonial styles.” (Linda Tuhiwai-Smith, *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. London: Zed Books, 1999) 2. In other words, the colonial discourse that I deconstruct in this chapter is a way of ‘talking’ about colonialism that legitimizes the goals of the colonial project. To only study colonialism at the level of macro-history can ignore the valuable and interesting information we can gain when we learn how it was experienced by people. I develop the argument that a thorough approach to the study of cross-cultural relationships demands that historians take into account the larger picture alongside micro – histories, or case studies. The reason that I make this clarification is because the colonial discourse is deeply embedded in much of the historiography concerning Indigenous peoples, but does not have to remain the narrative that historians rely on when participating in research with Indigenous peoples and Indigenous nations. When I make the argument later in this chapter that the study of female cross-cultural relationships are best served by a synthesis between the macro and micro I argue that including experience, will change how historians write the narrative of colonialism.

⁵⁵Catherine Hall, ed. *Cultures of Empire. Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (New York: Routledge, 2000): 7.

⁵⁶ Sarah Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, (Montreal and Kingston: McGill-Queen’s Press): i

colonialism was not confined to a particular period. Nicholas Thomas argues, “it is important to recognize that a variety of colonial representations and encounters both precede and succeed periods of actual possession and rule, and pertain in generalized forms about whole regions and continents at a level detached from particular imperial ventures.”⁵⁷ Philippa Levine furthers Thomas’ argument regarding the construction of colonialism when she states that

there was nothing inevitable or natural about how Britain came to constitute itself and to rule its expanding empire. Rather, in the racial typing of its colonies, in the careful separation of British from continental European values, in the creation of values of imperial patriotism, we see both Britain’s palpable success as an empire and simultaneously the constant work required to maintain that success. Nation and empire were fragile, in that without constant accommodation they threatened always to dissolve, yet they doggedly continued to operate and function as well as to proclaim Britain’s commitment to modernity.⁵⁸

In this chapter, then, I consider both nineteenth and twentieth century historiography to understand how the colonial discourse was constructed.

A component of the colonial discourse has been the development and maintenance of race and gender hierarchies. Levine recognizes that the establishment of gender and race hierarchies contributed to the maintenance of colonial rule by ‘marking’ a clear distinction between the colonizer and the colonized: arguing in her book that the “hierarchies around race and gender” were central to colonial rule.⁵⁹ Indeed, many historians have accredited the arrival of the white Settler women with an increase in colonial distinctions, often resulting in an increased experience of racism.

Antoinette Burton has studied how gender roles and representations became a tool of the British colonial project. Burton argues that gendered and sexualized orders that were both

⁵⁷Nicholas Thomas, *Colonialism’s Culture: Anthropology, Travel and Government*, (Cambridge: Polity Press, 1994): 16.

⁵⁸Philippa Levine, *Gender and Empire*, (New York : Oxford University Press, 2004): 3.

⁵⁹Levine, *Gender and Empire*, 13.

produced by, and a component of colonialism, were equally fluid and needed to be (re)constructed alongside the colonial project.⁶⁰ In *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915*, Burton argues that the Empire provided British citizens with a particular world view that was central to their understandings of themselves.⁶¹ British, bourgeois, middle class feminists in India understood their membership in the Empire as something that distinguished them from the rest of the world. These women accepted their imperial membership as “evidence of the superiority of British national culture,” and felt an obligation to help colonial peoples.⁶² Burton’s discussion of feminism in India suggests British women were imagined as the “moral guardian of the nation, the guarantor of British racial stability and the means of national-imperial redemption.”⁶³ Burton turns to the question of emancipation in order to demonstrate how the colonial narrative guided the work of British feminists in India. By representing Indian women as “helpless, unemancipated and trapped in zenan existence,” British feminists made Indian women into objects of humanitarian concern and thus, provided a reason for imperial intervention.⁶⁴ Burton’s work certainly demonstrates how race and gender categories were used to exert colonial control over Indigenous populations and this observation applies to Canadian historiographies as well.

Catherine Hall, Phillippa Levine and Antoinette Burton help to explain how the colonial discourse became a narrative historians relied upon that was recycled in early historiography

⁶⁰Levine, *Gender and Empire*, 1.

⁶¹Antoinette Burton, *Burdens of History : British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915*, (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1994): 6.

⁶²Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915*, 7.

⁶³Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915*, 59.

⁶⁴Burton, *Burdens of History: British Feminists, Indian Women, and Imperial Culture, 1865-1915*, 65.

concerned with Indigenous-Settler interactions and worked to legitimize and universalize colonialism. Understanding that race and gender hierarchies were complicit in the extension of the colonial project is foundational to the study of cross-cultural relationships, because these power hierarchies form the dynamics under which cross-cultural relationships continue to be experienced. The next section further examines how historians have de-centralized the colonial discourse in order to critique it.

Locating and De-Centralizing the Colonial Discourse in the History

Having determined what the colonial discourse is, this section focuses on how historians have studied and ‘talked’ about cross-cultural relationships between Settler and Indigenous women.⁶⁵ This section is critical of historians who have relied on the colonial discourse and will show this critique by providing examples of historians who are committed to de-centralizing the colonial discourse. In essence, what is included and what is excluded from histories about Indigenous peoples has played a role in the development and perpetuation of the colonial mindset. A useful place to start is the discussion of the ‘Other’ in the writings of Edward Said.

In *Orientalism*, Edward Said demonstrates how history has played a role in constructing the Orient and the Occident. History, as a discipline, has helped to shape a power relationship whereby the West has claimed to define the Orient. Said argues that the eighteenth century can be taken as a starting point for analyzing “Orientalism” as a

corporate institution for dealing with the Orient – dealing with it by making statements about it, authorizing views of it, describing it, by teaching it, settling it, ruling over it: in short, Orientalism as a Western style for dominating, restructuring, and having authority over the Orient.⁶⁶

⁶⁵Cruikshank, *Life Lived Like a Story*: 356. In her conclusion, Cruikshank reiterates the importance of historians to be aware of the potential for their work, because: “the way we tell stories largely determines who will hear them.”

⁶⁶Edward Said, *Orientalism*, (New York: Vintage Books, 1979): 3.

Of particular interest in Said's discussion of Orientalism is his argument that images and representations of the Orient were used by the West to define 'the Other,' while at the same time they serve to define "Europe (or the West)."⁶⁷ The concepts of the Orient, Orientalism and the Other contribute to a discourse whereby Europe enacted "systematic discipline" to "manage – and even produce—the Orient politically, sociologically, militarily, ideologically, scientifically and imaginatively during the post-Enlightenment period."⁶⁸ In short, Orientalism became hegemonic in how the West thought of the geographic region perceived to be the Orient. Moreover, there is a power dynamic that privileges the West in the Orientalist discourse, as evidenced by Said's argument that "European culture gained in strength and identity by setting itself off against the Orient as a sort of surrogate and even underground self."⁶⁹

Despite the existence of this power relationship, Said is careful to recognize that neither the term 'the Orient' nor the concept of 'the West' "has any ontological stability; each is made up of human effort, partly affirmation, partly identification of the Other."⁷⁰ Further, he reveals how these binaries came to function in historical and political discourses. To Said, Oriental knowledge is

a library or archive of information commonly and, in some of its aspects, unanimously held. What bound the archive together was a family of ideas and a unifying set of values proven in various ways to be effective. These ideas explained the behaviour of Orientals; they supplied Orientals with a mentality, a genealogy, an atmosphere; most important, they allowed Europeans to deal with and even to see Orientals as a phenomenon possessing regular characteristics.⁷¹

This particular argument suggests that there was an intertextual component to acquiring knowledge about the Orient, whereby 'new' knowledge was not critical of the old, but was built

⁶⁷Said, *Orientalism*, 1.

⁶⁸Said, *Orientalism*, 3.

⁶⁹Said, *Orientalism*, 3.

⁷⁰Said, *Orientalism*, xviii.

⁷¹Said, *Orientalism*, 43-44.

upon the old and often re-articulated what was already ‘known.’

Said’s investigation into the perpetuation of colonial tropes by historians, has been taken up by historians and anthropologists in North America, in an effort to discuss how power relationships figure into historical accounts of Indigenous peoples in North America. For example, Franz Boas’ work is demonstrative of an old tendency in British Columbian historiography to rely on colonial tropes. Boas’ hegemony over the discipline of anthropology has certainly influenced how historiography has treated Indigenous people.⁷² Anthropologist Franz Boas was concerned that Indigenous cultures in British Columbia would not survive as they were becoming increasingly exposed to westernization. Given the common nineteenth century belief that Indigenous peoples and cultures were a doomed and vanishing race, he developed a research program that was designed to produce textual portraits of traditional cultures with the hope that the textual portraits would outlive the cultures themselves.⁷³ Applying Said’s criticism of the archive of information and imagery that gets recycled by new generations of people writing about ‘the Other,’ it is clear that Boas’ work classifies Indigenous peoples as “peoples with no significant history and relegated to a realm of mythic timelessness.”⁷⁴ Boas focused on stories of the “deep past,” those that described legends, folktales, myths – “about the creation of the world and its first inhabitants.”⁷⁵ Richard White also acknowledges that a reliance on Boasian methods and theories has meant that “living Native Americans become invisible [and] dead Native Americans become visible without becoming

⁷²Regna Darnell, “Reenvisioning Boas and Boasian Anthropology,” *American Anthropologist*, 102: 4 (2000), 896.

⁷³Wendy Wickwire, “Stories From the Margins: Toward a More Inclusive Historiography,” *Journal of American Folklore*, 118: 470, Fall 2005): 453.

⁷⁴Wendy Wickwire, “Reconciling Issues of Time-Past and Time-Present in New Works of BC Ethnography: A Review Essay,” (*BC Studies*, 138/139, Summer/Autumn 2003): 171.

⁷⁵Wickwire, “Stories From the Margins: Toward a More Inclusive Historiography,” 453.

historical,”⁷⁶ thereby denying Indigenous people a place in the larger history of British Columbia.⁷⁷

The critique of the colonial discourse has recently been a pursuit for historians. Catherine Hall writes that post-colonial studies are concerned with the analysis of colonial discourse and colonial cultures.⁷⁸ Nicholas Drake argues that colonialism was itself a cultural project of control – which enabled and produced colonial conquest. It also allowed for binary or oppositional classification and categorization between the “colonies and colonized, European and Asian, modern and traditional, West and East, even male and female.”⁷⁹ Discussions of ‘Other,’ have led post-colonial historians/theorists to better understand how categories and classifications created and maintained through colonial hegemony were used to extend and legitimize colonialism. Certainly understanding how one culture produces information and knowledge about another culture helps us to understand how histories can perpetuate and inform a colonial mindset.

The critique of a colonial discourse has also looked at representations of Indigenous people. Said’s work has helped historians to understand that when ‘othering’ images of Indigenous peoples are repeated and reused for generations, they are taken for truthful representations by

⁷⁶Richard White, “Using the Past: History and Native American Studies,” in *Studying Native America: Problems and Prospects*, Russell Thornton, ed. (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1998), 218.

⁷⁷Wickwire, “Reconciling Issues of Time-Past and Time-Present in New Works of BC Ethnography: A Review Essay,” 171.

⁷⁸ Here, colonial discourse is thought of as the variety of textual forms in which the West produced and codified knowledge about non-metropolitan areas and cultures, especially those under colonial control. See Catherine Hall, “Introduction: Thinking the Post-colonial, Thinking Empire,” in Catherine Hall, ed. *Cultures of Empire. Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (New York: Routledge, 2000): 15.

⁷⁹Hall, “Introduction: Thinking the Post-colonial, Thinking Empire,” in Catherine Hall, ed. *Cultures of Empire. Colonizers in Britain and the Empire in the Nineteenth and Twentieth Centuries*, (New York: Routledge, 2000): 15-16.

mainstream Canadian culture. By affording these images and representations legitimacy as truths: policies, legislations, court decisions, social programs and cultural attitudes come to reflect a colonial mindset which has proven to be problematic in its perpetuation of inequalities and violence against Indigenous peoples. An investigation into the writing of the sources themselves, reveal how historiography was, and often continues to be, complacent in furthering the hegemony of the colonial project.

Mary Louise Pratt's work on travel narratives is a useful example of a historian working to reveal the perpetuation of colonial representations and de-centralize the colonial discourse. Pratt argues that travel narratives were produced with a certain audience in mind: European imperialists. By writing for a particular audience, travel narratives were very much a tool of 'othering.' Pratt takes up the example of Mungo Park, a Scottish explorer, who was engaged with the values of "the Civilizing Mission." Park contributed to establishing a precedent in exploration writing, as many ensuing travel narratives were "written along the colorful lines laid down by Park's *Travels*. Sentimental plot lines of hard luck and victimization proved very suitable for rendering the suffering and failures of one Niger expedition after another."⁸⁰ Park was sponsored by the African Association, who were interested in accessing the African trade market and wanted: "a gate...opened to every commercial nation to enter and trade from the west to eastern extremity of Africa."⁸¹ Certainly, Park's written account of his experience complied with the expectations of his sponsors, reinforcing the 'othering' of colonial subjects in travel writing.

⁸⁰Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, (London: Routledge, 1992): 85.

⁸¹Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation*, 72.

Sarah Carter is another historian who has critiqued the colonial discourse by revealing ‘othering’ in the Canadian context. Published in 1997, her book, *Capturing Women*, draws on the historiography of travel narratives and captivity narratives that examines the perpetuation of colonialism in these cultural sources. Through an investigation of the representations of white womanhood and Indigenous womanhood, Carter finds that the process of ‘othering’ was deeply integrated into the Settler culture of Western Canada. Settler representations of Indigenous women “articulated racist messages that confirmed cultural difference and the need for repressive policies.”⁸² One negative stereotype held Indigenous women responsible for a host of socio-economic problems, “including the deplorable state of housing, the lack of clothing and footwear, and the high mortality rate, [were] placed on the supposed cultural traits and temperament of Indian reserve women.”⁸³ Indigenous women were also portrayed as lewd and licentious, and as victims “subordinated within their own society. They were the drudges who performed all the labour, chattels that were purchased and sold, and at the absolute mercy of their owners or husbands.”⁸⁴ Blaming the existence of poor living conditions on the traits of Indigenous women, meant that the state was able to deflect any criticism that could injure the reputation of government administration, while maintaining ‘essentialized’ hierarchies.⁸⁵ The negative representation and ‘othering’ of Indigenous women in travel and captivity narratives was a key component in developing gender and racial hierarchies that served to sustain colonialism.

⁸²Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, 160.

⁸³Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, 160.

⁸⁴Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, 162.

⁸⁵Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, 162.

Carter recognizes the need to critically engage with the history of colonialism in Canada, because it is clear that the colonial narrative played an important role in determining the nature of cross-cultural relationships between Settler wives and Indigenous women. In her study of settlement, Carter finds that with the advent of the white women, came a harshening of racial hierarchies that served to benefit and strengthen the colonial project.⁸⁶ Carter makes it clear that the concept of ‘white womanhood’ was to be protected for white women were considered “‘civilizing’ agents” and central to “the creation and reproduction of the new community.”⁸⁷ In order for white women to be portrayed as innocent, civilizing agents in the colonial imagination, a comparison to Indigenous women became necessary. The construction of this binary sparked negative representations of Indigenous women by relying on the stereotype of the “squalid and immoral ‘squaw’ who lived in a shack at the edge of town and whose physical removal or destruction can be understood as necessary to the progress of civilization.”⁸⁸ In complete opposition to the image of the ‘squaw’, Indigenous women were also portrayed as the beautiful ‘Indian Princess;’ an imagined figure who was responsible for saving the white man, “while remaining aloof and virtuous in a woodland paradise.”⁸⁹ Carter argues that these either/or binary

⁸⁶Sylvia Van Kirk was among the first to argue this in 1980, but focuses on experiences rather than relying on the colonial discourse to determine the nature of relationships between European men and Indigenous women. See Sylvia Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870*. (Norman: University of Oklahoma Press, 1980): 12.

⁸⁷Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, i.

⁸⁸Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, 161.

⁸⁹Sarah Carter, “Categories and Terrains of Exclusion: Constructing the ‘Indian Woman’ in the Early Settlement Era in Western Canada,” in *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Indigenous Women’s History in Canada*, eds. Mary Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend. (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2006): 147.

representations left newcomers with hardly any “room to consider the diversity of the Indigenous people of the west or the complex identities and roles” of Indigenous women.”⁹⁰

Examining popular literature from the period, Carter deconstructs representations of Settler and Indigenous women and finds that calculated and specific representations aided in the acceptance of a colonial order in Canadian society. White womanhood became an essential symbol around which the new society was to be built, for “white woman were the true empire builders, their children the cornerstone of a strong nation.”⁹¹ White womanhood was both produced and articulated through gender and race hierarchies, and relied on white women’s vulnerability to “create and sustain concepts of racial and cultural difference, legitimize tough action against Indigenous people, convey messages of the necessity of policing boundaries between different peoples.”⁹² Recognizing that the colonial project functioned on many different levels, Carter’s work reveals the level of personal experience at which cross-cultural relationships can express colonial distinctions. Carter’s discussion of colonialism works to demonstrate how race and gender were used to develop and maintain distance between “civilized” Settler societies and Indigenous communities. Thus, Carter demonstrates that at a macro level, the colonial project relied on racial and gendered distinctions between Settler womanhood and Indigenous womanhood, which helped to establish the context under which cross-cultural relationships have been studied in Canada. Evidently, Said’s conceptualization of ‘the Other’ influenced a deconstruction of Indigenous women’s representations in the Canadian

⁹⁰Carter, “Categories and Terrains of Exclusion: Constructing the ‘Indian Woman’ in the Early Settlement Era in Western Canada,” in *In the Days of Our Grandmothers: A Reader in Indigenous Women’s History in Canada*, eds. Mary Ellen Kelm and Lorna Townsend, 147.

⁹¹Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, xvi.

⁹²Carter, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, xvi.

West.

The historiography concerning missionary women's interactions with Indigenous women is another topic where historians have been critical of the colonial discourse. There is a consensus in this literature that missionaries were an integral component of colonialism because of their work to reform Indigenous communities and to assimilate Indigenous peoples. The nineteenth century missionary zeal went "hand in hand with enthusiasm for the British empire" and missionary wives were certainly familiar with the discourse of colonialism.⁹³ In Myra Rutherdale's 2002 book, *Women and the White Man's God*, she writes that many women who were stationed as missionaries, or missionary wives in Canada arrived in Indigenous communities with preconceived notions about their own "superiority rooted in their identities as members of a White Anglo-Saxon middle-class Anglican community."⁹⁴ Similarly, Adele Perry writes in 2005 that missionary women and the wives of missionaries played an important role in efforts to forge "an Indigenous, Christian capitalism," which was a component of the missionizing process.⁹⁵ Perry writes that missionary wives taught Indigenous women how to work like "respectable, working-class women of metropolitan centers," in an attempt to turn Indigenous women not just into European women, but to partially turn them into working class ones.⁹⁶

⁹³Myra Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man's God: Gender and Race in the Canadian Mission Field*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002): 29.

⁹⁴Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man's God: Gender and Race in the Canadian Mission Field*, 29.

⁹⁵ Adele Perry, "Metropolitan Knowledge, Colonial Practice and Indigenous Womanhood: Missions in nineteenth century British Columbia," *Contact Zones*, eds. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005): 123.

⁹⁶ Perry, "Metropolitan Knowledge, Colonial Practice and Indigenous Womanhood: Missions in nineteenth century British Columbia," *Contact Zones*, eds. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005): 115.

Myra Rutherdale's study of missionaries reveals a different focus of the missionary civilizing project: that of external bodily appearance and hygiene. Rutherdale argues that the drama of colonization was acted out on Indigenous bodies because it was believed that in order to capture the Indigenous mind, the body must also be captured.⁹⁷ While personal hygiene was stressed as an important way to reform bodies, missionaries and their wives also stressed the significance of modern medicine. They sought cross-cultural relationships through discussions and interactions pertaining to Westernized, modern medicine. Rutherdale provides the example of Winifred Marsh, the wife of Reverend Donald Marsh, who used her midwifery skills to encourage the Padlimiut women to forgo their traditional birthing practices and adopt modern methods.⁹⁸ This type of cross-cultural relationship was perceived by Rutherdale to be very much governed by the colonial narrative.

By looking for examples of how historians have de-centralized the colonial discourse, this section has critically engaged with the types of colonial tropes that history has relied on and recycled to naturalize the colonial narrative that sees Indigenous cultures as inflexible over time. A major tenant of my project is to demonstrate, with the use of case studies, that relationships between Settler and Indigenous women constantly challenged the establishment of a colonial society in twentieth century British Columbia.¹⁰⁰ An understanding of the way that history and anthropology have been written helps to explain how a colonial archive persists in the twentieth century and that the existence of this archive influences a colonial mindset within the dominant

⁹⁷Myra Rutherdale, "She Was a Ragged Little Thing": Missionaries, Embodiment and Refashioning Indigenous Womanhood in Northern Canada," *Contact Zones*, eds. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2005): 229.

⁹⁸Rutherdale, "She Was a Ragged Little Thing": Missionaries, Embodiment and Refashioning Indigenous Womanhood in Northern Canada," *Contact Zones*, eds. Katie Pickles and Myra Rutherdale, 233.

¹⁰⁰Wickwire, "Stories From the Margins: Toward a More Inclusive Historiography," 454.

culture. Certainly, we cannot appreciate the deconstruction of colonial tropes and the inclusion of Indigenous voices in newer historiography, without understanding how profoundly historiography has been influenced by colonialism.¹⁰¹

To continue to de-centralize the colonial discourse, historians must create the space for the inclusion of experience. By studying lived realities of those impacted by colonialism, we can better understand the limits of the colonial project. Women's experiences with cross-cultural relationships is a lens through which to examine colonialism that will further decentralize the colonial project.

A Brief Historiography of Female Cross-Cultural Relationships

As was argued in the last section, if historians do not critically engage with the colonial discourse, then it will enter into their work when they write about women's cross-cultural encounters. The historical record concerning Indigenous and Settler women's cross-cultural relationships is limited, but is demonstrative of a historiographic shift that began with writing from within a colonial discourse to critiquing the colonial discourse. In this section, I address literature that discusses female cross-cultural relationships in both the nineteenth and twentieth century in an attempt to provide the context for the cross-cultural relationships featured later in my project.

Settler women's diaries and reminiscences from the nineteenth century have limitations as sources for studying cross-cultural experiences because Indigenous women are very much on the periphery. It is hard to learn about the lives of Indigenous women mentioned in these sources because of the silences that these sources perpetuate. An excellent example of a nineteenth century Settler woman's diary and reminiscences is offered by Susan Allison's

¹⁰¹Wickwire, "Stories From the Margins: Toward a More Inclusive Historiography," 471.

published diary and the Allison Family Papers, housed in the British Columbia Provincial Archives. There are many recollections of interactions with Indigenous women and perceptions of Indigenous culture that Susan Allison records in these sources. The primary sources that were produced by Allison and her family certainly communicate a colonial attitude towards Indigenous people. This diary indicates that Allison was well aware of her position within the colonial project because she constantly asserts that her purpose as a Settler in the west was to settle and colonize the land. She is also very sympathetic and encouraging of other Settlers who come to do the same in British Columbia, and writes of Indigenous people with paternalism and racism. Despite Margaret Ormsby's insistence in the introduction to Allison's published diaries that "it was only when she had her first call from an Indian woman and they both sat in strained silence that she realized how imperative it was for her to learn Chinook and how dependent she was on the Indians for companionship," there is evidence within Allison's diaries that her cross-cultural engagements were very much governed by a colonial mindset and that she was not interested in forming meaningful cross-cultural relationships.¹⁰² Take, for example, Allison's account of the same event:

I had a visit from an Indian woman, a niece of Quinisco, the "Bear Hunter" and the chief of the Chu-chu-ewa Tribe. (...) I did not know my visitor seemed to think she ought to sit upright in her chair and fix her eyes on the opposite wall. I think 'Cla-hi-ya' was the only word she spoke. I was not used to Indians then and knew very little Chinook. I felt very glad when her visit was over. I know now that I should have offered her a cigar and a cup of tea.¹⁰³

This example suggests a cross-cultural engagement that is demonstrative of colonial hierarchies, for there is a clear power imbalance in her record of the visit. Much like the literature examining

¹⁰²Margaret A. Ormsby, Ed. *A Pioneer Gentlewoman in British Columbia: The Recollections of Susan Allison*. (University of British Columbia Press, 1976): xxix.

¹⁰³Ormsby, Ed. *A Pioneer Gentlewoman in British Columbia: The Recollections of Susan Allison*. 24.

trends in travel narratives to exclude Indigenous agency, settlement accounts were influenced by the dominant society's cultural expectations. Allison adheres to these expectations by not naming the individual, and therefore perpetuates and constructs cultural divisions and difference through exclusion and anonymity.

Margaret Butcher's writings are an example of where the colonial mindset can be located in early twentieth century British Columbia. Margaret Butcher, a female missionary writing between 1916 and 1917, details her role as a teacher at the Elizabeth Long Memorial Home in her published letters. Butcher's letters demonstrate a compliance with the assimilative mandate of the Elizabeth Long Memorial Home, for she accepted "short term hardship for the students as a necessary step towards entry into non-Native society."¹⁰⁴ Butcher was able "to make allowances for the poor conditions of the school," and she viewed the goal of assimilation to be completely necessary.¹⁰⁵ Much like Allison's failure to identify Indigenous women by name, Butcher rarely provides last names for the Indigenous girls and women that she encounters. A failure to name individuals works to strip them of their identity, grouping all Indigenous women together and denying their right to individuality. This inability for Butcher to treat Indigenous women and girls who she encounters with the same respect as the Settler women with whom she works and lives, demonstrates a proliferation of racial and gender hierarchies that were identified by Sylvia Van Kirk and Sarah Carter as defining the colonial mindset in twentieth century Canada. Van Kirk and Carter both argue that a common belief among eighteenth and nineteenth dominant society was that distinctions between Indigenous women and Settler women were necessary for the colonial project to successfully build a nation. By continuing to rely on

¹⁰⁴Mary-Ellen Kelm, Ed. *The Letters of Margaret Butcher: Missionary Imperialism on the North-Pacific Coast*, (University of Calgary Press, 2006): 207.

¹⁰⁵Kelm, Ed. *The Letters of Margaret Butcher: Missionary Imperialism on the North-Pacific Coast*, 207.

colonial tropes while describing their relationships and experiences with Indigenous women, Allison and Butcher's diaries demonstrate that they actively participated in furthering the goals of the colonial project.

Elizabeth Furniss argues that “[a]s a Settler colony eventually granted dominion status, Canada has evolved into an independent state in which Settler populations continue to exert authority over a subordinate minority Indigenous population.”¹⁰⁶ The nature of the dominant Canadian culture that developed in the twentieth century maintained vestiges of nineteenth century colonialism evidenced by the perpetuation of cultural representations of Indigenous peoples, “exercised in cultural ideologies, practices and texts of Settler populations (...) that are central to the very process of establishing and perpetuating colonial relationships.”¹⁰⁷ The representations of Indigenous women that are present in these sources have contributed to a “saturation of the Canadian landscape of official knowledge,” regarding Indigenous peoples.¹⁰⁸ Indeed, these representations inform official knowledge and come to present ‘truths’ about Indigenous peoples, which “ultimately serve as strategies of power that not only legitimate but also necessitate the ongoing surveillance control and subjugation of colonized people.”¹⁰⁹

Having reviewed these examples of the colonial mindset in Settler women's diaries and reminiscences, it is evident that being able to hear and honour Indigenous women's voices is of paramount importance in terms of understanding how individuals experienced cross-cultural relationships.

¹⁰⁶Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 14.

¹⁰⁷Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 17.

¹⁰⁸Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 14.

¹⁰⁹Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 14.

The colonial project continues to appear in the form of colonial tropes to influence what constitutes and is accepted as significant and accurate history in Settler women's diaries and reminiscences of the late nineteenth and twentieth century. In addition to primary sources that tell of cultural interactions guided by the strictures of the colonial project, many of the books that have been written in the twentieth century about settlement and Settler women in British Columbia, have largely ignored the significance of their interdependence with Indigenous women. The purpose of their inclusion here is to demonstrate where and how the colonial mindset is located within twentieth century historiography concerning Settler and Indigenous women. The continued use of certain colonial tropes in the twentieth century also suggests a prevalence of a shared colonial mindset within the dominant culture.

In 1928, Mrs. E. Brunsick Shaw wrote *The Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island, 1843-1866*, under the name N. de Bertrand Lugrin. Shaw was a member of The Women's Canadian Club of Vancouver Island, Vancouver Island, British Columbia. As an interest group, a part of The Women's Canadian Club's mandate was to honour Settler women's contributions to the development of the Canadian nation. Shaw's book demonstrates how the colonial project was embedded within the dominant culture; so embedded that practices of civilization and progress were accepted as common sense. This book is particularly interesting not only for the way in which Settler women's reminiscences and life stories have been recorded, but also because the book was published by The Women's Canadian Club of Victoria. Its dedication page reads:

In order that we, and those who follow us, may remember the courage, strength of purpose and nobility of character which governed the lives of the pioneer women of Vancouver Island, these pages are lovingly dedicated to their memory by The Women's Canadian Club of Victoria, British Columbia.¹¹⁰

¹¹⁰N. de Bertrand Lugrin, *The pioneer women of Vancouver Island, 1843-1866*, John Hosie, ed. (Victoria, B.C.: Women's Canadian Club of Victoria, 1928): iv.

Shaw's account of pioneer women is meant to describe "the first unfolding of a nation," and the biographies of the women included elicit an understanding of a "very primitive" way of life, "but the truest thing in world, and the one fact responsible for the birth of nation."¹¹¹ There is a clear incentive to link pioneer women to the birth of a nation and the biographies included in this anthology do exactly that.

When recounting the arrival of Mrs. Andrew Muir at Fort Rupert, in 1848, Shaw writes that upon learning of the arrival of the newcomers, the Indigenous people near the fort

expressed a great deal of eagerness to see them, especially the white women. They were delighted when they caught a glimpse of Mrs. Muir. (...) But from the beginning the Indians, men and women alike, admired and respected the women, the first white women they had ever seen. There were various tribes in the vicinity of Fort Rupert, and they were very hostile toward one another, and not at all friendly to the Hudson's Bay.¹¹²

By suggesting that the Indigenous people welcomed and were excited to have white Settler women come to their land, Shaw implies that the Settlers had a legitimate right to the land. A key component to accepting the legitimacy of settlement across North America, and the creation of state, has been to recognize a policy of Terra Nullius and conceptualize Settler's use of land as desired by Indigenous peoples. Shaw writes a history about pioneer women that serves the exact purpose of legitimizing Canadian nationhood by appealing to the myth of Terra Nullius on Vancouver Island. The reverence that Shaw affords the contributions of Settler women without critically engaging with the impact of their arrival demonstrates a propagation of a colonial mindset in the early twentieth century and of the faith in the colonial narrative.

In 1971, Elizabeth L. Forbes put together the life stories of pioneer women on Vancouver

¹¹¹N. de Bertrand Lugrin, *The pioneer women of Vancouver Island, 1843-1866*, John Hosie, ed., 1-2.

¹¹²N. de Bertrand Lugrin, *The pioneer women of Vancouver Island, 1843-1866*, John Hosie, ed., 47.

Island, in *Wild Roses at Their Feet: Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island*. Included in this anthology is a chapter entitled: “An Indian Princess,” detailing the life of an Indigenous woman named Old Katie. Old Katie was also known as Princess Katie within the Settler community, suggesting that both of these names were commonly used by the Settler community when referring to this Indigenous woman. Much of the literature that examines Christian naming of Indigenous peoples provides examples of Settlers and missionaries giving Indigenous peoples Christian names. While Forbes does not discuss where the name Old Katie originates from, she received this name from a member or members of Settler society. Forbes’ account of Old Katie’s life, follows a narrative of romanticizing Indigenous women and placing the individual into the binary of Princess/Squaw: oft used imagery to represent Indigenous women. Princess Katie was a beauty in her youth “with smooth brown skin, flashing black eyes and a slim erect figure.”¹¹³ In addition to fitting the stereotypical appearance of an Indian Princess, Forbes states that Katie lived her entire life in her “ancestral lodge, as her right. No other habitation suited her dignity and her rank as princess.”¹¹⁴

Forbes’ description of Princess Katie can be understood as complying with colonial discourse given the arguments that Rayna Green makes in the article, “The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture.” Green argues that in eighteenth and nineteenth century historiography, Indigenous women were often portrayed in the Indian Princess/Squaw binary.

The image of the Indian Princess typically involved a handsome, vigorous, Indian woman in her twenties or thirties. She is of noble visage and bearing, has a swarthy complexion and long, dark hair, wears a feathered headdress and a

¹¹³Elizabeth L Forbes, *Wild Roses at Their Feet: Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island*, (Vancouver, BC: British Columbia Centennial '71 Committee, 1971): 71.

¹¹⁴Forbes, *Wild Roses at Their Feet: Pioneer Women of Vancouver Island*, 71.

loosely fitting cape or skirt, and is armed with a bow and quiver of arrows.¹¹⁵

The image of the Indian Princess during the nineteenth century was used to invoke a symbolic representation of American liberty and “European classical virtue translated into New World terms.”¹¹⁶ Central to the image of the Indian Princess, is her relationship with men, specifically with white men. Green argues that Indigenous women were conceptualized as Indian Princesses so long as they would “help, stand by, sacrifice for, and aid white men.”¹¹⁷ The Pocahontas story contributes to the Indian Princess imagery by claiming that Indigenous women desired that white men stay in the New World, which was confirmed by Pocahontas’ attempt to save Captain John Smith. Green argues that the outcome of this story, and Pocahontas’ actions in particular, contribute to the myth that Settlers have a right to the land on Turtle Island, because the colonizing power perceives itself as welcome and wanted on the land by Indigenous peoples.¹¹⁸ Thus imagery of the Indian Princess has served particular state and colonial goals.

The image of the ‘squaw’ acts in opposition to that of the Indian Princess, identified by Green as “[t]he Princess’ darker twin.”¹¹⁹ Whereas the Indian Princess was defined by her unrealized sexual relationship to men, the “presence of overt and realized sexuality” represented by the ‘squaw’ converts the image of Indigenous women from positive to negative.¹²⁰ The image of the ‘squaw’ encompasses vices that had long been a component of the negative representation

¹¹⁵Rayna Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture,” *The Massachusetts Review* 16(1975): 16.

¹¹⁶Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture,” *The Massachusetts Review*, 17.

¹¹⁷Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture,” *The Massachusetts Review*, 18.

¹¹⁸Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture,” *The Massachusetts Review*, 16.

¹¹⁹Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture,” *The Massachusetts Review* 19.

¹²⁰Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture,” *The Massachusetts Review* 19.

of Indigenous peoples in general: drunkenness, stupidity, thievery, venality and isolation from mainstream society.¹²¹ Representations of the ‘squaw’ suggest that she is understood as “mere economic and sexual conveniences for the men who (...) are tainted by association with her.”¹²² Significantly, the image of the ‘squaw’ encouraged isolation from American society, and heavy colonial regulation concerning all aspects of Indigenous women’s lives. As Green concludes, both images of the Indian Princess and the Squaw are problematic because these portrayals linked stereotyped perceptions of Indigenous women to “a national mythos,” which did not allow colonial society to engage with realities faced by Indigenous women.

Forbes relies on the Indian Princess imagery to articulate an essentialized representation of Old Katie that agrees with the colonial project. By describing Old Katie as part of an antique culture, denying her full identity, and sexualizing her image, Forbes is perpetuating a colonial mindset through historiography. The assumption that Forbes is writing for an audience that would accept her portrayal of Old Katie tells us that Forbes is not alone in adhering to a colonial mindset in the twentieth century. The continued existence of these images in twentieth century historiography demonstrates that a colonial mindset was clearly embedded within the dominant culture during the mid twentieth century, producing an environment under which cross-cultural relationships were experienced.

The limited historical record of cross-cultural relationships between women in British Columbia has been divided into two categories, and those sources that comply with a colonial discourse were dealt with in this section. Where Settler women’s experiences have been recorded, the voices of Indigenous women have not. Moreover, the representation of Indigenous

¹²¹Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture,” *The Massachusetts Review* 19.

¹²²Green, “The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture,” *The Massachusetts Review* 19.

women in these sources perpetuate colonial stereotypes and tropes that both reinforce and legitimize the colonial project. Reviewing how historians have incorporated Indigenous voices and where they are critical of the colonial discourse, is the focus of the next section.

Experience Enters In: How historians of cross-cultural relationships have critiqued the colonial discourse and included Indigenous voices

In the last section, we saw that the historical record regarding cross-cultural relationships is limited and is partially comprised of early Settler accounts which reflect the values of the colonial project. Alongside the post-colonial historiographic shift, the literature concerning cross-cultural relationships between Indigenous and Settler women has also gone through a transition. Here, I look at histories that have created the space to include women's experiences. The inclusion of women's experiences are accompanied by historians' critiques of the colonial discourse. The purpose of this section, then, is to examine how case studies regarding Settler and Indigenous women's cross-cultural relationships have been integrated into literature that is focused on analyzing the macro narrative of colonialism. I argue that an approach which identifies the colonial discourse and challenges the colonial discourse with the inclusion of lived experiences will best serve as a historiographic approach for the study of Settler and Indigenous women's cross-cultural relationships.

Sylvia Van Kirk has been credited as one of the first historians to discuss colonial experience through the lens of gender and race in Canada. In 1980, she argued that Frances Simpson's racism towards Indigenous women was exemplary of a rise in racist attitudes that accompanied the arrival of white Settler women, in her book, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870*. Van Kirk links this rise in racist attitudes towards Indigenous women, to the social structure in which a women's lot was determined by her success in

marriage.¹²³ Historiographically, Van Kirk is in good company when she asserts that the arrival of Settler, white women signaled a “growth of racial prejudice.”¹²⁴

Van Kirk’s analysis of relationships during the fur trade era reveals that European women’s racism originated out of a belief that Indigenous and Métis women posed a concrete threat to their well being. Since all women were reduced to a “dependency on male protectors,” the perpetuation of negative representations of Indigenous women was considered necessary to ensure Indigenous women’s subordinate position in fur trade society.¹²⁵ For Van Kirk, the existence of these negative representations precludes the possibility for meaningful cross-cultural relationships.

Recent historiography has compared the impact of the colonial discourse alongside lived experiences and begun to question the perceived dominance of the colonial narrative. In Antoinette Burton’s introduction to *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernities*, she concludes that colonialism never attained complete hegemonic rule but was constantly negotiated and re-negotiated while never being fully realized.¹²⁶ The essays that are included in Burton’s book are meant to challenge the historiography that argues that imperial power acted as the “proverbial juggernaut”¹²⁷ by offering histories that include lived realities. Indeed, Myra Rutherdale’s work aims to “show how preconceived ideas about empire, colonialism, race and culture, travel, gender and religion came into conflict with actual experience.”¹²⁸

¹²³Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870*: 203.

¹²⁴Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870*: 201.

¹²⁵Van Kirk, *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870*: 229.

¹²⁶Antoinette Burton, *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernities*, (New York: Routledge, 1999): 1.

¹²⁷Burton, *Gender, Sexuality and Colonial Modernities*, 2.

¹²⁸Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man’s God: Gender and Race in the Canadian Mission Field*, xiv.

The injection of experiences into literature concerning cross-cultural relationships has changed how historians understand colonialism by allowing them to deconstruct and question the breadth of the colonial project. For example, Myra Rutherdale recognizes that not all relationships between Settler –specifically missionary women -- and Indigenous women were governed by the colonial project. In a section of her book, *Women and the White Man's God*, entitled, “Ambiguous Relations,” she discusses relationships that developed between Selina Bompas and Madeline, a Cree woman from Saskatchewan.¹²⁹ Rutherdale writes that despite Bompas’ role as a missionary, and “[h]owever strong the dominant discourse used to construct the other may appear, it is clear that there were many important moments in the mission field when racial barriers broke down.”¹³⁰ Madeline and Bompas developed a “close relationship” when there was a food shortage at the fort and when Bompas fell ill.¹³¹ In both circumstances, Rutherdale writes that Bompas may have developed a new self-perception in her “intense closeness to Madeline.”¹³² Rutherdale concludes that actual experiences in the mission field were capable of challenging Settler women’s pre-conceived notions that had been developed by the colonial project.

Lyn Riddett’s work examines female cross-cultural relationships in Australia and questions whether these relationships could withstand the “prevailing patterns of eurocentrism and ‘scientific’ racism” to which Settler women were pressured to conform.¹³³ Though not a

¹²⁹Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man's Gold: Gender and Race in the Canadian Mission Field*, 43.

¹³⁰Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man's Gold: Gender and Race in the Canadian Mission Field*, 42.

¹³¹Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man's Gold: Gender and Race in the Canadian Mission Field*, 45.

¹³²Rutherdale, *Women and the White Man's Gold: Gender and Race in the Canadian Mission Field*, 45.

¹³³Lynne Riddett, “Watch the White Women Fade: Indigenous and White Women in the

Canadian example, Riddett's 1992 approach to the study of cross-cultural relationships in her article, "Watch the White Women Fade: Indigenous and White Women in the Northern Territory, 1870- 1940," is an excellent example of how these relationships can be studied. Riddett recognizes that while missionary work required an adherence to prescribed colonial ideological influences, missionary women's work meant that they had to develop personal relationships with Indigenous women. Riddett goes further and demonstrates that some of these women were capable of developing relationships "in a spirit of sisterhood and affection."¹³⁴ Notably, Sister Elizabeth Taylor and her relationship with Indigenous women on Groote Eylandt suggest to Riddett that there exist exceptions to relationships completely governed by the imperial gaze. Riddett provides examples of "many simple personal details and references" from the personal letters between Sister Elizabeth Taylor and Connie Bush, an Indigenous woman on Groote, to indicate that the women were friends.¹³⁵

While Riddett's work does challenge the trend in historiography to consider gendered relationships as governed by the colonial project, she is skeptical as to whether her conclusions are representative of wider historical trends or simply unique examples that are isolated in their significance.¹³⁶ Riddett also briefly examines the role of Settler women in Australia and writes that, in general, Settler women were "ill-equipped to understand those practices. What was essential, spiritual and meaningful to Aborigines became primitive, barbaric and exotic in the

Northern Territory, 1870- 1940," *Hecate: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women's Liberation* 19.1 (1992): 89.

¹³⁴Riddett, "Watch the White Women Fade: Indigenous and White Women in the Northern Territory, 1870- 1940," *Hecate: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women's Liberation*, 87.

¹³⁵Riddett, "Watch the White Women Fade: Indigenous and White Women in the Northern Territory, 1870- 1940," *Hecate: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women's Liberation*, 87.

¹³⁶Riddett, "Watch the White Women Fade: Indigenous and White Women in the Northern Territory, 1870- 1940," *Hecate: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women's Liberation*, 88.

tales told of Settler and traveler women.”¹³⁷ This is made understandable considering the Settler women’s focus on survival rather than a concern with cultural sensitivities. Furthermore, because of their ignorance of Indigenous culture and lifeways, Riddett argues that they sought clarification from old white men, not Indigenous women.¹³⁸

Carole Gerson’s article, “Nobler Savages: Representations of native women in the writings of Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Trail,” contributes to historiography that investigates whether a “unified metanarrative” of Indigenous and Settler women’s relationships is possible.¹³⁹ What is of interest in Gerson’s comparison of Moodie’s and Traill’s work, is the representations of Indigenous women as noble and the reverence they accord Indigenous women’s ability to survive in the bush.¹⁴⁰ Gerson writes that Moodie, Traill and Indigenous women occupied a similar marginal space on the outskirts of frontier culture: “powerful as white, but disempowered as female.”¹⁴¹ Moodie’s cross-cultural relationships with Indigenous women, such as Mrs. Tom Nogan and Mrs. Muskrat, are historicized as examples of attempts by Moodie to transcend the colonial narrative. Gerson argues that portions of Moodie’s work can be considered an “anti-conquest” narrative, but concludes that both Moodie and Traill “inevitably participate in the colonial destruction” they deplore. However, examining Moodie and Traill’s attempts to negotiate their roles as settler women and their ability to transcend the imperial gaze in some of their writings, Gerson does nuance the historiography regarding cross-cultural

¹³⁷Riddett, “Watch the White Women Fade: Indigenous and White Women in the Northern Territory, 1870- 1940,” *Hecate: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women’s Liberation*, 89.

¹³⁸Riddett, “Watch the White Women Fade: Indigenous and White Women in the Northern Territory, 1870- 1940,” *Hecate: An Interdisciplinary Journal of Women’s Liberation*, 89.

¹³⁹ Carole Gerson, “Nobler Savages: Representations of native women in the writings of Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Traill,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32:2 (1997): 8.

¹⁴⁰ Gerson, “Nobler Savages: Representations of native women in the writings of Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Traill,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32:2 (1997): 6.

¹⁴¹ Gerson, “Nobler Savages: Representations of native women in the writings of Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Traill,” *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32:2 (1997): 4.

relationships.¹⁴² Gerson's analysis of cross-cultural relationships in Moodie and Traill's writings may complicate the hegemony of the colonial narrative, but, as argued by Riddett, is the evidence here enough to make any conclusions regarding the nature of these relationships?

In 2005, Patricia A. Roome published an article, "From One whose Home is Among the Indians," which is an exciting examination of early twentieth century cross-cultural relationships between Henrietta Muir Edwards and Cree, Assinibonine, Blackfoot, Blood and Peigan Indigenous peoples in Alberta. Roome argues that Henrietta Muir Edwards developed unique relationships with Indigenous women when she writes that "few Euro-Canadians shared Edward's experiences or possessed enough knowledge of Aboriginal peoples to critique what historians describe as the "centrality of racism in first wave feminist thought."¹⁴³ The wife of a medical doctor, Henrietta Muir-Edwards came into daily contact with Indigenous women when she moved to Fort Qu'Appelle in 1883. By 1904, the Edwards moved to Macleod, a town near the Blood Reserve in Southern Alberta and continued to interact with Indigenous populations. Despite Roome's argument that Muir Edwards did not choose to in Western Canada, but "marriage and her husband's fortunes dictated places of residence and her association with Aboriginal peoples," Roome attributes Henrietta's willingness and capacity to interact with

¹⁴² Carole Gerson, "Nobler Savages: Representations of native women in the writings of Susanna Moodie and Catherine Parr Traill," *Journal of Canadian Studies* 32:2 (1997): 6. Gerson writes that while Moodie seems sympathetic to the plight of Indigenous peoples at the time of settlement, she is a woman of her time, and did maintain an imperial gaze. For example, she accepts the commodification of Indigenous traditions and artifacts readily and participates in a romanticization of Indigenous cultures and life-ways.

¹⁴³ Patricia A. Roome, "From One Whose Home is Among the Indians: Henrietta Muir Edwards and Aboriginal Peoples," *Unsettled Pasts*, eds. Sarah Carter, Lesley Erikson, Patricia Roome and Char Smith, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005): 48.

Indigenous peoples to her “flexibility, compassion and determination, important assets in cross-cultural experience.”¹⁴⁴

In particular, two relationships developed between Henrietta Muir Edwards and Indigenous women that were mentioned in Roome’s article. While at Qu’Appelle, Edwards developed a close relationship with an Indigenous woman named Paitence. Bringing Paitence into her family home to work alongside her husband and children was an experience that “did not fit prevailing stereotypes that depicted Indigenous women simply as “Indian Princess” or immoral “Squaw.” Nor did Henrietta and Oliver believe the negative propaganda generated by government officials, missionaries and journalists.”¹⁴⁵ Indeed, Henrietta enjoyed training Indigenous women in the arts of homemaking and nursing, for she believed her duty to be instructing Indigenous women in the making of a Christian home, “one that modeled “civilized” habits.”¹⁴⁶ The second relationship that Roome writes of is the friendship that developed between Henrietta and Quioto, an Indigenous woman. Quioto worked for Henrietta, but it was clear that they also had a personal friendship. Henrietta wrote to her daughter Alice that, “Quioto and her daughter turned up on Sunday about 2 pm and spent the afternoon. I had finished my dinner but I was very glad to cook them theirs, there was plenty of meat and

¹⁴⁴ Roome, “From One Whose Home is Among the Indians: Henrietta Muir Edwards and Aboriginal Peoples,” *Unsettled Pasts*, eds. Sarah Carter, Lesley Erikson, Patricia Roome and Char Smith, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005): 55.

¹⁴⁵ Roome, “From One Whose Home is Among the Indians: Henrietta Muir Edwards and Aboriginal Peoples,” *Unsettled Pasts*, eds. Sarah Carter, Lesley Erikson, Patricia Roome and Char Smith, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005): 61.

¹⁴⁶ Roome, “From One Whose Home is Among the Indians: Henrietta Muir Edwards and Aboriginal Peoples,” *Unsettled Pasts*, eds. Sarah Carter, Lesley Erikson, Patricia Roome and Char Smith, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005): 65.

potatoes left over from Saturday so it was not much trouble.”¹⁴⁷ Despite the examples of cross-cultural relationships that developed between Henrietta, Paitence and Quito, Henrietta’s commitment to Christian feminism ultimately defined the nature of these relationships. Roome’s conclusions suggest that Henrietta struggled within her ambiguous position between Christian feminist and Indigenous ally: “On a personal level, Henrietta participated in a women’s culture that allowed her to make friendships and treat Aboriginal peoples with respect. However, (...) Edwards’ religious –based feminism prevented her from embracing cultural difference and understanding Aboriginal spiritual traditions.”¹⁴⁸ While Roome fills a gap in the literature concerning female cross-cultural relationships in the early twentieth century, the perspective of these relationships is only known from Henrietta’s gaze. What would the Indigenous women that she befriended say about the same relationships?

Certainly, it can be argued that the historiography of cross-cultural relationships is well served by a synthesis between discourse and experience. However, more case studies are needed in order to demonstrate the fluidity of colonialism and the actual experiences of both Settler and Indigenous women. Case studies regarding Indigenous women’s roles in their communities and attempts to understand how they perceived Settler women would be a significant contribution to this literature. Research that situates Indigenous voices at the center of these investigations also proves quite fruitful in a pursuit to understand the complexity of cross-cultural relationships. Moreover, a focus on Indigenous voices instigates a transition within historiography for the work that historians can do to participate in decolonized, indigenized history. In response to the call

¹⁴⁷ Roome, “From One Whose Home is Among the Indians: Henrietta Muir Edwards and Aboriginal Peoples,” *Unsettled Pasts*, eds. Sarah Carter, Lesley Erikson, Patricia Roome and Char Smith, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005): 67.

¹⁴⁸ Roome, “From One Whose Home is Among the Indians: Henrietta Muir Edwards and Aboriginal Peoples,” *Unsettled Pasts*, eds. Sarah Carter, Lesley Erikson, Patricia Roome and Char Smith, (Calgary: University of Calgary Press, 2005): 72.

for a study of lived realities, this project will contend with female cross-cultural relationships in the twentieth century in an attempt to honour Indigenous women's experiences within cross-cultural relationships.

The purpose of this chapter has been to review the literature on cross-cultural relationships and make a case for including women's lived experiences, because these experiences can tell us a lot about colonialism in twentieth century British Columbia. The literature reveals power dynamics that can persist in histories, if historians are not critical of their sources and willing to make "voices from the margin" central to their research. While some authors featured here have written about colonialism as if it reached a hegemonic status, those who have incorporated case studies and are interested in experiences have demonstrated that this was simply not the case. To be sure, a colonial mindset was well established within dominant society throughout the twentieth century in British Columbia. However, whether this mindset decided the nature of cross-cultural relationships will be the focus of the remainder of this project. The following chapters present different sites where cross-cultural relationships developed, and ask what relationships that have been formed between Indigenous and Settler women look like at these sites. While recognizing the scope and severity of the colonial project remains an important task for historians, by honouring the experiences of Indigenous and Settler women it will be shown that the colonial project did not attain hegemonic status. It is my hope that by demonstrating the work that has been involved in maintaining the colonial project and by revealing one area where colonialism impacted people's lives, this research can contribute to a meaningful process of decolonization. Simply put,

the different life experiences of individuals, conditioned not only by their individual biographies but also by their varied positions within structures of inequality and domination, may give rise to different perceptions of reality and lead to challenges to the

legitimacy of dominant culture.¹⁴⁹

¹⁴⁹Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 15.

Chapter 2

The Residential School System as a Site of Encounter

Residential schools were a key site of cross-cultural encounters that emerged from my interviews and in retrospect, they are an obvious one. Given the physical isolation of Indigenous peoples on reserves and Indigenous children in separate schools, institutionalized settings like residential schools were where a large number of cross-cultural relationships occurred.

The gendered organization of residential schools was maintained through separate classes, sports, vocational training and dormitories for Indigenous boys and girls. Non-Indigenous women were the teachers and supervisors of the Indigenous girls in these gendered spaces. Residential schools, then, witnessed many interactions and relationships between Indigenous girls and non-Indigenous women.

The introduction of institutionalized missionary Indigenous education dates to 1617 in North America, following King James' advocacy for "schooling of the Indians," to promote "civilization" and Christianity." Because the latter was a key part of the former, Christian organizations were instrumental in managing the education of Indigenous peoples. Under the jurisdiction of the Imperial Power, prior to entering into Canadian Confederation in July of 1871, missionaries in British Columbia worked to reinforce Britain's policies for dealing with Indigenous populations predicated on the Royal Proclamation of 1763 which sought to "maintain the Indians as allies," while promoting the paternalistic view of "Indians as an imperial responsibility."¹⁵⁰ Up until 1879 when Nicholas Flood Davin submitted a confidential "Report on Industrial Schools for Indians and Half Breeds," to the Minister of the Interior, Sir John A MacDonal, most of the mission education experiments were governed by ecclesiastical

¹⁵⁰John L. Tobias, "Protection, Civilization, Assimilation: An Outline History of Canada's Indian Policy," *The Western Canadian Journal of Anthropology*, 1976 6(2): 13-30.

institutions. By the early nineteenth century, missionaries to British Columbia had institutionalized an education system, with the goals to “civilize” Indigenous populations. Thus, missionary schools that focused on a strict Christian education and assimilation with Settler society are the foundation that the residential school project was based on.

In a study of mission education, historian Carol Devens argues that these schools “had a profound impact on Native American girls and on their female kin.”¹⁵¹ Following the example set by the United States, 1879 marked the advent of the Canadian federal government’s interest in the education of Indigenous peoples. The Canadian government certainly shared in the belief that schooling was “the primary means of enticing young Native Americans to reject tradition and seek conversion.”¹⁵² Moreover, by the beginning of the twentieth century, Canadian

¹⁵¹Carol Devens, “If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race”: Missionary Education of Native American Girls,” *Journal of World History*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (1992): 219.

¹⁵²Devens, “If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race”: Missionary Education of Native American Girls,” *Journal of World History*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (1992): 223.

In Derek G. Smith’s article, “The “Policy of Aggressive Civilization” and Projects of Governance in Roman Catholic Industrial Schools for Native Peoples in Canada, 1870 – 95,” he writes that Canada took note of how the United States had implemented Residential School policy following the submission of Davin’s report in 1879. Nicholas Davin’s 1879 report was the charter document used to specify the terms for how industrial schools, and boarding schools were to function for almost a century. Davin had been commissioned to report on the United States’ policy of “aggressive civilization” and found that industrial schools were a key component of this state run policy while Christian missions oversaw the day-to-day running of the schools. Davin’s description of the U.S. Peace Commission’s policy recommendations for governing Indigenous populations included the statement that

the Indians should, as far as practicable, be consolidated on new reservations, and provided with “permanent individual homes;” that the tribal relation should be abolished; that lands should be allotted in severalty and not in common; that the Indian should speedily become a citizen of the United States, enjoy the protection of the law, and be made amendable thereto, that, finally, it was the duty of the Government to afford the Indians all reasonable aid in their preparation for citizenship by educating them in Industry and in the arts of civilization (Smith, The “Policy of Aggressive Civilization” and Projects of Governance in Roman Catholic Industrial Schools for Native Peoples in Canada 1870 -95, 255).

Davin’s recommendation that Canada adopt a similar policy was well taken, and his Report was the fundamental to seeing the Order in Council passed. Contrary to a body of

Indigenous education policy began to reflect a dominant cultural belief “that women, as mothers, must be educated in order to raise virtuous male citizens.”¹⁵³ The education of Indigenous girls, then, became an important task to undertake at residential schools, as “[t]he girls will need the training more than the boys and they will wield a greater influence in the future. If we get the girls, we get the race.”¹⁵⁴

By 1849, the first official residential school had opened in Alderville, Ontario. Residential schools differed from mission schools insofar as Indigenous children would leave their home communities and travel to live at the school for the entirety of the school year. In order to educate Indigenous girls at residential schools, there was a call for better teachers and a female presence. In 1909, Duncan Campbell Scott became the Superintendent of Indian Education, and by 1913 he began running the Department of Indian Affairs. As Superintendent of the Department of Indian Affairs, he became particularly concerned with the quality of teachers and their commitment to realizing the goal of the colonial project: assimilation. In the hopes of having better results and less hostility or apathy from Indigenous communities, Scott poured funding into securing better teachers, while providing meals, clothing and supplies for the

historiography maintaining that the mandate for residential schools began in missions, new evidence suggests that Davin’s report with consultation from missionaries and Churches formed the charter for the residential school project after Confederation. In the case of post-Confederation industrial schools it is apparent that the schools “were neither simply a Roman Catholic creation, nor a missionary creation, nor even a Canadian state creation, but were an outgrowth of an array of policies and practices on a continental scale deeply intertwined with other US and Canadian cultural projects regarding Native peoples” (Smith, *The “Policy of Aggressive Civilization” and Projects of Governance in Roman Catholic Industrial Schools for Native Peoples in Canada, 1870 – 95*, 255).

¹⁵³Devens, “If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race”: Missionary Education of Native American Girls,” *Journal of World History*: 224.

¹⁵⁴Issac Bird to John C. Lowrie, 14 July 1883, AIC, G:I:III. As quoted in Devens, “If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race”: Missionary Education of Native American Girls,” *Journal of World History*: 225.

students to both encourage and bribe Indigenous youth to attend and stay in school.¹⁵⁵ While there had always been a female non-Indigenous presence at mission and residential schools, female teachers and childcare workers were hired on to “instruct girls in domesticity and Christianity as well as some academic subjects.”¹⁵⁶ To “get rid of the Indian problem,” by 1920 Scott made it mandatory for all Indigenous children in Canada between the ages of seven and fifteen to attend a school.¹⁵⁷ The objective of this policy shift was made transparent by Scott himself:

I do not think as a matter of fact, that the country ought to continuously protect a class of people who are able to stand alone... Our objective is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic and there is no Indian question, and no Indian Department.¹⁵⁸

The hope that the non-Indigenous female educators would be better able “to indoctrinate them [the indigenous girls] with the ideals of Christian womanhood – piety, domesticity, submissiveness and purity,” was reflected in the curriculum.¹⁵⁹ Girls were trained in sewing, knitting, cooking, and other domestic tasks and were taught history, math, spelling and natural sciences, all the while reinforcing the superiority of Settler society’s “history, morality and health.”¹⁶⁰ Evidently, the messages that the girls’ received about their cultures were demoralizing and it is clear that a young Indigenous girl’s exposure to European religious,

¹⁵⁵Brian E. Titley, *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1986): 86.

¹⁵⁶Devens, “If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race”: Missionary Education of Native American Girls,” *Journal of World History*, Vol. 3, No. 2, (1992): 225

¹⁵⁷Titley, *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada*, 73.

¹⁵⁸John Leslie, *The Historical Development of the Indian Act*, Second Edition, (Ottawa: Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development Treaties and Historical Research, 1978) 114.

¹⁵⁹Devens, “If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race”: Missionary Education of Native American Girls,” *Journal of World History*: 228.

¹⁶⁰Devens, “If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race”: Missionary Education of Native American Girls,” *Journal of World History*: 228.

economic and gender values were detrimental to women's roles within Indigenous society, for girls would not receive "instruction that was the key to assuming her place as a woman within her own cultural tradition."¹⁶¹

Despite an attempt to shut down the schools that were in the worst conditions beginning in 1910, while at the same time increasing funding to realize the goal of complete assimilation, Scott's overbearing policies did not eradicate the hazards of the residential school experience. It is clear that in addition to attempted cultural genocide, rapes, beatings, disease transmission and other abuses were common at residential schools.¹⁶² By 1946, a critical re-examination the Indian Act began, slowly resulting in the decision to start shutting down residential schools by the 1960s, in favour of integrating Indigenous students into the public school system. However, the closure of residential schools did not erase or undo the generations of damaging assimilative work Indigenous communities were exposed to through the Canadian education system.

While there are not many histories that detail non-Indigenous women's roles in the nineteenth century, the history of Port Simpson provides an example of a British Columbian town where the mission school became a site for female cross-cultural relationships. Having moved to Port Simpson in 1874, Emma Crosby, the wife of a Methodist minister, Thomas Crosby, took on a variety of roles that brought her into contact with Indigenous women. Her published letters reveal that the school, in particular, was a site for developing female cross-cultural relationships. The daughter of a Methodist minister in Ontario, Emma was well versed in the faith, but because of gender attitudes of the time she was unable to take on the roll of a full-

¹⁶¹Devens, "If We Get the Girls, We Get the Race: Missionary Education of Native American Girls," *Journal of World History*: 220.

¹⁶²_____. The Royal Commission on Aboriginal People, *Department of Indian and Northern Affairs Homepage*. 2004. <www.ainc-inac.gc.ca/ch/rcap/rpt/nte_e.html> (February 22nd, 2006).

fledged missionary in her own right.¹⁶³ Emma was the only non-Indigenous woman at Fort Simpson, which strengthened her resolve to “civilize” the Tsimshian through gender role re-organization. Jan Hare and Jean Barman write that

“[e]xcept for Emma, all women at Fort Simpson were either Aboriginal or mixed race, the offspring of newcomer men and Aboriginal women. From the perspective of women like Emma, they embodied a double complexity. Their Aboriginality made them suspect, but so did their paternity. For a newcomer man to consort with an Aboriginal woman was to demonstrate a weakness of character that would be passed down to their children, who were thereby doubly contaminated by the accident of birth.”¹⁶⁴

Emma carried out her duties pursuing the transformation of Tsimshian gender relations by visiting homes of local families, teaching school, organizing mission activities and advocating for her husband’s conversion conquests.¹⁶⁵ Her letters to her mother in Ontario speak to her role as a missionary concerned with “educating” Indigenous women, in particular, “the need to raise up Indian women from their supposed despair so as to make them good Christians capable of managing marriage and family based Victorian models.”¹⁶⁶

Emma Crosby’s example suggests that while Settler women who were employed within the system of Indigenous education saw humanity in their students, it was their authoritative role, their acceptance of the legitimacy and the necessity of the colonial project that superceded the development of personal relationships. Have the relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous women changed over the course of one hundred years and 300 miles since Emma Crosby’s experience at Port Simpson?

¹⁶³Jan Hare and Jean Barman, *Good Intentions Gone Awry: Emma Crosby and the Methodist Mission on the Northwest Coast*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2006): xviii.

¹⁶⁴Hare and Barman, *Good Intentions Gone Awry: Emma Crosby and the Methodist Mission on the Northwest Coast*: 47.

¹⁶⁵Hare and Barman, *Good Intentions Gone Awry: Emma Crosby and the Methodist Mission on the Northwest Coast*: xviii.

¹⁶⁶Hare and Barman, *Good Intentions Gone Awry: Emma Crosby and the Methodist Mission on the Northwest Coast*: xx.

St. Mary's of Mission, British Columbia as a Site for Female Cross-Cultural Encounters

People's individual and varied experiences at residential school are known and are beginning to be included in the 'official' narrative on the history of Indigenous schooling in Canada. For example, a study of St. Mary's Catholic boarding school in Mission, British Columbia by Jody R. Woods, in *A Stó:lō Coast-Salish Historical Atlas*, recognizes that the memories of students at St. Mary's "were not wholly negative; rather, they were complex, varied and individual."¹⁶⁷ Mary Charles' memories attest to the complexity of residential school experiences:

I suppose all of us experience things in our own way. There are some who never liked boarding school life. For myself, I can only say that St. Mary's was good to me. It was strict but so was everything else in those days. We had only a half day class but outside class I learned to knit, to sew, to cook, to dressmake and to needlework, to look after vegetables and of course to scrub and wash.¹⁶⁸

Mary Charles' reflections on her time at St. Mary's Roman Catholic boarding school were echoed by some of the women I interviewed, but for every positive memory there were also negative memories. Thus, my inquiry came to focus on how these varied memories and experiences have been impacted by female cross-cultural relationships at St. Mary's of Mission, British Columbia.

St. Mary's at Mission was established in 1863 by Roman Catholic priests from the

¹⁶⁷Jody R. Woods, "St. Mary's Roman Catholic Boarding School. A Spatial Analysis," in *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, Keith Thor Carlson, ed. and Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Cultural Advisor (Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, Chilliwack: Stó:lō Heritage Trust, 2001): 68.

¹⁶⁸Woods, "St. Mary's Roman Catholic Boarding School. A Spatial Analysis," in *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, Keith Thor Carlson, ed. and Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Cultural Advisor: 68.

Oblates of Mary Immaculate order.¹⁶⁹ By 1868, the school sought both boys and girls to attend from Indigenous communities in the lower mainland and Vancouver Island, although most of the students were Stó:lō. In 1960, a second school was built to accommodate 300 students, replacing the old school by 1965. In 1973, students stopped living and attending St. Mary's. At this time, the Department of Indian Affairs took control of the school from the Oblates of Mary Immaculate order, and the school became a dormitory from where students were bused to public schools. In 1984 the site of St. Mary's was leased to Coqualeetza Education Training Center to be used as offices and classrooms, which signifies the closure of the residential school in Mission, British Columbia.¹⁷⁰ The property continues to be in use today by the Stó:lō, and may undergo large scale renovations in order to house visiting Indigenous nations during the 2010 Vancouver Olympic Games.¹⁷¹

Due to the longevity of St. Mary's, the Stó:lō community continues to face a daunting legacy left by residential schools. The purpose of asking about female cross-cultural relationships was to find out how colonialism enters into interpersonal relationships and whether a bond occurs between women, or whether there is a greater polarization between Indigenous and non-Indigenous women at St. Mary's. Having participated in discussions with Stó:lō and non-Stó:lō women who were involved with St. Mary's, there is no simple answer to this question.

The girls' days at St. Mary's were steeped in routine. Marcie Peters, a student of St.

¹⁶⁹Woods, "St. Mary's Roman Catholic Boarding School. A Spatial Analysis," in *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, Keith Thor Carlson, ed. and Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Cultural Advisor: 68.

¹⁷⁰Woods, "St. Mary's Roman Catholic Boarding School. A Spatial Analysis," in *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, Keith Thor Carlson, ed. and Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Cultural Advisor: 68.

¹⁷¹Marcie Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009.

Mary's, recalls that they

had to get up early in the morning, everything we did we had to pray. That's probably the one thing that people found difficult: we had to pray so much. Pray when you get up, pray before you eat, pray before you go to school, pray before you go to bed, pray on Sundays, Lent, certain times of the year we prayed each day. Yeah, we prayed lots. Of course, they were Catholic.¹⁷²

The strict routine that the students of St. Mary's had to follow was coupled by a significant amount of time spent at the school, because students lived and attended school on the premise until the early 1970s. When asked about the amount of time spent at St. Mary's throughout the year, Marcie Peters responded that

[i]f you went to school in September you didn't come home 'til Easter. Then you go back to school and you didn't come home until summer. And then you came home for Christmas. That's it. You didn't – we didn't get to come home like ... because most of the kids lived too far away. Like the one's up on the coast would have to travel back to Horseshoe Bay, to Tofino, up the coast. And the one's to Mount Currie would have to go on a train. And the ones to Chillath. So you didn't get to go home on weekends. So you just got to go home on the four different holidays.¹⁷³

Marcie Peters lived and attended St. Mary's from 1955 until 1968.¹⁷⁴ The amount of time that she spent there and the routine she grew up with impacted her and all the other students of St. Mary's in complex ways. Her ability to reflect on this stage of her life allows us access to understand the complex relationships that she had with both the nuns and female childcare workers at St. Mary's. During their time at St. Mary's, the girls were divided up into three sections depending on their ages: juniors, intermediates and seniors. When Marcie Peters attended the school, the juniors were taught and looked after by the sisters. Marcie recalls that:

They taught us, but they were also in charge of us because we were juniors. And I think

¹⁷²Marcie Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 1)

¹⁷³Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 2)

¹⁷⁴Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009.

that's probably it. Even though you were like 5 and 6 years old they were so cold. There was nothing personal. There was no hugging. You know, like, I lost my grandmother when I was there, not even a full year. And there was no affection, there was no explanation or anything. They never took time to explain anything to you personal. (...) Yeah, because I think that's probably the only thing I was so bitter about, St. Mary's, because they chose to take my sister and I away from our grandmother and it was not even a year later that our grandma died. So we ended up being orphans after that 'cause we had no parents, no mom or dad and no grandma.

Kate Martin: Was there anyone else during that time – I mean you would have had your sister there, but was there anyone else during that time...

Marcie Peters: No. And that was the really cold part of it. No, there was no affection. There was none in all the junior years I was there, it was like the sister's aren't like that. They weren't like that.¹⁷⁵

While discussing the impact of the residential school system later in her life, it was clear that a lack of affection in her early childhood has not been forgotten or overshadowed by some of the positive experiences she may have had later in her years at St. Mary's, thereby complicating her experience at St. Mary's;

But I guess some of the things I was trying to state before is, when the government talks of us being in school and you know with the Pope doing his so called apology, people just don't realize that what you lost by going there. They make it sound like: so you lost your language? You know? And your culture? And that was only the beginning. You know... you lost... when you're 6 and 7 years old you've got parents to hug and to talk to and stuff. That's a big loss. You know, the affection, the trust, and I'll be honest, the sisters... maybe it would have been a little different if we would have had Ms. Rice and them earlier. The nuns were not affectionate. You never saw them giving you a hug, or sitting you down. You'd see it now if you went to a Catholic school, you know, you'd see them doing it now. But it never happened then. And so that was a huge loss, right off the bat, you just lost that closeness. You don't really know at that age how to handle it. Other than withdraw, cause you can't go to my sister 'cause she's in a totally different age group, in a different part of the school. So you don't know. You just withdraw and stick to yourself if anything happens.¹⁷⁶

Virginia Joe's experiences with the nuns when compared to the childcare workers, echo

¹⁷⁵Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 3)

¹⁷⁶Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 4)

those of Marcie Peters. Virginia told me that the childcare workers who were not nuns,

had more of a understanding of the children without looking at them in the religious side of things. I guess what I am trying to say is that I felt that no matter what we did we were going to the devil or Creator was going to punish us for doing wrong . This is my own opinion mind you.¹⁷⁷

Virginia's comments alerted me to the role that the nuns were responsible to at St. Mary's. Evidently, Virginia's experiences suggest that the nuns she encountered acted in accordance with the roles that were expected of them in an institutionalized, assimilative setting. Moreover, her experiences suggest that the nuns participated and reinforced the colonial project, even at the level of personal cross-cultural relationships.

While Marcie Peter's and Virginia Joe's experiences with the nuns at St. Mary's can be classed as cold and unaffectionate, Leona Kelly remembers a different side to the sisters. Leona Kelly started at St. Mary's when she was nine years old, and was placed in the intermediate age group. Leona started at St. Mary's in 1968, many years after Marcie Peters and Virginia Joe. She did not attend a residential school before the age of nine, but lived with her mother until she started going to St. Mary's, which helps to explain why her memories differ than those of Marcie and Virginia's. In 1971, when she was in grade seven, her father passed away and she left St. Mary's for three years to live with her mother.

So I was the little man of the house (laughs) 'cause I always did the wood chopping and getting the wood, we still had an outhouse then. And we finally got running water in the house, but we still had the outhouse and we'd always pick berries and apples. And then before summer ended, we'd go down and wash the clothes down river and hang them around. But also go swimming, but also make sure we'd get a basket and berries and peanuts. I remember bringing all those back to St. Mary's and saying to everyone: these are all mine! 'Cause it was a good summer that we picked them all together.¹⁷⁸

When I asked her about positive experiences with religious figures at St. Mary's, Leona

¹⁷⁷ Virginia Joe, e-mail correspondence with Kate Martin, July 9th, 2009.

¹⁷⁸ Leona Kelly, Interview with Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009. (Track 5)

responded that she was

Pretty much the goody too-shoes. I was everybody's favourite as supervisor, as a nun, as a father, or the brothers' at St. Mary's. So at St. Mary's at a younger age we were learning Irish dancing. The nun was Irish and she loved to do ringlets in us and loved to teach us "shellaly-under my arm..." (Laughs). You know the Irish songs? So I remember learning all the Irish dances and singing those songs and going out to other schools, the ones that knew the songs or got taught the songs and dances. We went to secondary schools in the Mission area, I was young then, I would say maybe grade 6, probably grade 5 when I learned all of those. I still do the Irish Jig today, not as fast! I remember that song, not all of it though... "Shellaly under my arm." She was always so happy. She loved to see us just dance those songs, I think it made her spirit happy as well as ours. And I would always try to keep my ringlets for as long as possible because there was a lot of work in ringlets with rope and that. So she'd have sheets and tear them up and we used to have long hair and it would just curl up to short. Yeah. So ringlets. And then I'd put two ponytails on and try to keep my ringlet curl for as long as I could. And then divide it up by morning (...) again. It was funny. It was my favourite to have those ringlets. So that would be a good moment with the Sister Leonita. I don't know her last name.¹⁷⁹

What is more, Leona Kelly saw her time at St. Mary's as a welcome reprieve from home life for a period during her childhood. When I asked her about her positive and negative memories, she told me that she

loved being at St. Mary's better than, even more than coming home. I really dreaded coming home. So that was kind of like the sad separation part, the separation of me and my mother, with my father gone. He died when I was about 12, yeah, so.¹⁸⁰

When it comes to memories of the nuns at St. Mary's, Leona Kelly's memories differ from those of Marcie and Virginia's. It is the existence of these different memories among these three women that are telling of the complicated and individualized cross-cultural relationships that occurred between the nuns and female students.

Despite different memories of relationships with nuns, Virginia Joe, Marcie Peters and Leona Kelly all remember the childcare workers fondly. The childcare workers were hired to

¹⁷⁹Leona Kelly, Interview with Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009. (Track 6)

¹⁸⁰Leona Kelly, Interview with Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009. (Track 7)

care for the students at St. Mary's and occasionally taught as well. They would stay at the school, sleep in dormitories and were involved in extra-curricular activities that the girls participated in. When the girls got older and entered into the intermediate and senior age group, they had more contact with the childcare workers and were able to develop closer relationships with them.

While attending St. Mary's, Leona Kelly, Marcie Peters and Virginia Joe had favourable experiences with Joan McGernagle, Ms. Anne Rice and Ms. Carol, all non-Indigenous childcare workers. When asked why she thought these relationships were different, Marcie Peters responded that

[t]hey stuck out because, probably for two reasons: they weren't sisters and they were young and they had more feelings for us. And it's probably – I don't know if it's because I was older and I could sense the feeling or whatever, but when I was in grade 1 to 6 it was just sisters in charge of us and I did not feel any closeness from the sisters. There was not the affection that Ms. Rice, Ms. Carol, or Ms. McGeragle or Father Burt's niece had for us.¹⁸¹

For Leona Kelly, Ms. Rice was remembered as having positively influenced her days at St. Mary's. Leona told me that

because there was so much abuse with myself and my older sisters, I remember a Ms. Rice taking us out to Vancouver, to her house, it must have been her personal house. She brought my two older sisters: Joanna and Jane and myself. Because it was such a strange place, we all slept on the floor in sleeping bags. That summer we got to stay there and she made us dresses, made each of us a dress. And I remember she made me this nice, nice polka-dotted chiffon dress I loved it so much! Of course I grew out of it. The older sisters got mini-dresses too, just above the knee. So she was a good sewer, or tailor. I think we had a good time then. There was a park nearby and we always went down to play and roll around in the grass because I was younger. So they probably had an idea for us not to have such a – I guess that kind of life – to go home and come back. So we always had to shield ourselves from being hit, so that's probably one reason why we were selected to go with them. That was a supervisor – well I guess they were called prefects or supervisors. Prefects in the beginning and then supervisors as they grew older and became grade 9, 10, 11 or 12. No more brothers, no more sisters, no more fathers

¹⁸¹Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 8)

looking after us.¹⁸²

Leona's experience with Ms. Rice reveals the personal level that some of these relationships reached. By taking Leona and her sisters in for the summer, Ms. Rice transcended the boundaries of the expected relationship between residential school students and teachers, in what is remembered as a positive experience for Leona Kelly.

Akin to Leona Kelly's experience with childcare workers, Marcie Peters and Virginia Joe developed lasting relationships with Joan McGeragle. Marcie Peters credits her bond with Joan to Joan's involvement with the St. Mary's girls band and her role as a childcare worker;

She was a big part of my life. You know personally I never had any problems. Like, she's very dedicated. Same with Ms. Carol and Ms. Rice. I knew Ms. Carol very well they were, like, in charge of the intermediates. They were always put in charge of a group: junior, intermediate, senior, whether you're at the old school and the new school. So you had a prefect and somebody else that looked after you, when you got into the different levels. Whether you were at the boys – the boys still had the same: you know, like prefects or brothers, whoever was in charge of them.¹⁸³

Joan McGeragle's commitment to St. Mary's and the programs was noted by her former students. Marcie Peter's recalls that St. Mary's was Joan's life for the time that she was there. She started at St. Mary's when she was young and

she spent her whole life at Mission. She stayed there at holidays. She didn't go anywhere. You know that was... I don't know. She stayed and helped the ones that didn't have anywhere to go. So she would stay behind.¹⁸⁴

For Joan, a positive memory of St. Mary's was that of the girls' band. The band at St. Mary's is representative of another 'site' where female cross-cultural relationships developed between Joan and Indigenous students. While Joan did not instruct the band, she was in charge

¹⁸²Leona Kelly, Interview with Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009. (Track 9)

¹⁸³Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 10)

¹⁸⁴Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 11)

of organizing traveling, uniforms, practices and supervising the band members. She took great pride in the band and maintains feelings of pride towards those involved with the band. Her memories pertaining to the uniforms are demonstrative of closeness she felt to the girls in the band. When I had the opportunity to talk to her about her days at St. Mary's, she told me that

[t]hey looked gorgeous! (...) I was talking about the uniforms and I smiled because I can remember the first time. This was these girls, they wore their hair up, initially in the band. I don't know why, but their hair was up with a head band. And these blue jackets – we were traveling over to Victoria – and these blue jackets, black skirts, nylons... I mean this is a long time ago before the jean age! And they had on high heels. Beautiful white spikes. They just looked like millions. Everybody on the ship was saying: "Who are they?" "Where are they coming from?" And four of them got up into the bridge with the captain, and this is like! Those kind of things, little things that happened I can remember 'cause it's just such a delight.¹⁸⁵

It is clear that Joan's sentiments regarding the band were known and felt by the members of the band. Marcie Peters stated that Joan was

very proud of the band because she traveled with us, bring us all over, whether it was to Vancouver Island, or up Kamloops way, Kelowna way, she drove us in that big ugly bus. But it was a nice outing so we never complained. Father Burt and Ms. McGeragle used to drive us. Depends on how many of us were going, we'd go in two busses or one bus.

Kate Martin: And she – this is probably getting into what Carolyn wants to ask – but she said that she was so excited about the band as something for the girls' to have, because the boys had sports that they were involved with.

Carolyn Bartlett: There wasn't really much else for the girls then.

Marcie Peters: No, because when you think about it, we had basketball and volleyball in school. We used to go out and play Abbotsford and MEI and all that. Yeah, I guess you could say the boys had more soccer. She used to make us run lots. Every morning, every day we had to run. You know if you sat at the school and looked up the hill, there used to be a big white cross up the hill and she use to make us run up there. And run back, run around the fields. Yeah, she was great for making us run. She made us run lots. She, I guess, tries to keep us in shape. But yeah, she was a big part of the band, a very, very big part.¹⁸⁶

¹⁸⁵Joan McGeragle, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009. (Track 12)

¹⁸⁶Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 13)

Virginia Joe told us that Joan's commitment to making the band a positive experience included getting "Aunt Connie" to help make the uniforms.¹⁸⁷ When the uniforms first arrived, each member of the band was to bead a thunderbird on to the chest of the uniform. Virginia told us that she thought: "I was really smart and I wasn't going to do mine because I didn't want to sit there for hours and bead."¹⁸⁸ Since Virginia was in a leadership position as the band major, and Joan was committed to making sure the band members worked well together, having witnessed Virginia's defiance,

Mother got really fiercely angry with me and brought me upstairs and she just tore into me and told me that if I wasn't going to behave and do what I was supposed to do, I was going to be demoted because that's what leadership was about, you know, do this and that.¹⁸⁹

When we discussed Joan's feelings on the band becoming co-ed around 1974, her strong sentiments towards the girls became clear:

I liked my girls better! They were so beautiful. Boys were goofs! (Laughs) No, that's just maternal prejudice or something.¹⁹⁰

In return, the girls at St. Mary's considered Joan as a mother figure, giving her the nickname 'Ma,' which many of them continue to refer to her as today. Joan told us that

Nobody ever called me by my first name. Initially when I went to the school, a Mother's Day came along – any excuse for a party – so the girls had a cake baked and we had a mother's day party. And after that, I remember it well because it was "mother this and mother that." And one day some sisters came from the school in North Vancouver and those sister's were not called sisters but they were calling me mother. They went "who's she?" "Is she a Nun?" "No." It soon got down to, it soon became 'Ma.' How do you say

¹⁸⁷Virginia Joe, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 20th, 2009.

¹⁸⁸Virginia Joe, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 20th, 2009. (Track 14)

¹⁸⁹Virginia Joe, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 20th, 2009. (Track 15)

¹⁹⁰Joan McGeragle, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009. (Track 16)

that? (Laughs.) It didn't last. I didn't like the "mother" thing.¹⁹¹

The relationship that Joan formed with many of the girls at St. Mary's extended beyond the walls of the school and entered the realm of her personal life. By introducing her 'charges' to her family, it is clear that Joan's relationships with Marcie Peters and Virginia Joe were more complex than a student/ teacher, or supervisor/ supervisee relationship. An example of the reach of the relationship between Marcie and Joan can be understood by the time that Marcie spent with Joan's family;

Marcie Peters: We used to spend time... she used to bring a bunch of us to Surrey or Whalley to visit her sister and she had a couple little girls and we used to visit with them. So they were very close, that's about the only personal thing we knew about her. She was very umm... she kept everything about herself, her parents, everything was just Connie. Yeah, and her two nieces.

Kate Martin: And did you go stay with Connie at any point?

Marcie Peters: Oh, we used to go visit her. We'd stay for the day.

Carolyn Bartlett: How many of you would?

Marcie Peters: It would depend on how many of us, or what kind of vehicle would go down. But we all knew Connie. Connie loved everybody too. And I think that was it, you know. It never really occurred to me as the difference between Carol, and Ann Rice, and Joan and the sisters. Yeah, there was a big difference, now that I think about it. It was that they were more affectionate, more open. The sister's were just really cold. I don't recall having any favourites. To be honest.¹⁹²

Virginia Joe's memories of Joan and her continued involvement in Joan's life echoed what Marcie had to say. When I had the opportunity to ask Virginia about her relationship with Joan and Connie, she told me that

I call Joan my mother and Auntie Connie. So Joan was, of course you know she was our surrogate mother in the residential school, she was our supervisor, our prefect, whatever

¹⁹¹Joan McGeragle, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009. (Track 17)

¹⁹²Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 18)

you want to call her and she was there right from the start for me. I... my parents kicked me out of my home, so I went to St. Mary's. And the guys there, the brothers and that didn't want me staying there because they were there and they were male so I guess they got all worried about that, so I went to stay with Auntie Connie. In the summer, traveled around. So that's how we are ... related. Related in spirit.¹⁹³

Moreover, Virginia wrote to me that her interactions with Joan remained special, especially when compared to the types of relationships she had with the nuns. Aforementioned, when Virginia was reprimanded by one of the nuns, she felt as though she would end up in hell. However, Virginia understood early on that her relationship with Joan,

was good in that she had a great amount of trust in me to allow me to work with the younger children as a student. When she had to discipline me I did not feel that I was going to go to hell or creator didn't love me anymore. Our relationship is such that I call her my mother as many of us do and my children only know her as their grand mother. We continue to stay in contact with one another and check up on each other as mother and daughter.¹⁹⁴

As evidenced by Virginia's testimony, the relationships between Joan, Marcie Peters and Virginia Joe did not end when they left St. Mary's. What was interesting when talking to each of these women, is the respect and care they continue to maintain for one another. I asked Joan whether she has maintained a feeling of maternal instinct towards Virginia and Marcie. She responded that

Joan McGeragle: I still do. I always did. Always did.

Kate Martin: That's a pretty special relationship then.

Joan McGeragle: Oh yeah. I get all these emails with all these names on them, you know. (laughs.) No, it is a good relationship. Not everybody. I didn't please everybody.

Kate Martin: You can't.

Joan McGeragle: Yeah. But you know for the most part. Like I said to Beaver [Virginia Joe] the other day, she said: "Ahhh Ma!" You know because there's so much crap. And

¹⁹³Virginia Joe, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 20th, 2009. (Track 19)

¹⁹⁴ Virginia Joe, e-mail correspondence with Kate Martin, July 9th, 2009.

she said, “you know I go all over the province, I go all over and everybody asks: “How’s Ma?” It’s nice to hear.”¹⁹⁵

While we were discussing the history of the St. Mary’s girls band, and past members of the band, Joan remarked that Virginia Joe is a frequent visitor to her and Connie and had just called her after Mother’s day.¹⁹⁶ Indeed, Virginia remarked that she calls both Connie and Joan “almost every day to check in on them. See how their doing ‘cause they’re getting up there, and that.”¹⁹⁷ Additionally, during my conversation with Marcie, Marcie remarked that she named her daughter after Joan.¹⁹⁸ Joan formed a lasting bond with both Virginia and Marcie that continues to be reciprocated years after their time at St. Mary’s. Given this bond between Joan, Marcie and Virginia, to what degree were these relationships based on a reciprocal interest in different cultures? Specifically, is there evidence to suggest that childcare workers were interested in Indigenous cultures and lifeways?

It is impossible to know for certain the degree to which the childcare workers were genuinely interested in Indigenous cultures and lifeways, and equally impossible to quantify the ability of the childcare workers to transcend the strictures of the colonial project that employed them. However, from the memories shared by Virginia Joe and Joan McGeragle, it is clear that Joan had an interest in learning from her students’ cultural backgrounds. As an aside, it is important to note that many of the Indigenous students at St. Mary’s were not connected to their cultural backgrounds, because

¹⁹⁵ Joan McGeragle, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009. (Track 20)

¹⁹⁶ Joan McGeragle, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009.

¹⁹⁷ Virginia Joe, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 20th, 2009.

¹⁹⁸ Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009.

once you get sent to a school like this, you don't have any outside world. You don't live anywhere. I mean, you get to go home for summer, you get to go home for Christmas and Easter, that's really – if you think of how many days in the year, that's not a lot. (...) You know because we didn't, I didn't even really know what it was like to live on a reserve until I finished school.¹⁹⁹

Nevertheless, Virginia Joe thought that

Mother was more of a First Nations person in the beginning than we were. She started, I don't know where she got the call, I don't, 'cause we didn't have it. And she also had us start our church as Indian -- as First Nations as possible.²⁰⁰

Indeed, Joan's recollections of Christmas celebrations at St. Mary's suggest that she had an interest in Indigenous cultures, but also abided by the strictures of the colonial project. Joan stated that the church decorations included boughs of holly and cedar. The ceremony included

Carl Sam dressed in the black native costume like the dancers here and she, Mary, was dressed in a beautiful gown, native gown, and the whole bit and the baby was in – what do you call it – what do you call it? Baskinette? Bassinette. And, that was the opening hymn and the precession would come in and there's – then they sing, the chorus is “Jesus the lord is born,” or something. It's very emotional. And they'd raise... Carl and what's her name... would raise the child up in the air like this, then everybody would stop and they'd move a little bit further, the the next chorus. It was a little bit dramatic, theatrical stuff. And then the hunters were at the same time, there was a couple little hunters behind the alter, and there was a big moon coming up, there was a big moon up in the, hanging from the ceiling. And the hunters were coming out from behind the alter. It was cute! Those are my memories of things.²⁰¹

On the one hand, Joan's memories of the Christmas celebrations demonstrate an understanding of the need for Indigenous students to have access to a few cultural symbols that they might be familiar with from their early childhood. On the other hand, Joan did not question whether Indigenous children ought to be celebrating Christmas indicating that she was unable to fully commit to the role of the colonizer or the role of Settler ally. Throughout our discussion, she

¹⁹⁹ Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 21)

²⁰⁰ Virginia Joe, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 20th, 2009. (Track 22)

²⁰¹ Joan McGeragle, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009. (Track 23)

indicated that she developed an interest in Indigenous culture and spirituality that has increased since her time at St. Mary's from 1960 to 1980. During her employment as a childcare worker at St. Mary's, it is apparent that her participation and engagement in Stó:lō culture and spirituality was limited to what was acceptable from within the walls of St. Mary's.

The joyful and painful memories that these women were able to share over the course of our discussions are telling of the complexity of the residential school experience. Surviving years of separation from families, cultures and worldviews have left a violent legacy that the Stó:lō community, represented here by Marcie, Virginia and Leona, will always live with. Despite having some pleasant memories of her time at St. Mary's, Marcie was quick to remind us that these instances have not overshadowed the deprivation that comes with having grown up in a residential school setting.

Marcie Peters: I know of a girl who committed suicide who was in the same age group as us, I don't know how many years after we finished, after I left school that she committed suicide. But yeah, there was a lot of tough... it was like I guess one of the things we found really hard was no one talked to you about being a parent, no one talked to you about being in a life where there is alcohol. Like there wasn't really drugs then, it was alcohol. So all of a sudden you're in this perfect little world where you go to church almost every day, you know? You live this life and all of a sudden you're living in a community. There's no preparation. There is no preparation to say, or even, how to babysit anymore, or how to bring up babies, or, I mean, I myself with no parents, all of a sudden there's babies around, because you're not brought up around that, unless you have a family to go home to summer, Christmas, Easter. So that was tough. Nobody teaches you that. That was not anything in our education down there, is you know, alcohol, parents who drink or parents who don't drink. Teenagers, teenage pregnancy, housekeeping, nobody taught you housekeeping. I understand that, there is no such thing. Nobody talked about it. We talk now about how do you motivate people, or how do you change a lifestyle. How do you change a lifestyle of someone who's lived x number of generations like this? Is it because of the way their brought up? Because they're not taught? And so if I went to your place and everybody works out in the garden, plants trees, flowers, shrubs, constantly. I mean, if you went to this other family who's in isolation, or I mean, an isolate community, they don't even have a lawn. But they weren't taught. Nobody even had a lawn before, you talked about housing policy, how do you change it? How do you talk to someone without offending him? Without questioning his lifestyle? If I went into your place, it's probably all wall papered and stuff. If I went to a house in community, they probably don't even know how to wall

paper. ‘Cause nobody ever wall papered. So when we left school no body ever talked about that, you didn’t know anything about ... it was all school, straight school. It was just this criteria for school. So there was no in between, that when you go home, none of that. There’s nothing, not ever. So that’s what we’re saying, sort of a grey area.

Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett: Yeah, for sure.

Marcie Peters: So it was like, no one prepared you or questioned you, ever. You know, like if I went to you and said, “okay, I’m not coming back next year. I’m going to school in wherever.” “Where are you going to stay? What are you going to do? How you going to get to school? Are you staying with family? Did you look into your curriculum? Did you do this? Are you going to be able to get your books?” You know? There was none of that, neither. No. So there was no linkage to set you up to make sure. So there was no communication. And I don’t know if it’s because it was not set up, or it’s just way before the time, or there would have been anything saying okay, who’s the name of your social worker or your educational worker in your community? Or what’s your band office’s number? No one ever asked us if we even had one. So there was none of that prep work for you to go back home. So I do really understand why some really, really had a hard time. Some went back home to an environment where maybe their family really drank, lots so they couldn’t handle it. No one prepared them. No one told them or explained to them how to handle it, or what to do.²⁰²

When she needed advice, however, Marcie would take the initiative to talk with one of the child care workers, reinforcing the idea of difference between the type of cross cultural relationships that existed between the nuns and the female students, and the female child care workers and the female students;

I spoke to all three of them. Ms. Carol, Ms. Rice and Ms. McGeragle. I could. And I think that’s why they understood I’d stay at school for Easter, Christmas. And they’d find me jobs in the summer. But they didn’t question me on it. I mean I had the Petus’ to go to. You know I could go home there. But they had 11 kids. It was only a three bedroom. So that was my choice. That was my choice not to go home. But I was fortunate, the family that took me in when I did go home, my only living relative. She was really strict. She was really strict, very strict. She was with all of us. You know.²⁰³

It is clear from these oral histories of time spent at St. Mary’s in Mission, that there are more examples of reciprocally caring personal relationships between the female childcare

²⁰²Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 24)

²⁰³Marcie Peters, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 25)

workers and the female students, than with the nuns. But why is this the case? Returning to the nineteenth century diary of Margaret Butcher, Mary Ellen Kelm argues that because Butcher was aware of her purpose as a missionary women in 1916 and 1917, and it was her sense of purpose that made it impossible to transcend the colonial project. Almost fifty years later, the strictures of the colonial project continued to influence female cross-cultural relationships, but the degree to which individuals identified with the project of assimilation through education, indicate the nature of female cross-cultural relationship that formed. From 1960 onwards, the nuns' roles at St. Mary's were to educate Indigenous children for the purpose of assimilation. Given the testimony from Marcie Peters, Virginia Joe and Leona Kelly, the nuns' role precluded the development of significant cross-cultural relationships. This is not to say that the female childcare workers ignored their roles at the school; rather from speaking with Joan, it is clear that they took them quite seriously and participated in the assimilative work residential schools attempted to do. As Joan stated in our discussion,

[t]here are a couple of people who didn't have good experiences. That's kind of sad. How do you have a good experience if you don't have a mother and father at home to look after you? Shuttled off to boarding school, that happens to white kids too, you know.²⁰⁴

Further, when asked if she remembers any girls turning to her for advice when they were going through difficult times, her response tells both of her understanding her role at the school, and an ability to transcend it at times:

Sometimes, but I really... yeah when kids were having a hard time, they'd come and want to talk about it. But yeah, I don't remember a lot of that. I think they had each other and that's the beauty of this situation. If they were in a boarding school – sorry, if they were in a boarding home in the milieu of another culture, and they didn't have ... here they have each other. So there's a peer kind of ... and I know they confided in each other. So I think that to me was the great thing about being in a situation when they

²⁰⁴Joan McGeragle, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009. (Track 26)

weren't isolated out in the community in a strange ... But that's also my perspective. You know?²⁰⁵

From this study of cross-cultural relationships at St. Mary's it is apparent that if a non-Indigenous woman closely identifies with her role in the institution, than she was less likely to form meaningful cross-cultural relationships with Indigenous girls. Nevertheless, not every woman employed at St. Mary's ignored the opportunity to form meaningful cross-cultural bonds. Once an attempt to form these bonds had been made, the process of dialogism created the space for everyone involved in the relationship to constantly reconsider how to engage with each other in a cross-cultural context when they enter into dialogue with each other. Dialogue has been responsible for de-centering both Indigenous and Settler women, demonstrating the fluidity of the colonial project in cross-cultural contexts.

²⁰⁵Joan McGeragle, Interview with Kate Martin and Carolyn Bartlett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009. (Track 27)

Chapter 3

Community Interactions as a Site of Encounter

In the last chapter I argued that women's responsibilities to roles in institutions shaped the nature of their cross-cultural engagements. However, when we step back from the study of formal institutionalized sites, where are the other places that cross-cultural relationships have developed? Unlike the residential school setting, this chapter contends with the appearance of cross-cultural relationships when neither party is responsible to a particular institutionalized site or role.

Throughout my discussions with Stó:lō and Settler women, it became apparent that I would not be able to situate every cross-cultural relationship in one particular site. Rather, in spite of the institutional segregation, there were many examples of Indigenous and non-Indigenous relationships that were based on informal community interactions. The study of cross-cultural relationships at a community level was made necessary by the examples of Indigenous and non-Indigenous women's interactions that I witnessed during my time spent with the Stó:lō, so I wondered whether these relationships were more likely to transcend the strictures of the colonial project?

The community interactions to be looked at here describe interactions between Stó:lō and Settler women on reserves, in town and in their homes. St. Mary's students' interactions with non-Indigenous communities, cross-cultural relationships that have developed because of the Indian Act's gender discrimination and the relationship that has developed between Leona Kelly and Lorraine George are the examples of cross-cultural engagements that have transpired at a community level. The focus of my inquiry has been whether these relationships differ from the institutionalized relationships described in the context of residential schools. In broader terms, I'm interested in where and how the colonial project has extended into daily community

interactions.

Elizabeth Furniss' contemporary study of colonialism at Williams' Lake has informed my research in Stó:lō communities and in the non-Indigenous communities on the lower British Columbia mainland. Furniss was interested in how a modern colonial culture worked at the level of everyday life. She argues that power exists in other areas than the state, its agencies and institutions, and their supporting bureaucratic ideologies. It is also deeply embedded in cultural forms and practices that frame commonsense understandings of the world.²⁰⁶ Given the argument that colonial power exists in non-institutionalized sites, it is feasible that the colonial project impacts community interactions because Canadian society has attempted to assert the "hegemony of Settler society," to organize cross-cultural interactions. Canada continues to be a colonial society "whose culture remains deeply imprinted by the legacy of colonialism," creating a dominant, hegemonic culture that is exercised at many levels: community interactions being one of those levels.²⁰⁷

According to Furniss, the Canadian dominant culture is informed by ideas of "history, identity, society, and Indigenous "difference" that permeate Canadian literature, film, art, and popular culture," that are not simply derivatives of political and economic institutions, but "are central to the very process of establishing and perpetuating colonial relationships."²⁰⁸ The dominant culture that exists on the lower mainland in British Columbia is profoundly influenced by the ideological legacy of colonialism and continues to exercise the colonial project; "In Canada, there has been no radical break with the past: Canadian culture remains resolutely

²⁰⁶Elizabeth Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 1999): 4.

²⁰⁷Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 11.

²⁰⁸Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 12.

colonial in shape, content, meaning and practice.”²⁰⁹

The myth of the frontier helps to explain how power relationships are exercised at a community level, even when cross-cultural relationships might occur outside of a formal institutional setting. In small British Columbian towns, Furniss argues that the frontier myth is one of the most important cultural myths for understanding the history of settlement and colonization.²¹⁰ The frontier myth, otherwise referred to as the frontier cultural complex, is used by Furniss to understand dominant culture in Williams Lake. The frontier complex is comprised of

a diverse yet interrelated set of values, beliefs, attitudes, identities, and understandings about society, history, and Aboriginal /non-Aboriginal relations that appear repeatedly in multiple domains of Euro-Canadian every day life, ranging from casual conversations to public history to political discourse on contentious issues.²¹¹

In other words, the frontier cultural complex is an awareness of history, or an historical consciousness, that is “a way of knowing about history that provides a certain set of rules and assumptions that guides how “truths” about the past, and by extension, the present are created, understood, and conveyed.”²¹² The very idea of the frontier has consistently informed how Settler society conceptualizes their relationships with Indigenous peoples. According to Furniss, the relationships between Settler and Indigenous peoples continues to be ordered in a hierarchy, where the categories “of Indian and white are mutually exclusive and oppositional and in which Euro-Canadian cultural superiority, material privileges, and political authority are taken as

²⁰⁹Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 12.

²¹⁰Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 17.

²¹¹Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 17.

²¹²Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 17.

unquestioned truths.”²¹³

For my project, Furniss’ recognition that power relationships persist outside of institutions, and are also occurring at the level of community interactions, is an important observation. Thus, a history of colonial interactions, regulations, legislations and institutions all impact the power dynamics in cross-cultural communities. The frontier cultural complex is not unique to William’s Lake, rather there are similarities with other cross-cultural communities across British Columbia. Furniss argues that

By virtue of their ubiquity, these frontier histories constitute a dominant historical discourse in the city, a discourse that bears down to influence and constrain how local residents understand the past, the present, and their relationships with one another. The exercise of power relies on knowledge, and these habitual modes of knowing about the past, in both what they say and what they do not say, have significant implications for the continued material and ideological domination of Aboriginal peoples of the Cariboo-Chilcotin.²¹⁴

Gerald Sider also looks at how colonialism has historically functioned at a community level. Akin to Furniss’ findings of an entrenched power hierarchy between Settler and Indigenous communities, he argues that in colonial communities there exists a dialogue of dominance that cannot simply be described as domination or resistance. Both domination and resistance may be “brutal, but neither is very clear. Domination even at its most violent can still be permeated with ambiguity, uncertainty and peculiar mixtures of fantasy and reality: resistance can occur simultaneously with collusion.”²¹⁵ Domination can be thought of as the dialectical process that occurs between the dominator and dominated, which has been referred to as

²¹³Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 17.

²¹⁴Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 54-55.

²¹⁵Gerald Sider, “When Parrots Learn to Talk, and Why they can’t: Domination, Deception, and self-deception in Indian White Relations,” *Society for Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 29:1 (1987): 11.

attempts at assimilation or the attempt to realize the colonial project elsewhere in this paper. What Sider's inquiry into domination reveals are the power dynamics that are occurring at the community level between individuals. He argues that,

[t]he process of domination imposes a dialogue between dominators and dominated. Each must speak to the other, for the political and economic transactions to occur. In speaking to each other, they seem often to seek to incorporate one another: Western Indians wearing cowboy hats and boots, and army-style sunglasses; whites forming "Red Men's lodges, dressing like Indians on certain occasions, and often invoking a fraudulent Indian ancestry. (...) So the fundamental language of this confrontational and incorporative dialogue is not found in words, or even in symbols. It is rooted, rather, in the domain of social organization, in which words and symbols are contextualized in a struggle to harness emergent differentiation or, from below, to develop and re-develop autonomy.²¹⁶

Sider and Furniss' work regarding cross-cultural communities and non-institutionalized exercises of the colonial project are not limited to the communities that they have worked in. Rather, Furniss hopes that "many may recognize as familiar the operation of this particular system of signs, meanings, and practices that various parties engage in and that I describe as constitutive of the dominant culture of the region."²¹⁷

Both Furniss and Sider's work left me with questions regarding the application of their ideas to the work that I am interested in. By stating that "frontier myth histories" inform non-institutionalized community interactions given the argument that colonial power dynamics persist, how have the lived realities of women been impacted? Specifically, do the lived realities of female cross-cultural relationships that have developed because of community interactions resemble the power relationships that have been established and reinforced by colonial institutions? Using female cross-cultural relationships as a lens, how can we better understand

²¹⁶Sider, "When Parrots Learn to Talk, and Why they can't: Domination, Deception, and self-deception in Indian White Relations," *Society for Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 22.

²¹⁷Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 21.

the impact that colonialism has had on lived realities?

Furniss and Sider's work demonstrates how the colonial project has extended into community and into personal relationships. Simply stated, it would be impossible for colonial institutions to exist in isolation from the communities they are located in. Rather, colonial institutions are legitimized through dominant community discourse about Indigenous peoples. The experience of a dominant community discourse working to legitimize and accept colonialism, has impacted all of the cross-cultural relationships between Stó:lō women and Settler women, but did not always dictate the nature of these relationships.

St. Mary's Roman Catholic Boarding School and Community Interactions

While those who attended St. Mary's Roman Catholic Boarding school lived and went to school at the site in Mission, their interactions with the community of Mission are telling of community based cross-cultural relationships that both followed and challenged the expectations of the colonial project. Marcie Peters does not remember having the opportunity to spend much time in town away from the school for a couple of reasons. She told me that

It's hard, because when people think about it you're in school and all of sudden say: do you want to go for a walk? Want to go into town? Well, why would we go to town? We have no money. If we went to town, the white people in town would accuse all us Indians of stealing from their stores or whatever, you know. They didn't want us. So, no. You know, lots of times we wouldn't even walk to town.²¹⁸

Marcie's experiences going into town, makes it clear that the opportunities to form cross-cultural relationships with non-Indigenous women while she was a student at St. Mary's throughout the 1960s, was not a possibility. Joan McGeragle stressed that other activities at St. Mary's were set up to keep the students busy on Friday and Saturday night because

We didn't really appreciate the kids going to town. Because there was just too much

²¹⁸Marcie Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 28)

drinking and there's nothing to do and in the early days there was no money to spend. So it wasn't a ... we'd rather keep them busy at home.²¹⁹

After Marcie Peters had left St. Mary's and around the time the school was annexed by the public school system in order to integrate Indigenous students into public schools in 1965, Joan stated that more attempts to bring Indigenous and non-Indigenous students together occurred:

And we tried to – eventually anyway – we tried to get them to integrate or to ask some of their non-native friends or even their native friends from town to come up for an evening. Occasionally, some people would come.²²⁰

Marcie, Virginia and Leona did not develop cross-cultural relationships with members of the Mission community while they attended St. Mary's, because they were not given the opportunity to do so and the community did not encourage cross-cultural engagements.

When Marcie and Virginia traveled with the St. Mary's band, they explained that they had many positive experiences when they were billeted in non-Indigenous people's homes. Joan McGeragle would contact the community that the band was traveling to and the local parish priest would find families who were willing to take in girls from the band. Marcie recalled that she enjoyed getting billeted out to other people's homes:

Different girls got to go to different places, different houses and seeing how non-Natives cooked and how they lived, which was interesting because we never got to see this. (...) Yeah, people were really good to us. You know and I'll be honest, we were scared. We were scared to be billeted because we didn't know what to expect. We had no idea what it was, but after the first year we went through that, we were all so excited to go through that again because people really pampered us. And it was nice.²²¹

Despite recalling some positive experiences, little was said about the girls in the band or at St. Mary's forming lasting cross-cultural relationships at a community level with host families, or in

²¹⁹Joan McGernagle, Interviewed by Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009. (Track 29)

²²⁰McGernagle, Interviewed by Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Surrey, British Columbia, May 18th, 2009. (Track 30)

²²¹Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin and Carolyn Bennett, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 19th, 2009. (Track 31)

Mission. The short duration of their stay coupled with the recognition that these Indigenous girls were part of an institution aimed at assimilation made it difficult to form lasting and meaningful engagements with members of non-Indigenous communities beyond the walls of St. Mary's.

Community Cross-Cultural Encounters brought on by Gender Discrimination in the Indian Act

By bringing non-Indigenous women into Indigenous communities, and conversely, Indigenous women into non-Indigenous communities, cross-cultural relationships have transpired thanks to the Canadian Indian Act. Bill C-31, An Act to Amend the Indian Act, 1985, was an attempt made by the federal government to respond to the disproportionate ways that the Indian Act has impacted Indigenous women's lives in Canada. Additionally, Bill C-31 brought the Indian Act into compliance with the Constitution Act, 1982. Given that the Constitution Act of 1982 included the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, which held that it was unconstitutional to discriminate based on gender under the Equality Clause of Section 15(a), an amendment to the Indian Act was deemed necessary.²²² In order to address the complexity of both implementing Bill C-31 and the impacts that this bill has had, it is important to engage

with the depth of the problem that the Indian Act represents – its overarching nature as a discourse of classification, regulation, and control that has indelibly ordered how Native people think of things “Indian.” To treat the Indian Act merely as a set of policies to be repealed, or even as a genocidal scheme in which we can simply choose not to believe, belies how a classificatory system produces ways of thinking – a grammar – that embeds itself in every attempt to change it.²²³

In the following paragraphs, I discuss legislation leading up to the ratification of Bill C-31 in

²²² Section 15 of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms reads that: “Every individual is equal before and under the law and has the right to the equal protection and equal benefit of the law without discrimination and, in particular, without discrimination based on race, national or ethnic origin, colour, religion, sex, age or mental or physical disability.” Government of Canada, *Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms, Part I of the Constitution Act, 1982*, March 29th, 1982. < <http://laws.justice.gc.ca/en/charter/>>

²²³ Bonita Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” in *Hypatia*, 18:2 (2003): 4

1985. My purpose here is to reveal the implications of this legislation as it has impacted the experiences of Indigenous women, giving some context to Bill C-31 and how it has played a role in facilitating cross-cultural relationships.

In 1869 the Gradual Enfranchisement Act was passed by the Canadian federal government, which stipulated that any “Indian woman who married a white man would lose her Indian status and any rights to band membership.”²²⁴ Additionally, the Gradual Enfranchisement Act instituted a blood quantum requirement into the definition of an Indian, for the first time. In order to obtain status, an individual had to trace their lineage through male descent as well as prove at least one-quarter Indian blood.²²⁵ The beginnings of legislated colonial categories in Canada that have been strengthened by the Indian Act, began with the Gradual Enfranchisement Act.

In 1876, the federal government instituted the Indian Act as a piece of legislation to closely regulate who could be defined to as “Indian” in Canada. The Gradual Enfranchisement Act had already established a one-quarter blood quantum, but the Indian Act took the restrictions even further. The act established who can be considered a “pure Indian” by stating:

no half-breed head of a family (except the widow of an Indian, or a half-breed who has already been admitted into a treaty) shall ... be accounted an Indian, or entitled to be admitted into any Indian treaty.²²⁶

Ann Stoler notes that European settlements developing on other peoples’ lands have been concerned with how to control and differentiate themselves from “Native” populations, to

²²⁴Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 5.

²²⁵Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 9.

²²⁶James Waldram, *The ‘other side’: Ethnostatus distinctions in western subarctic Native communities, in 1885 and After: Native Society in Transition*, ed. Laurie Barron and James B. Waldram, (Regina: University of Regina, Canadian Plains Research Centre, 1986): 281.

maintain “white social solidarity and cohesion.”²²⁷ It is clear that the existence of the Indian Act is “therefore predicated on maintaining racial apartheid, on emphasizing racial difference, white superiority, and “Native” inferiority.”²²⁸

Until 1985, the Indian Act used gender distinctions and discrimination as a way to maintain control over who can be considered “Indian.” Section 3.3 of the act stipulates that Indian status was only granted to women if they were married to “[a]ny male person of Indian blood reputed to belong to a particular band.”²²⁹ Also, if Indigenous women wanted to keep her status following marriage, she had to marry a status male; “any Indian woman marrying any other than an Indian or a non-treaty Indian shall cease to be an Indian in any respect within the meaning of this Act.”²³⁰ Section 12(1)(b) of the Indian Act, until 1985, had discriminated against Indigenous women by removing their status if they married a man without Indian status. Furthermore, under section 12(2) any illegitimate children born to a woman with status would lose status if the alleged father did not have status and if the child’s status was called into question by the Indian Agent. Section 12(1)(a)(iv), was known as the “double mother” clause, wherein status was removed from a child when they reached the age of twenty-one if their mother or grandmother did not have status prior to marriage.²³¹ As a corollary to losing their

²²⁷ Ann Stoler, “Carnal knowledge and imperial power: Gender, race and morality in colonial Asia,” *Gender at the crossroads: Feminist anthropology in the post-modern era*, Micaela di Leonardo, ed. (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1991): 53.

²²⁸ Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 8.

²²⁹ Government of Canada, “Chap. 18. An Act to Amend and Consolidate the Laws respecting Indians,” April 12th, 1867 <<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/aboriginaldocs/stat/html/1876ap12.htm>> (March 18th, 2006).

²³⁰ Government of Canada, “Chap. 18. An Act to Amend and Consolidate the Laws respecting Indians,” April 12th, 1867 <<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/aboriginaldocs/stat/html/1876ap12.htm>> (March 18th, 2006).

²³¹ Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 13.

status, Indigenous women who married non-Indigenous men were prevented from living on reserve in their own communities and returning to their reserve community if they separated, widowed or divorced.²³² While lineage has been determined differently across Canada among Indigenous nations, the Indian Act imposed the regulation that “Indian status was derived from the male head of the household.”²³³ Thus, children could only be considered ‘Indian’ under the Indian Act if they were the children of an Indigenous male who fit the blood quantum decided upon in the Gradual Enfranchisement Act.²³⁴ With the adoption of an amended Indian Act in 1951, both federal and provincial governments openly aimed to assimilate Indigenous people, for “integration into the wage economy was desirable and inevitable,” further accelerating gender discrimination in the Indian Act.²³⁵ The effect of the 1876 Indian Act was the legislation of Indigenous women as second- class citizens, thus further devaluing their roles in Indigenous communities by adding a layer of sexism onto legislated racism.

The issue of federally regulating identities has had a discriminatory impact on the experiences of Indigenous peoples across British Columbia. In combination with monitoring identities, the right to access resources guaranteed to Indigenous peoples by the federal government was, and continues to be, administrated through the federal government in compliance with the Indian Act. The legal category of “status Indian” is the “only category of

²³²Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 13.

²³³Beverley Jacobs. “Native Women’s Association of Canada Submission to the Special Rapporteur Investigating the Violations of Indigenous Human Rights.” *Sisters in Spirit Homepage*. December 2nd, 2002.

<<http://www.sistersinspirit.ca/documents/NWACreportfinal.pdf>> (February 22nd, 2006), 19.

²³⁴Government of Canada, “Chap. 18. An Act to Amend and Consolidate the Laws respecting Indians,” April 12th, 1867 <<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/aboriginaldocs/stat/html/1876ap12.htm>> (March 18th, 2006).

²³⁵Ila Bussidor and Ustun Bilgen-Reinhart, *Night Spirits*, Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1997: 43.

Native person to whom a historic nation-to-nation relationship between Canada and the Indigenous peoples is recognized.”²³⁶ Band membership can only be extended to those who have Indian status. Without status, Indigenous peoples cannot live on land considered a part of an Indian reserve in Canada, or take part in the activities of the community.²³⁷ Due to stipulations on who is considered “Indian” a large number of Indigenous people have been excluded from obtaining status. The colonial act of regulating status has meant that the Canadian government has been able to “remove a significant sector of Native people from the land.”²³⁸ According to John Holmes, by 1985 non-status Indians and Metis outnumbered status Indians by one hundred percent.²³⁹ Given this statistic, Bonita Lawrence’s highlights more important numbers: “by 1985, legislation ensconced in the Indian Act had rendered two-thirds of all Native peoples in Canada landless.”²⁴⁰ Evidently, the status clauses in the Indian Act did, and continue to, impact the lived realities of Indigenous people across Canada.

The Canadian government responded to the controversy created by the Indian Act with Bill C-31, “An Act to Amend the Indian Act,” which was passed on June 28th, 1985 . The bill removes status provisions of the Indian Act that were discriminatory based on sex. In 1981 Sandra Lovelace, a Maliseet women from Tobique, New Brunswick, challenged the discriminatory sections of the Indian Act at the United Nations Human Rights Committee and won, forcing Canada to address the provisions that found Canada in violation of the International

²³⁶Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 6.

²³⁷Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 6.

²³⁸Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 6.

²³⁹ John Holmes, *Bill C-31 – equality or disparity? The effects of the new Indian Act on Native women*. Background Paper, (Canadian Advisory Council on the Status of Women, 1987):

²⁴⁰Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 6.

Covenant on Political and Civil Rights.²⁴¹ Additionally, the creation of the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms in 1982 forced the federal government to make the Indian Act congruent with the Charter, thus amending the sections responsible for gender discrimination. Section A 6(1)(c) states that “those eligible to apply to the Department of Indian Affairs for their status or to be registered as status Indians (...) [including] Those who had lost their status due to sexual discrimination.”²⁴² There are numerous ways in which Indigenous women and their children were discriminated against, and all were meant to be redressed by this bill. Bill C-31 was successful at encouraging Indigenous women and men to apply for status if they or their mothers, or grandmothers had lost status by marrying a non-Native person. However, the bill included a cut off clause, whereby “anyone beyond a two-generational cut-off was denied status.”²⁴³ Bill C-31’s limitations suggest that in 1985 the federal government was not willing to undo generations of damage done to women’s status within First Nations communities.

After Bill C-31 was passed in 1985 there were a range of responses from the Indigenous community. Bonita Lawrence raises the argument that opposition from Indigenous nations cannot be taken as simply “a function of Native sexism.”²⁴⁴ Rather, the relationship that Indigenous nations have with maintaining status is a deep and complicated one. In 1969, the Liberal Government under Trudeau released the White Paper, which called for the end of separate status for Indigenous people in Canada. While the White Paper called for the equality

²⁴¹Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 13.

²⁴²Saskatchewan Indian, “Bill C-31,” October/November 1988.
<<http://collections.ic.gc.ca/SaskIndian/a85oct09.htm>> (March 18th, 2006.)

²⁴³Beverly Jacobs. “Native Women’s Association of Canada Submission to the Special Rapporteur Investigating the Violations of Indigenous Human Rights.” *Sisters in Spirit Homepage*. December 2nd, 2002.

<<http://www.sistersinspirit.ca/documents/NWACreportfinal.pdf>> (February 22nd, 2006), 24.

²⁴⁴Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 13.

of all Canadians, Indigenous nations took issue with the implementation of the White Paper as meaning that the federal government could effectively “legislate away its historical relationship with Native peoples.”²⁴⁵ Since the threat of the White Paper, Indigenous nations have been conscious of protecting status Indian rights, meaning any tampering with the Indian Act was perceived as a risk, even if it was about bringing justice to Indigenous women. Lawrence writes that this opposition is

yet another example of how the inequalities created between Native people by the Indian Act have made resistance difficult – as those who are empowered by the inequalities attack those who are opposed by them, or leave them to struggle alone.²⁴⁶

In a practical sense, when Bill C-31 was passed, it created a chaotic situation for Indigenous communities, since funding to nations is based on band membership. When Bill C-31 was passed, band memberships and funding for bands increased, but there remained gender discrimination in the Indian Act to ensure the federal government did not become overwhelmed with numerous costly registrations. Nevertheless, since 1985, the additional pressure put on budgets in “housing, education, social assistance and infrastructure sectors,” has created divisions between individuals and led to discrimination within Indigenous communities.²⁴⁷

Twenty years after Bill C-31 was ratified, there remained a sense of disenchantment among Indigenous communities regarding the implementation of the bill. In a press release from the Assembly of First Nations, (hereafter referred to as the AFN), past National Chief Phil Fontaine stated that the bill had not resolved any of the issues it was intended to fix, and has added new issues as well. He stated that “significant gender discrimination still remains, control

²⁴⁵Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 13.

²⁴⁶Lawrence, “Gender, Race, and the Regulation of Native Identity in Canada and the United States: An Overview,” *Hypatia*, 14.

²⁴⁷Jacobs. “Native Women’s Association of Canada Submission to the Special Rapporteur Investigating the Violations of Indigenous Human Rights.” *Sisters in Spirit Homepage*, 2.

over Indian status is still held by the Crown, and the population of status Indians is declining as a direct result of Bill C-31.”²⁴⁸ Recognizing “Bill C-31 as an imposed government solution to problems created by government’s own imposed legislation,” Fontaine argues that it is “morally, politically and legally wrong for one government to tell another government who its citizens are.”²⁴⁹ It is the AFN’s perspective that “First Nations governments are best placed to identify and define their citizenship. In fact, Canada is in a clear conflict of the interest in trying to define our membership because the number of registered Indians creates financial implications for the government.”²⁵⁰

The reactions of the Stó:lō community towards individuals claiming status under Bill C-31 have varied depending on the bands involved. Leona Sam, the person in charge of registration under the Indian Act for the Stó:lō explained that on June 25th, 1985 bands were allowed to choose whether they wanted to be section 10 bands or section 11 bands. Section 10 bands can adopt their own membership codes, while section 11 bands remain under the Indian Act.²⁵¹ Leona Sam explained that with section 11 bands,

if a person gets their status, they automatically are a member of the band. On section 10 bands, they would apply for their status, when they get their status number they are affiliated with that registry group. They have to make application to the band for band membership.²⁵²

When I asked her what the experiences with people who want to claim status under Bill C-31

²⁴⁸Assembly of First Nations. “Bill C-31 Twenty Years Later: AFN National Chief Calls for First Nations Control of First Nations Citizenship,” *Assembly of First Nations Home Page*. <<http://www.afn.ca/article.asp?id=1548>> June 28th, 2005.

²⁴⁹Assembly of First Nations. “Bill C-31 Twenty Years Later: AFN National Chief Calls for First Nations Control of First Nations Citizenship,”

²⁵⁰Assembly of First Nations. “Bill C-31 Twenty Years Later: AFN National Chief Calls for First Nations Control of First Nations Citizenship,”

²⁵¹Leona Sam, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 6th, 2009.

²⁵²Leona Sam, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 6th, 2009. (Track 32)

was, she responded that:

Within Stó:lō nation, there are various different band membership codes. Some of them I find fully accept their whole membership as long as you have ancestor lineage through your mother or father on the band. There are some bands not readily accepting everyone for various reasons, I guess, but being that they put their own membership codes in place, I guess they get to chose who they would like to be a band member. I think it's rather hard for band members, I supposed, who are under a section 10 band, while there is an appeal process in place on each of the codes, but there is no other place for them to turn to. They can't turn to INAC if they are rejected memberships, they can't turn to me because I just do the Indian Registry program. Because band membership is an internal band issues, their own recourse... is just to get legal advice because the fact is that they just don't have anyone else to help them and sometimes I find that a little difficult for our members because a lot of them, even though it's been 25 years, people are still having a hard time – our members are still having a hard time between section 10 and 11.²⁵³

An indication of the difficulties that some Stó:lō communities are having regarding expanding memberships, has been expressed in prejudice that Lorraine George has encountered in some her cross-cultural relationships at Shxw'ōwhámél reserve. As we will see below, Lorraine is a non-Indigenous woman who does not have status, but lives on the Shxw'ōwhámél reserve with her partner, Ralph George. While she does not have status, her experiences are demonstrative of the difficulty to form meaningful cross-cultural relationships in a community when one woman is non-Indigenous and new to the community. During our discussion, her long time friend Leona Kelly expressed to me that she

Didn't want prejudism to carry on here [at Shxw'ōwhámél] either. There was a little bit from our cousins up the street. Who would just deny her as an auntie, or family.²⁵⁴

²⁵³Leona Sam, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Chilliwack, British Columbia, May 6th, 2009. (Track 33)

²⁵⁴Leona Kelly and Lorraine George's relationship has developed into what is known by anthropologists as fictive kin or symbolic kin. While these women are not kin, in the sense that they do not share a genealogical origin, through their biological, cultural or historical descent, they do use kinship terms when they talk about one another. Their relationship developed over the course of thirty years and went through many different stages of 'closeness' before becoming what it is when I interviewed them in May 2009. Since they have developed such a close relationship, Leona's relatives at Shxw'ōwhámél have, for the most part, taken to recognizing Lorraine as a part of their family. For more information on the concept of fictive kin, see: Janet Carsten, ed, *Cultures of Relatedness: New Approaches to the Study of Kinship*, (Cambridge:

Lorraine George: I have a niece who did that.

Leona Kelly: And I just felt, you know, no matter how it was that she was always going to be an auntie or she was always going to be a friend of some sort. A role model. A sister.

Lorraine George: She's one of them I took care off too, when she was little.

Leona Kelly: And I always let my sons' know even when we're in a restaurant: there's grandma. And they would ... they made one grandma smile ear to ear, one time. She was just a little old lady, she was all by herself having tea at the Royal Café. And I don't know what we did that day, but Jonathan turned around and: "hi Grandma!" And she just smiled, ear to ear! She just looked so homely and lonely then, in that moment, to see her smile that big! And as they grow older, now, their just saying now "no, their not my auntie, their not my grandma," to have a little attitude. But when I want to look at the world that way, they're still sisters, or brothers, or aunties. In the end we all relate somehow, we're all God's children. I don't really go into all that. Just somehow, when I end a prayer: my relations, you've really got to mean it. And that's how I see it and they always called everybody like: auntie and uncle. And there was just come change there probably in my cousins 'cause of school. "They're not my auntie. Oh they're not my uncle." So they're just seeing some difference.²⁵⁵

Within the Stó:lō community, there are other examples of women who have come into communities and left communities and have had their membership within these communities change because of Bill C-31. The history of cross-cultural relationships at a community level when Bill C-31 is the site around which they are formed, is varied. Some women embodied the expectations of the colonial project suggesting that even non-institutionalized sites have been impacted by the ethos of colonialism, while others were able to form relationships at a

Cambridge University Press, 2000). Janet Carsten, "The Substance of Kinship and the Heat of the Hearth: Feeding, Personhood, and Relatedness among Malays in Pulau Langkawi" *American Ethnologist* 1995, 22 (2): 223–241. David M. Schneider, *A Critique of the Study of Kinship*, (Ann Arbor, Michigan: University of Michigan Press, 1984). Jenny B. White, *Money Makes Us Relatives: Women's Labor in Urban Turkey*, (New York: Routledge, 2004).

²⁵⁵Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. Leona Kelly was brought up to be Catholic but recently began to revive Stó:lō spirituality in her life. Her reference to 'all God's children' was in light of her Catholic upbringing, but also suggests that she understands the similarities and cross-over that Christianity and Stó:lō spirituality provide. (Track 34)

community level regardless of their status under the Indian Act. However, the anxieties around status continue to be an issue for the type of relationship that can form between Indigenous and Settler women in communities. The legacy of gender discrimination and segregation because the Indian Act, has impacted the nature of some cross-cultural relationships in communities, while women like Leona Kelly and Lorraine George have been able to work through these barriers to realize meaningful interaction.

A Cross-Cultural Relationship in Community: Lorraine George and Leona Kelly

Lorraine George may have encountered some difficulties regarding community relationships, but it is clear that she and Leona Kelly have been able to build a lasting and meaningful cross-cultural relationship. Leona Kelly and Lorraine George have a deep personal friendship that has developed over the course of thirty-four years because of the many ways their lives have intersected within their community. Leona, 49, and Lorraine, 79, both live on Shxw'ōwhámél reserve in Stó:lō territory. Lorraine is a non-Indigenous woman who does not have status, and Leona is Stó:lō and has status. At the beginning of our discussion, it was clear that these women cared very much for each other and embodied a cross-cultural space that seemed devoid of the expectations of the colonial project. Lorraine told me that she

met Leona probably thirty-three years ago. No, thirty-four years ago when I moved to reserve. She was a younger girl and we always got along. And when she got older, had her children, we were always there for each other. And we've always been there. I've been with Leona quite a bit now, all the years I've lived up here. And it's basically the last twelve years we have been really close, since when Ralph left. I think that brought us together more, and with the children – I love them like my grandkids. I could cry. I've got tears in my eyes. I love this lady very much. She's a good person, she's always there to help anybody who needs help and for all the children too.²⁵⁶

Leona was quick to confirm the important role that Lorraine has played in her life as well. When

²⁵⁶Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 35)

Lorraine became overcome with emotion while expressing her feelings towards Leona, Leona thanked Lorraine and responded that the relationship

goes both ways. Really, it does. When you say all those nice words about me, those are the same, if not more because I've learned from you. You gave a lot of your life to all of Shxw'ōwhámél. And you still do: bake sales, baking seventy-two or some-odd little tarts for the community, you put your heart into everything. You are there for all the burnings. Sometimes it's just her and I doing the burning and it's her and I that started the fire and no men around to help. And we did all the cooking. So it just seems like through the hard times, it was there when I started to drink, in the early parts of my alcoholism as a young adult. I just felt that there was a little bit there. I think probably because we all drank. Disagreements just went a little too hard, but from one incident on, it didn't go any farther than that. A little bit of argument and that was about it. I think that was the only hard time.²⁵⁷

Having established the nature of the relationship, I was interested in how Leona and Lorraine grew so close and where they encountered each other in order to develop such a strong friendship. Lorraine George was born and raised in the logging town of Bridlewood, Washington, and met Ralph George in Aberdeen, Washington. When she met Ralph, she came to Canada and to live on Shxw'ōwhámél reserve, at which point she met Leona. Leona had a relationship with one of Lorraine's sons, Dennis, and when that relationship ended twenty-five years ago, Leona and Lorraine remained friends.²⁵⁸ While Leona was growing up at Shxw'ōwhámél, Lorraine took care of Leona and her younger brother Clay, as an unofficial foster parent. By "always working together," Lorraine imparted to Leona the importance of caring for the children of the community and helped Leona learn about parenting.²⁵⁹ Leona remarked that Lorraine

took in children, you fostered children. So I learned a little bit of that from Aunt

²⁵⁷Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 36)

²⁵⁸Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009.

²⁵⁹Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009.

Lorraine, because that's what we're doing now, is taking in children and looking after them. So like I said there's a lot of both ways. Where she's always there and Uncle Ralph got my logging in the latter years of our friendship and so there was, even if her son and I did break up twenty-five years ago or so, the friendship still carried on. I still didn't divorce her. Our friendship stayed. I needed her just as much, no body at home with a driver's license. I remember not drinking every other year, but then indulging again by mid year and then trying to quit by New Years. So, throughout between twenty and thirty, I, by the time I was thirty was it. I put the bottle aside and cigarettes aside and set some goals to start a family, so by the time I was thirty-five I would have found a partner and start a family. But for Aunt Lorraine, I think that a lot of her roles that she sees in me is what she gave me. So, her tears just make me happy because that's what she taught me. And she may need me now, but I needed her back then. Because my mom was an alcoholic.²⁶⁰

The role of foster parenting is certainly a 'place' where Leona and Lorraine's relationship developed and grew stronger. When I asked Lorraine how she got involved in foster parenting, she told me that she started when she moved to Shxw'ōwhámél.

Then all the kids used to come to my house when their parents were drinking. I drank. But they all seem to come to my house. I think a lot of it, why they did too, was that a lot of them didn't have food in the house when their parents were drinking. And that's one thing I made sure.

Leona Kelly: There was consistency in breakfast, lunch and supper. So supper was always on the table regardless. And when I think back then there was like, there was no meal on the table.

Lorraine George: Ralph always made sure he drank more than I did. And he made sure that I had the cheque. He always gave me the money. (...) So I could pay the bills and make sure the kids have clothes and have food on the table. Sometimes it may not be much, but it was there. We got by, we never starved.²⁶¹

For Leona, learning to care for the children in the community at an early age has impacted how she interacts with the community today. She remarked that one of the reasons why she thinks children and teenagers from the community come to stay with her

is cause they know supper will be on the table. And they know I'm busy now and they're

²⁶⁰Leona Kelly, Interview with Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009. (Track 37)

²⁶¹Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 38)

older. So they know if I'm not there, somebody will take the reign on and make macaroni and cheese, or put some noodles on or pancakes. That'll be made and put on the table. I'm just glad that they can come in and they're comfortable to use my kitchen too, they way they want to eat to feed their friend. To feed my children. I think that's kind of cool, because you can't go into many homes and feel free to do that. And I think, my house is really open to the teenagers to just come in and do their thing. Cooking or whatever.²⁶²

Having taken from Lorraine the importance of caring for children in the community, Leona explained that opening her house for meals was

Like a way of living. And I think just being that open with the community. I have, lately, set some boundaries down, so I don't have everybody all the time. So I have asked just recently, being a single parent and all, that I can't have everyone coming in 24/7. Weekends kind of tame down, as well as every night. I found it kind of difficult to do that, but now a days I wasn't sure how to go about it, because I just let it go on for a long time. But regardless of the restrictions I've put up just recently, they can still come and hang out and be here and be safe. I think just being safe and I probably, I think the biggest and bottom line is so they can stay away from alcohol and drugs. I won't tolerate that. Respect, they want to be able to respect, even themselves, just to be there.²⁶³

The idea of opening their homes to the community was, and continues to be, a practice for both Leona and Lorraine in terms of their own families. Leona and Lorraine often spend time at each other's houses and share meals with one another. Lorraine told me that when she makes too much food for herself and Ralph, "I'll have the family over to my house. I used to go to her house a lot when I was by myself, practically every night."²⁶⁴ The shared dinners and responsibilities during periods of separation from spouses were an additional 'site' where Leona and Lorraine's bonds were strengthened. Leona explained that

There was a separation back then and then off and on there was a separation from my partner too. There was more bonding, more togetherness. She also helped during my going back to school.

²⁶²Leona Kelly, Interview with Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009. (Track 39)

²⁶³Leona Kelly, Interview with Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009. (Track 40)

²⁶⁴Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 41)

Lorraine George: Six months.

Leona Kelly: And helped look after the boys while I did my practicum and that. And they just more or less moved right in. That's why with the university students come they don't mind to come over here and stay the one week. And then we're back home. But the other grandma, hey? Grandma Suchuck, is not really for that. She really wouldn't. Why am I kicking my own children out and moving people in, so there's a little bit of restrictions.²⁶⁵

Another area that demonstrates the bond Lorraine and Leona share, is Lorraine's interest in Stó:lō religion and spirituality and a willingness to take part in ceremonies. When we were visiting with Leona and Lorraine, Ralph George took us to see where the church on Shxw'ōwhámél was located before it had been moved. At the site, there is also a grave yard and Stó:lō traditions stipulate that people have to wear Tumulth (a red powder) on their faces when they enter a graveyard. We returned to Lorraine and Ralph's house to carry out the discussion with Tumulth on our faces, which sparked a discussion about Stó:lō spirituality. Leona Kelly explained that

We have it on tonight because we didn't want to bring anything back.

Lorraine George: On account of the spirits.

Leona Kelly: I'm her crutch.

Lorraine George: I know a lot of it, but I'm still learning.

Leona Kelly: It's because children, and the babies, and the unborns ... their so vulnerable that the spirits can just take them. Just take them in a wrong way or to the other side. Or else, put something on them in somebody in the range of families. So there's ... it's a protocol that needs to be announced I guess. It's usually an elder, like she mentioned. If Ralph was there, an elder would ask that the children be removed and put in a babysitting house, just because something can happen.²⁶⁶

²⁶⁵Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 42)

²⁶⁶Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 43)

To be sure, the relationship between Leona and Lorraine is special. Their lives intersect in so many ways and they truly love each other. When asked if they consider them as role models for relationships between Indigenous and non-Indigenous women, they both responded:

No!

Lorraine George: I don't think I ever thought that

Amber Kostuchenko: I think so! I think you have such a great friendship!

Kate Martin: Yeah, I do too.

Amber Kostuchenko: And I think you are ambassadors for women united!

Kate Martin: There's a lot to be said for that, certainly. But, I mean, it seems that your bond, your relationship is based on so many different aspects of your lives, that ... true friendship.

Lorraine George and Leona Kelly: Yeah!

Kate Martin: Not that you need anyone to say that at all! But it seems that way and it's inspiring to see that too!

Leona Kelly: Yup, when her hair gets all strangely and stringy, we try to find a way of getting it all curled and permed!²⁶⁷

This humorous exchange reinforces the significance of the roles that Leona and Lorraine play in each other's lives. The multiple ways that their lives have intersected, the proximity to each other and shared values have made for a friendship that truly transcends the colonial project. The space and freedom to respect and understand each other as individuals within a cross-cultural context has contributed to a meaningful, reciprocal relationship. Theirs is a true example of dialogism at work.

Having looked at relationships that are not necessarily confined to institutionalized settings, it can be concluded that the colonial project was, and remains, quite fluid. The

²⁶⁷Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interview with Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 44)

meaningful cross-cultural relationships that have been formed through community interactions have required a degree of agency on behalf of each woman involved to recognize similarities between cultures and respect alternate worldviews, and then participate in a dialogue to re-negotiate their positions with regards to different cultural contexts. Leona Kelly and Lorraine George's relationship is certainly a testament to the exercise of agency, and the creation of space through dialogue, in order to transcend colonial power dynamics. A recognition on Leona's behalf of the prejudice on reserve, created by the existence of colonial power hierarchies, has no doubt contributed to how their relationship was able to develop.

Leona and Lorraine have developed a deep cross-cultural friendship based in part on shared kin and proximity as both live on reserve. While it might seem rare to have a non-Indigenous person living on land "reserved" by the Indian Act for status "Indians," given the century plus of Indian policy aimed at defining status along gendered lines, reserves are actually a likely space for non-Indigenous women and Indigenous women to have formed relationships. Nevertheless, a recognition of the possibility to transcend the expectations of colonialism at the level of interpersonal relationships warrants further study and serious consideration by those who would like to see change in the relationship between Indigenous and Settler populations.

Chapter 4 Religion as a Site of Encounter

In the previous chapters, I have looked at cross-cultural relationships as formed through institutions, as well as those that have developed informally at a community level. In this chapter, my inquiry into religion as a site of encounter is in the context both of the church as an institution and the new communities have been formed based on shared spiritual or religious beliefs. These cross-cultural relationships that have formed around the site of religion can be understood as based around both institutions and community interactions.

Prior to my discussions with Stó:lō and settler women, I expected that Christian religious institutions would be a site of cross-cultural encounters. My discussions confirmed this expectation, but also revealed that religion enters into the lives of both Stó:lō women and settler women in complex ways. Reserve churches, residential schools and community interactions were three areas where religion served to facilitate female cross-cultural relationships. This chapter looks at each of these areas and discusses how religion has acted as an agent in bringing about cross-cultural encounters between Stó:lō women and settler women.

Reserve Churches

The colonial project has a long history of using Christianity as a means to civilize Indigenous peoples. Historical geographer Cole Harris writes that

[e]conomic motives, calculations of geopolitical advantage and of imperial grandeur, concern for the plight of the British poor, the opportunity to spread Protestant Christianity, and a sense of responsibility to civilize savage peoples, had all justified in various permutations and combinations, the British governments involvement in the colonial enterprise.²⁶⁸

By the time that colonies were established in North America, there was a great deal of experience for the Colonial Office in London to draw on when deciding how to govern “the prior

²⁶⁸Cole Harris, *Making Native Space*, (Vancouver: UBC Press, 2002): 3.

inhabitants of their colonies.”²⁶⁹

One of the policies that the colonial office sought to develop was the creation of reservations. Early on in British Columbia, reservation policy was supported by the ideology of liberal humanitarianism, which maintained that

[a]ll people were essentially similar, and that with proper laws, administration and educations, barbarians and savages could be civilized, a state they would readily embrace when exposed to its advantages. They posited a universal, civilized culture, a product of common socio-cultural evolution – allowing next to no room for continuing cultural difference, and hardly a hint of the idea that there were different forms of civilized human societies. Imbricated with the moral crusade to Christianize and civilize was the economic agenda of free trade. The rights of property, an industrious labour force given to hard work and for the liberation and civilization of savage peoples overseas.²⁷⁰

While the specific policies regarding reserves shifted over the course of the lives of the colonies, depending on popular ideological trends and those in power, the goal of civilization through missionization remained a cornerstone on reservations.

Missionary discourse and liberal humanitarianism went hand in hand resulting in the establishment of churches on reserves, to ensure civilization. At the beginning of the twentieth century, most missionaries believed that Indigenous people were “children of God, who like everyone else, could enter the Kingdom of Heaven.”²⁷¹ Further, missionary rhetoric claimed that the Indigenous peoples they worked with “lived in darkness” and “their condition was a product of history rather than of race and therefore could be corrected – hence the missionary presence in British Columbia, a product of both colonialism and of conviction about the common humanity and fundamental equality of all people before God.”²⁷²

By the mid-twentieth century, missionary rhetoric regarding Indigenous peoples in

²⁶⁹Harris, *Making Native Space*: 6.

²⁷⁰Harris, *Making Native Space*: 8.

²⁷¹Harris, *Making Native Space*: 55.

²⁷²Harris, *Making Native Space*: 55.

British Columbia had shifted, but certainly not disappeared. In the Stó:lō communities, Christianity continues to play an important role in women's lives. Reserve churches, such as the Catholic churches on Seabird Island Reserve and Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve are locations where religion has acted as a catalyst for cross-cultural relationships.

Sister Térése and Stó:lō Lila Peters have formed a cross-cultural friendship that is based around the reserve church at Seabird Island. Sister Térése came to work at Seabird ten years ago. Prior to living on Seabird, she had been in France for five years working for her community in Versailles. When her five-year term was completed, she was asked by Sister Denise, who was her provincial, whether she would return to Canada. She replied:

I'm coming back to Canada definitely and my choice is to continue working with First Nations peoples. And so, she said: "okay I'll scout around and see what there is." And I found out that the people from Seabird wanted me. And your mom was one of those. (Directed at Lila) They wanted a sister to come and live on reserve and it was for religious purposes. They felt they wanted to have a sister's presence here, to help, to be with them daily, to be a friend. And I think my whole main role – I had to write down a job description for the Archbishop because he's the one who pays me – and I did say that I believe that the essence of my job description is to be a presence of love here on reserve. So that people know there is a God, there is a creator. And so to interrelate in a very gentle way with the people and learn from them. So that's how I got to be here and I've been here for 10 years.²⁷³

When I asked Sister Térése and Lila how they came to be friends, they told me that when Sister Térése first arrived at Seabird, she was directed to Lila Peter's mother, Birdie, because of Birdie's connection, involvement and dedication with the Seabird Island Catholic church. Sister Térése said:

I met her mother first. I was brought to meet her mom, when I first came to the reserve, I wasn't living in this house. I was living right by the church in another old trailer. And this lady said: I think you should meet Birdie, she's really the... the backbone of the church and all that. So off we went to meet Birdie and of course we just hit it off immediately and had many, many visits and Birdie told me about her family. One day

²⁷³Sister Térése and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 45)

she phoned me and said: “oh my daughter Lila is going to be here, she lives in Chilliwack.” That’s how I met you the first time and I didn’t really get to know you, but I knew you. I knew Bette the first. Then a few years ago we gravitated. What year was that?

Lila Peters: After my mom passed away, what year was that? I don’t know.

Sister T  r  se: Two years ago already, it is going to be three in December.

Lila Peters: Yeah, so I became friends with her after, and it stayed that way.²⁷⁴

The type of relationship that Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters have formed through their involvement at the Catholic Church at Seabird, is formed around shared spiritual beliefs and a deep respect for one another because,

Sister T  r  se: We don’t live in each other’s pockets. You know. I think there’s a deep respect on both sides of this friendship. We have our space. Lila takes her space when she has to go do other stuff, and I take my space when I have to. And it’s very respectful. I think it’s a type of friendship that’s not easily broken.²⁷⁵

Sister T  r  se was also quick to point out that this relationship was “all based on spiritual beliefs. That’s about all we spend our time talking about.”²⁷⁶

Having heard about both women’s involvement with the church on Seabird, and coming to understand that their bond had developed across the spiritual lines, I wondered whether there was space and respect for both Catholic and St  :l   spiritual values, considering the institutionalization of Catholicism. Sister T  r  se explained that “there are a lot of similarities and we often say it,” when I asked her if Catholicism and St  :l   spirituality can complement

²⁷⁴ Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 46)

²⁷⁵ Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 47)

²⁷⁶ Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 48)

each other.²⁷⁷ For example, we discussed the Stó:lō tradition of burnings, in which Sister Térése and Lila Peters demonstrated that the space to respect similarities between Catholicism and Stó:lō spirituality has developed at Seabird.

Sister Térése: You have to believe in the spirits to begin with and sometimes the spirits of our loved ones come around and they're asking for more attention. To me! I think it's a beautiful symbol of the burning. It's really the symbol you find in the Bible, in the Old Testament. And it's not being fearful the spirits are going to come after us and do bad things to us if we don't feed them. That used to be the thought. It's more: "hey! We're still in connection with you." And that's what I feel all the time I hear those people speak. And some of those people have real... I could tell the little story about after my mom died. (...)you know when you believe in the spirits... So this powerful burning is so very much to us, to me every time I go, it's like a sacrament in our church. Where a sacrament is when you connect with God. Like we have communion, and all these sacraments. It's real a connection with the great spirit, like God. And to me it's very similar to some of our sacraments. The burning and the masked dancing that I've done in the States too, are like sacramental and some of the people see, that's what they're attracted to, those who love the church and have been baptized in it.²⁷⁸

The reciprocity that defines this relationship is a product of a dialogic exchange where both women have been de-centered and learned extensively from each other.

While Sister Térése has found links between her belief in Catholicism and Stó:lō spirituality, it is apparent that Stó:lō women have also been able to accept Christianity in addition to their Stó:lō spiritual beliefs. I asked Lila and Sister Térése if there was a lot of acceptance for Christianity within Stó:lō spirituality, to which Sister Térése replied,

I can speak through my own experience, like you know, out when I was working in Chilcotin and all the other reserves. And Jimmy reserve. And I have found that basically, that all the First Nations people who have been baptized are basically Christian and they definitely believe in the Great Creator and the spirit. But they're not church goers. The Mass is not – you know I've said that often – for many people the mass, it never was expressed to them in a way that has – and I'm not saying that for everybody, but for some have understood it a bit. But it's not – you know when most of the people learned about the mass we were still doing it the old way, and it was in Latin, it was not a

²⁷⁷Sister Térése and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009.

²⁷⁸Sister Térése and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 49)

personal thing. And I think a lot too is that, the mass, because prayers had been forced on a lot of people when they were in residential schools, because they used to be dragged out of bed and sent to mass every morning. And I know a lot of families who have pushed their kids and preached to them, not only in First Nations parishes, the kids, as soon as they are old enough, they'll never set foot in church. Some how or another, there was something spiritual that was not happening. And although the mass, I often say if we had fully understood it, if it had been presented in a different way, it is such a beautiful prayer, because it's a prayer of Jesus for the rest of that Christian community all over. That's what it is. That's what it mainly is. It's Jesus' final act of love for all of us. For all of creation. And if we had understood how to present it. It would be so powerful. But I would say that, you know, here. Even Clem, who has never gone to church, who is not a baptized Catholic says to me: "well I want to be buried here from this Church." And I say: "Why not?" You know? Because he has a whole affection or affiliation for all the spiritual things we do in the church outside of the mass. There are not many who come to the Mass.²⁷⁹

Lila Peters: But the ones that do are really, really... because we were brought up going to mass. You know. It's I don't know.

Sister T  r  se: They love it though.

Lila Peters: Yeah, yeah. There's a deep respect for it. They're people who pray up this web. They pray at other things, different ways. There's so many different ways. I don't know, it's hard to describe.

Sister T  r  se: Yes, it's hard to describe. And I think what I feel too Lila, is often when people come to mass it's because they have a real need to be there. I mean look at your sister in law, well she's not your real sister in law, but related to Birdie. When she comes to mass, she's fully into mass and it's for a special... like I said it's a prayer for Christ and she seems to understand the needs she has to pray for, it's quite powerful. And I think some have that, but I think on our side, we haven't fully understood that yet.²⁸⁰

Furthermore, Lila explained that she does not see a problem with combining different aspects of religions. When she mentioned this, our discussion turned to consider how religion is currently made accessible for everyone on the Seabird Island reserve today, and how Sister T  r  se has played an important role in making spirituality relevant.

Lila Peters: I think anything to do with prayer, I'm involved with. A lot of people say

²⁷⁹Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009.

²⁸⁰Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 50)

you shouldn't mix this and that, but to me prayer is prayer no matter what and I think it's really powerful.

Kate Martin: You know it's so interesting, those opinions of: you can't mix, you need to have pure spirituality, here and here and here.

Lila Peters: Yes, it's sort of like at the Church and the priest saying you can't come because you are not baptized.

Sister T  r  se: It comes to that same thing where we're always separating. And what we've done is misread the Garden of Eden and the story of Adam and Eve. And no where did God ever separate himself from any of us. God is in us. God is all around us. And we keep teaching to the kids: If you are bad, God doesn't love you anymore. And that is separation. And that... we don't realize how that does. Your spirituality, because of your language and how you were treated by the Europeans, you were cut in half. You were told: "you're not good people because you're pagans." You're following pagan... I still hear it sometimes, I just almost lose my head when I hear people make comments about your spirituality (referring to Lila) and say that's pagan. You know? 2009. So that's pretty difficult to understand. But I think the whole concept of separation is what we do. Prayer is part of you, it's who you are. How could you separate that? You know? And I think we like to put things in compartments and we've done that with religion and with God and it's totally wrong. As far as I'm concerned God is everything and is everywhere and for people to want to separate all the time, separate. And well that is, that's what happens: separate people and then divide and conquer. And that's a power thing. That's a power based thing.²⁸¹

The amount of respect that they have for each other's beliefs and for different ways of experiencing spirituality was surprising. In particular, Sister T  r  se's attitude towards loosening the strictures of Catholicism were interesting considering her role in the Church. However, she went on to explain that she was

with First Nations people ever since I'm a child because I was brought up by a First Nations reserve in Saskatchewan, Whitefish Reserve, so they were always in our home. My dad had learned how to speak that. My dad was from France. So he learned how to speak the Cree language to communicate with the people and he worked in one of the stores. That's why he spoke the language. (...)

And I feel that way too, after I've spent so much years, so much time... when new aspects are brought into the whole concept of people, settler's coming in, and I've been reading a lot of history books and I'm telling you, you have to read them too (directed at

²⁸¹Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 51)

Lila,) because this is Canada. Even, you know if your people were way before we all came, but it gives you an insight into what people did when they all came.²⁸²

Furthermore, she accredited her French cultural background as having given her some of the tools necessary for her job. She told me that

I wouldn't be able to be here if I didn't have that attitude. But I can bless my dear old dad, my French dad and my French culture. Because the five years I spent in France really touched... we are creationists, we believe in creation and in God being in everything. And too much used religion to control people, to do things. And I don't care what religion it is, we bring in our own truths that are not really God.²⁸³

The discussion that I had with Sister T r se and Lila Peters reveals a cross-cultural relationship that is based on an acknowledgement of each others' spiritual beliefs. By acknowledging that Catholicism and St :l  spirituality can intersect to serve the needs of the community, a bond has been strengthened between Sister T r se and Lila Peters. Sister T r se and Lila Peter's relationship is a contemporary example of a female cross-cultural relationship formed around religion, that would not have existed during throughout the 1960s and 1970s, when there was less of an opportunity for Indigenous people's resistance to colonial values impact the mindsets of Settler women.

Leona Kelly and Lorraine George's relationship is another example of a relationship strengthened because of religion. Leona Kelly has been involved with the Catholic Church since her time at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Boarding School in Mission, British Columbia. For Leona, religion has played a very significant role in her life and she attended the church on Shxw' wh m l_reserve on and off for the past thirty-five years. She explained that her spirituality

²⁸²Sister T r se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 52)

²⁸³Sister T r se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 53)

helped [me] to learn how to pray for a better week, a better day, a better night. And probably at a small level, not to swear, not to think bad thoughts. It wasn't something that was imposed, but learning from going into confessions, that when I was learning more about the prayers, saying the Hail Mary's and the Our Father's, (...) [speaking about St. Mary's and earlier experiences] So there was some things that I did keep at such a young age. And a father, that simple teaching kept my life, my strength and courage to hold that and help have a family at that age. I feel kind of happy that I did wait, I've had my trials and tribulations and mistakes. To be able to maybe listen to someone who gave me just that simply part of something so simple to keep on, to hold on. I really believed that I would never do that. I really believed I'd be married and have lots of children and there's a lot of unfairness of myself as I get into it as an adult. I think when I take a look at his words there's always that reflection of hope and faith that I can be a better person rather than (...) drink, and not care for myself. So I really found the higher power is always there somehow. And we hear our elders talk about the great spirit, but I always went Catholic, in God invoking love and faith, it always came through the Church. If I ever feel down, that's what picked me up. I wanted that for my children, because I was able to survive and go through a lot. I felt that it really helped build a positive attitude and a better world for myself. I just gave me strength somewhere too, to work.²⁸⁴

The significance that Leona Kelly has placed on religion has been reflected in her relationship with her long time friend Lorraine George. Lorraine and Leona have known each other for over thirty years and consider each other family members, despite not being blood relations. Lorraine is seventy-nine years old and when she was seventy-five, she was baptized with Leona's boys.²⁸⁵ When I asked them if the Church on Shxw'ōwhámél reserve could be in part credited for maintaining a strong bond between them, Leona Kelly said that

a bond is huge there, because of our children. She was there when they got baptized. She got to meet the inlaws, my inlaws, and then just following through. Cause we used to always go to church in St. Theresa's and father started to come up here and that was a really big open door for her to share with us. Catholic. Cause you're Presbyterian?

Lorraine George: No, I was... well I was never baptized, but I was Lutheran, I went to Lutheran.

Leona Kelly: Okay, I thought it was Presbyterian, but it's Lutheran. I never did

²⁸⁴Leona Kelly, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009. (Track 54)

²⁸⁵Leona Kelly, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009.

understand.²⁸⁶

Lorraine George: I went to it ever since I lived in Eugene, because in Bridlewood when we were kids it was a community church. So I don't know really. Because I was born and raised 'till I was 12 in a logging town. The houses, the whole bit. You go in you turn around, you go back out. Until... then we moved from there in WWII, right after the war. But I always went over there with my kids because they had their communion over here and their catechism. Cause we had nuns coming in here when the kids were little. And so, Dennis, not Dennis, Dwyane, Rick, Bill and Lila were all over here. And had their catechism and communion in that little church over here.

Leona Kelly: When that was all happening I was still at the Residential school, so there was two different. So that's why I wouldn't know what she just said. With the children going to... getting Catechism by the nuns.

Lorraine George: I can't remember who was here. Father Priest? Or the other one? Carney? It was either one of those who was here then. Then they had the bishop come, I don't even remember the name, that's been so many years ago. The kids were – Lila was there... she was in grade school. All the kids were in grade school.

Kate Martin: And is that just the church that's up the road?

Lorraine George: Yeah. The one I was baptized in. We had the church almost full that day. Everybody wanted to come in. Well, Heather and Marcus were both baptized with me. They were living with me then. (...)

Kate Martin: Okay, that's great! They must have thought that was pretty neat.

Lorraine George: Everybody did! (laughs) Baptized with Grandma! I wish we could bring our priest back.²⁸⁷

A component of Leona and Lorraine's bond is predicated on similar spiritual beliefs and participation in the Catholic tradition. Lorraine's experience with Catholicism, however, did not begin upon meeting Leona. Rather, she was involved with the Catholic Church at Shxw'ōwhámél when her children were young. When I had the opportunity to speak with Lorraine on Shxw'ōwhámél reserve, she told me that

²⁸⁶Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009.

²⁸⁷Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 55)

they did the catechism right over at the church then. The kids went right over. And then I don't know what year it was at the church that the Nuns went to Hope. I know one of them got killed on the number 7, I can't even remember what her name was now. But I know two of them came back to visit one time. That was when Father Jerry was here. Because Pat and Lester brought them out here. Pat and Lester were still together then, so that's been quite a few years ago. But I can't remember what year that they... the nuns they took them out of Hope. They still have some nuns. They have one over at Seabird and they have some in Chilliwack 'cause one was sitting right next to me at the prayers the other night I went to.²⁸⁸

The memories of the Church, the stability and strength that the Church represents, continues to be an important site where Leona and Lorraine's cross-cultural friendship is situated. Even though the church on Shxw'ōwhámél is no longer in use, the experiences that both Leona and Lorraine had there have helped to form a common bond and bolster their friendship. The following exchange between Lorraine and Leona is telling of the significance of the Church at Shxw'ōwhámél. When Lorraine first moved to Shxw'ōwhámél,

they weren't even using the church. Then Father Priest came, they painted it and started using the church again.

Leona Kelly: Renovated it, and put the rugs and that in it. 'Cause I remember it used to be all wood floor. And it would still be veneered before that.

Lorraine George: They put a gas stove in there.

Leona Kelly: No, it used to be a wood stove, then a furnace stove. And then... So, I remember some changes back then. Rather not be veneer, it used to be all plank and wood floor.

Lorraine George: I hate to see the Church just sit there.

Kate Martin: It's a beautiful building, it really is.

Leona Kelly: Built in 1907, then it got moved from down there to here in 54, 55. Uncle Alf said.²⁸⁹

²⁸⁸ Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 56)

²⁸⁹ Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Shxw'ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009. (Track 57)

It is clear that the Catholic Church on Seabird reserve and the Catholic Church on Shxw'ōwhámél have served as sites for the development of a strong cross-cultural relationships, despite the history that links missionaries and Christianity to the colonial project. However, when compared with Stó:lō women's earlier experiences with institutionalized Christianity, it is clear that Settler women's responsibility to the Church did not always allow relationships to defy the strictures of the colonial project and create meaningful relationships. The changes in the Catholic church over the past thirty years that have allowed for more flexibility and a shift from being solely responsible to the Church to being also responsible to the people and the community, suggest why meaningful relationships have developed.

Residential Schools

Turning to women's religious experiences at St. Mary's Roman Catholic Boarding School and Coqualeetza, it is clear that religion is also a site where cross-cultural relationships have formed that follow the expectations of the colonial project. Based on the existing and rich historical record of institutionalized missionization, the history of Christianity in Stó:lō territory is deeply intertwined with the history of residential schools. As mentioned in the chapter on residential schools, the colonial government in British Columbia, and then the government in Ottawa after 1871, used Christian education as a tool to "civilize" Indigenous populations. Both St. Mary's Roman Catholic Boarding School at Mission and the Methodist – United Church school at Coqualeetza in Sardis represent and confluence of Christainization and civilization that speak to Stó:lō women's early experiences with westernized religion.

The Coqualeetza site and St. Mary's School are examples of religious institutions where cross-cultural encounters have been recorded as taking place. The history of St. Mary's has been covered in the previous chapter, but the history of the land use at Coqualeetza deserves further

investigation to demonstrate the extent to which Christianity was institutionalized within Stó:lō territory. In April of 1893, the Coqualeetza Industrial Institute was opened as a Methodist residential school at Sardis, British Columbia. By this time, the majority of Stó:lō people living near Sardis were Roman Catholic, so most of the students were from other parts of British Columbia.²⁹⁰ Despite different ecclesiastical traditions, Coqualeetza functioned within the same colonial framework as St. Mary's, which was "designed to assimilate Aboriginal children into *Xwelitem* culture by separating them from their families and traditions and by punishing them for speaking their own languages."²⁹¹ When the federal government began to enforce mandatory attendance to residential schools in 1920, larger facilities were built and Coqualeetza became a residential school that focused on domestic work for girls and farm and industrial work for boys in addition to academics.²⁹² According to the historical record, then, Stó:lō women only encountered non-Indigenous women in religious spaces in a couple of ways: the nuns and female childcare workers at residential schools being one of the most frequent ways.

For some Stó:lō women, their encounters with Nuns and other religious figures at St. Mary's shaped their relationship to institutionalized religion for the rest of their lives. For many

²⁹⁰Jody R. Woods, "Coqualeetza: Legacies of Land Use," in *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, Keith Thor Carlson, ed. and Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Cultural Advisor. (Vancouver: Douglas and McIntyre, 2001): 74.

²⁹¹Woods, "Coqualeetza: Legacies of Land Use," in *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, Keith Thor Carlson, ed. and Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Cultural Advisor: 74. *Xwelitem* translates as "hungry ones" or "starving ones," and is used in this quotation to denote non-Indigenous peoples and non-Indigenous society. In the Stó:lō atlas, Keith Carlson writes that "the application of this term to an identifiable ethnic community appears to have arisen during the 1858 gold rush, when miners were literally starving along the Fraser's banks. The term may well have been applied to earlier explorers and fur traders as well, but it appears to have been a commonly used expression only when the surge of 30, 000 new arrivals in 1858 demonstrated for the first time to the Stó:lō that they themselves could and would become a minority in their own territory, and that the vast majority of the region's new immigrants would not form martial alliances with the Stó:lō so as to become a part of their community, but rather would form a distinct and competing society." 2.

²⁹²Woods, "Coqualeetza: Legacies of Land Use," in *A Stó:lō-Coast Salish Historical Atlas*, Keith Thor Carlson, ed. and Albert (Sonny) McHalsie, Cultural Advisor: 74.

Stó:lō women, participating in institutionalized religion after having experiences with the nuns at St. Mary's was too painful. Whether it was the relationships with Nuns or priests, or the incompatibility of Catholicism with personal and cultural worldviews, some Stó:lō women did not choose to participate in institutionalized religion later in life. Leona Kelly's sister was unable to continue to participate in the Catholic Church because of negative experiences she had at St. Mary's. While Leona did not specify whether a bad relationship with a nun or a priest had impacted her sister's decision to not participate in institutionalized Catholicism after leaving St. Mary's, it is clear that the way the Catholic church played a role in her early life precluded her ability to participate in the institution of the Catholic church later in life. While discussing her own participation at the Catholic Church on Shxw'ōwhámél, Leona told us that,

My older sister went and she's probably in her 60s, early 60s. She went, but never, ever ever came back again. So the Father John that was there, we sang songs and I related to them all. I didn't know until the end of the first sermon that he sat down at the alter floor and kind of just let us know that he served at St. Mary's in Mission Residential school and it wasn't until then that my sister never came back. So I'm sure that she had bad experiences. No matter how much he tried and other fathers tried too, talk to come back to church, she wouldn't. She would go to another church in Agassiz or Seabird, but she wouldn't go back to Father John. So I guess even the word St. Mary's in Mission, triggered her or traumatized her again or something. So we never did see her back in the church. And I kind of felt a sad moment, you know? Why couldn't she just set it aside and go? And want something good for her family and grandchildren? All her children are adults so her children – or her grandchildren – are the same age as my children.²⁹³

The reports about residential school experiences suggest that few women had positive experiences with the Nuns at St. Mary's. Marcie Peters and Virginia Joe reported the experience of cold, uncaring relationships. However, during our discussion when Marcie was discussing the role that the Sisters' played in her education and early religious life, she made a clear delineation between the Nuns behaviour of the past, and the present. When we were talking about the lack

²⁹³Leona Kelly, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Robyn Moore and Mandy Fehr, Hope, British Columbia, May 13th, 2009. (Track 58)

of affection or warmth from the Nuns at St. Mary's when Marcie attended, she was quick to state the case today would be very different; that the Nuns today would show affection towards their students.

I had the opportunity to ask Sister T  r  se, for her opinion about why Nuns might react differently to young children today, then they did when Marcie attended school. Sister T  r  se, her friend Lila Peters and I, had a lengthy discussion about transitions and transformation regarding the attitudes of Nuns and Priests towards Indigenous peoples over the past thirty or forty years. Sister T  r  se began by stating that recently she and Lila had

met that young woman we gave a ride to and she said a very negative thing: we don't want the experience of Nuns again or something like that. And I thought that was very negative of her, and I thought I wonder what has happened to her. But you know, personalities, people just like in Sister's. We were many, many Sisters. Not just my community, but many other communities, I can name the big ones like the St. Anne Sisters of St. Joseph's, they are big outfits. And they have been out here as long as our community has been in BC and they've worked with First Nations people and we see it today. Some people were not called to work with First Nations peoples and they brought their own pain and we know what it is like to work with people who are not healed, and yes, they did cause a lot of pain to some of the First Nations people. (Nervous laughter) And for myself, I pray I never did. In a sense, I had been in a boarding school as I child, so I knew. I had such a sense of not doing certain things in boarding schools. But even the teachers were hard on the kids even in the school.

Lila Peters: Even in the day school, I think that was here. We lost our language, we were strapped, we were hit. And stuff like that.

Sister T  r  se: It's not part of their culture.

Lila Peters: So I think that's where a lot of the pain comes from, with the people. Like now, they're compensating for residential school, but they're forgetting about the day school issues. Whereas, here and Shxw'  wh  m  l. There's still people out there suffering from that and it's part of the inter-generational effects, you know? That's continuing on.

Sister T  r  se: Because it's passed on from one generation to another. And what you're doing right now, you see that's really branching in, I think if I understand correctly this whole how did the white women – because we were all white, and we were from different countries: Ireland, France, England, because sisters came from all over, eh? In communities. And these people from different cultures came to be – I'm speaking about

religion, religious nuns and teachers, Catholic schools, and Anglican school and United Church, we were all religions who came to evangelize the First Nations people. And I believe that, yes, we did not have the hindsight that today we have. But, and people did. To me all I can say, it was human nature and people who were not – I saw it so often, sometimes with some sisters. And I, I just said it to those who were in charge: “No, this sister should not be working here, she does not know how to relate with the First Nations people.” And I know I did. Because I was brought up. I went to school with the First Nations, I was brought up and my dad so there was always a deep respect... so I am very fortunate. And Lila knows that I have a respect for the people, it was just natural, it was inborn. But not everybody has had that.

Kate Martin: Right. I suppose if you don't the luck to have that exposure in childhood, then you're going to come in with your preconceived...

Sister T  r  se: You're going to come in with your preconceived and it was very bad in the early days. I think it is 100 times better now. All the sisters I know who are working not only in my community – there are not that many left – who work with First Nations, are oh so totally different, so open. And come with more of a humble spirit to learn. And I know that's what I'm came with. And I know I'm learning a lot!

Kate Martin: Yeah, it seem's... Someone mentioned to me: “You wouldn't see this now, but 40 years ago, this is how it was.” So I was just wondering about that transition?

Sister T  r  se: Yes, and I think culturally different the more I'm learning it, more and more as I'm with the people here, how some of the things that were being done in the schools, in the day schools and residential schools were so anti-culture for the First Nations people. Totally against their culture, their way of living. And that's sad. And that's something that has to be lived. And even myself, a boarding school was totally against my own culture, the way I was brought up, I was brought up as French and I was brought up very freely out on the farm. And I went to boarding school, it almost killed me. And I think a lot of these experiences, you know these different things, I mean, boarding schools were for the rich kids for a while. Not for us!²⁹⁴

The discussion with Sister T  r  se about her approach to religion, and in particular the Catholic faith on Seabird Island, in comparison with the sisters of generations past, revealed some significant lessons about why she has formed such a close bond with Indigenous women in her community, and in particular with Lila Peters. Her ability to find flexibility with the doctrine of Catholicism is markedly different than Indigenous women's experiences with religious workers

²⁹⁴Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 59)

at residential schools. Significantly, Sister T  r  se engaged, spoke and learned from people on Seabird Island. If cross-cultural colonial communities are organized around institutions, it is the flexibility of the people who comprise these institutions and a recent shift towards a responsibility to people and the community is a step towards more meaningful relationships.

Community Interactions

The relationship that has developed between Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters extends beyond the walls of the Church on Seabird, indicating that religion has also functioned at a community level to build the bonds of friendship. Lila and Sister T  r  se started a women’s group, hosted in Sister T  r  se’s home, bringing together women living on Seabird who shared spiritual beliefs.

Lila explained that

We started a women’s group because there were women finding out that they didn’t have anyone to talk to about their issues. We figured we’d start this group because we were keen on getting them to speak about things personally that they wouldn’t speak to anyone else about. I facilitated, I co-facilitated with Sister and I told her we should start with a prayer and end with a prayer: that was the most important thing. And everything was confidential. We’d have a candle lit. And I think we had up to how many women? 7 maybe? 7-10 women at different times and it really helped a lot of them.²⁹⁵

The first group lasted for about a year and then it “sort of petered out” according to Sister T  r  se.²⁹⁶ However, the women in the community are asking for it to start up again, and both Lila and Sister T  r  se are keen to make that happen;

Lila Peters: So we’re going to start again. And we met once a week and probably for up to 3 hours. And it was so neat because you could see the change in the women. From the beginning to near the end. You know they opened up. They were more clear and more confident in themselves after they spoke about their issues and they knew we weren’t going to go talking about it outside of the circle. So it was really powerful thing to see them change and be more – I don’t know – into themselves. By honouring themselves and empowering themselves in that way. So it was good that way.

²⁹⁵Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 60)

²⁹⁶Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 61)

Sister T  r  se: And another aspect was I think, a few of the and I think most of the women who came, developed a need: “What can we do now for our village?” And you know, “what is it that we can put in? There are things we don’t like, we’d like to help change.” And so that is a very powerful thing and I hope we’re going to work on that some more this year. To sort of get caught in a whole bunch of different things. We started doing one book and everybody read it and took it home and read it at home. – “The Power of Now.” And that’s really good. I’ve done all that stuff, Oprah and the computer. But it’s good! It’s good! And a lot of the people had to – some people it’s touched them very deeply.²⁹⁷

The women’s group allowed Sister T  r  se to develop better cross-cultural relationships with women in the community. At the same time, the women’s group has brought together members of the St  :l   community. I commented that the group seems like a community based support network, which Sister T  r  se confirmed when she told me about a member of the group who is currently very ill;

Sister T  r  se: Yes. And real networks and when somebody like dear little Nellie, who is dying of cancer right now, she’s been sent back home. I’m trying to get women to come around and help the daughter, to come and help relieve because they’re doing it all at home, they’re keeping her at home. So that’s another area where it’s really going to be wonderful. The homemakers are conscious and they said ya, we’re asking other people to go and relieve poor Gail, because she’s there all the time. There’s going to be a real community spirit going in.²⁹⁸

Significantly, the support that the women within this group can offer each other and their community, was strengthened through their participation in this form of community based spirituality. Evidently, recognizing common spiritual beliefs have brought Indigenous and settler women together.

Having had the opportunity to discuss institutionalized religion as opposed to community based spirituality at Seabird, it seems that a transition has occurred on the Seabird Island reserve,

²⁹⁷Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 62)

²⁹⁸Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009.

which has encouraged more people to identify with the Catholic faith. Sister T  r  se’s experiences at Seabird exemplify part of that transition and suggest where a convergence between Christianity and St  :l   spirituality may be able to develop into the future. When Sister T  r  se reflected on what she has learned during her ten years on Seabird, it was clear that she had undergone a transition in terms of what she believed her role to be as a nun in an Indigenous community. She explained that,

I think some of my preconceived ideas of First Nations people, were... like I said I was brought up with them, I went to school with them. So there was a certain area, to me, First Nations people were just like me. I’m French, they’re First Nations, that’s their nationality, I’m a Frenchman, so it never made a difference.

But then I moved and went to school. I was living in North Vancouver near the Burrard reservation. And then I started hearing people and their comments about First Nations, but when I came to live here, I still have religious, deep religious things that have gone way deep in my head. Like around the mass, “Oh! I have to get people to go to the mass.” You know? And stuff. And I’d talk with your mom, because she loved the mass, but then I’d say “ You know Birdie, I’m not going to say anything to people about coming to the mass.” “Good.” She’d say. She would answer me immediately. “Good.” So this is an area that, oh, I did an 90 degree turn. Like the conviction came deep from within me. Do not put pressure on people to go to church. That’s one area where I totally turned. I don’t mind if anybody hears it because it comes from my heart and from God. I don’t think I have a right going around trying to influence or push, or use any form of anything to follow God, or follow Jesus Christ. Whenever I have, just by my ways, Lila will tell you, I try to be my best self when I’m out with the people, not to get angry, not to gossip, you know just to do all the little things that we can do. I try to be a little bit if I can, but I’m human and I often fall. And I think in that sense a lot of people have told me: “Sister, you have accepted us and you respect us.” And I think that came from letting go of some of the preconceived religious ideas I had. As far as the culture, it never bothered me. There were not too many things I had to re-learn. I’ve always just adapted really well.

Lila Peters: Even if people don’t go to church, the only time people go to church are for funerals and weddings. You never see the church get vandalized. Where other schools get vandalized. The Band office. But there is a high respect for the church.

Sister T  r  se: I was so worried! Yes, it’s true. And I think for persons, I’ve felt that so much. And it’s quite beautiful.²⁹⁹

²⁹⁹Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Seabird Island, British Columbia, July 17th, 2009. (Track 63)

Religion has been a site where cross-cultural bonds have formed, but much like women's experiences at residential schools, how "close" settler women are to the expected roles of the colonial institution, has played a part in determining what the cross-cultural relationship comes to resemble. Shared spiritual or religious beliefs that are articulated at a community level have enabled Stó:lō and Settler women to form bonds that may have otherwise been impossible within the walls of religious institutions. From discussing religion with Sister Térése and Lorraine George, it is apparent that when Settler women have been critical of their roles in institutions, or shown an interest in learning about Stó:lō spirituality, meaningful cross-cultural relationships have formed at the site of religion. Lila Peters and Leona Kelly have maintained a great deal of agency in these relationships as well. Their decisions to accept Catholicism, while also seeking to understand similarities with Stó:lō spirituality and other forms of prayer, again confirm that a flexibility of people's responsibilities to institutions and human difference are significant to determining the nature of female cross-cultural relationships.

Conclusion

When Lorraine George and Leona Kelly were asked if they considered themselves to be role models for relationships between Indigenous and Settler women, they laughed and said that they had never thought of their relationship in that way.³⁰⁰ However, given that historically the Canadian state has worked to keep Indigenous and Settler peoples separate, the nature of their friendship is remarkable. The contribution that this project has made is to expand the historical record concerning cross-cultural relationships and friendships between Indigenous and Settler women, in order to present a challenge to the established colonial order. If the colonial project ‘worked’ then these reciprocal, meaningful relationships should not exist. That they do exist tells us that assimilation was never achieved and provides room to envision a different relationship between Indigenous and Settler populations.

Some of the relationships featured in this project have developed into contemporary examples of meaningful cross-cultural encounters, and it is these relationships that provide sound evidence to refute the hegemony of the colonial project. Ranging from 1960 to the present day, these relationships represent an ability of Indigenous women to resist the values of the colonial project and encourage Settler women to do the same. I wrote in the introduction that by tracing the history of Stó:lō women’s relationships with Settler women from 1960 to 2009, it became apparent that it was contemporary relationships that had the possibility to be meaningful and reciprocated. Does this mean that Indigenous peoples and Settler peoples today are increasingly able to resist the hegemony of colonialism? To be sure, both Indigenous and Settler populations are more cognizant of the construction of colonial project now than they have ever been and able to resist it once identifying that it exists. However, contemporary relationships that are

³⁰⁰Leona Kelly and Lorraine George, Interviewed by Kate Martin, Shxw’ōwhámél Reserve, May 16th, 2009.

meaningful and reciprocated between Indigenous peoples and Settler peoples are not always the norm. Given that Indigenous and Settler populations continue to be segregated, the persistence of internalized colonialism within Indigenous communities and a gross ignorance within the Settler community when it comes to Indigenous histories, cultures and lifeways on this land, complex relationships between the Indigenous and Settler populations persists.

Dialogism and institutionalism are the two approaches that I have used to understand the complexity of female cross-cultural relationships between Settler and Indigenous women. First, the complexity of these cross-cultural relationships can be understood as women's relationships to the colonial institutions and/or colonial mindsets that they have been exposed to over the course of their lives. Individual histories, national histories, dominant culture, images and representations all contribute to an individual's ability to participate in cross-cultural relationships. Indeed, the diaries of Margaret Butcher reinforced the idea that an individual's role at a colonial institution, or responsibility to a colonial institution, does influence the types of cross-cultural relationships that will be experienced. However, Margaret Butcher's example does not explain all of the relationships featured in this project. While colonial institutions and colonial mindsets can shape cross-cultural relationships, they do not determine them.

Secondly, understanding these cross-cultural relationships as products of dialogic exchange, has served to explain some of the complexity and difference among relationships between Settler and Indigenous women. As a theory, dialogism reminds us that "there is no single voice among white Canadians, among colonizing populations or among indigenous peoples."³⁰¹ Further, the different degrees to which, and sincerity with which, Indigenous and Settler women participated in cross-cultural relationships are reflective of a process of dialogism

³⁰¹Lutz, *Makuk*: 26.

in a colonial culture, for “colonialism is a fragmented culture within which neither the voices of the West nor the voices of the Natives are monolithic, stable or regionally localized.”³⁰² When considering the cross-cultural relationships discussed in this project as examples of dialogism, it is clear that the colonial project was never realised. The dialogue that occurred between Settler and Indigenous women “de-centered” each participant allowing those involved in relationships access to a deeper understanding of a cultural context that was not their own.

Throughout this project I have used the phrase “meaningful cross-cultural relationships” to denote circumstances where dialogism is, or was, in use and responsible for engaging both members of the cross-cultural relationship in an active, vibrant, healthy, reciprocal relationships. The lesson to take from viewing these relationships through a dialogic lens is that meaningful cross-cultural relationships were possible when both parties engaged in dialogue with the interest of understanding a culture that is not one’s own. The lesson of dialogism coupled with an understanding of the impact of an individual’s expected role at a colonial institution, are the contributions that this research can make to the study of female cross-cultural relationships.

The relationships that were formed because of residential schools tell us that these oppressive, assimilative institutions expected certain behaviour and attitudes from the women who worked, or went to school there. Marcie Peters and Virginia Joe’s early encounters with the nuns at St. Mary’s Roman Catholic Boarding School, in Mission, tell of a group of Settler women who were incapable of transcending the expectations of the institution that brought them into contact with Indigenous women. When women did transcending the expectations of roles at institutions, it is clear that dialogism is at work de-centralizing everyone involved in the relationship. Joan McGeragle’s relationship with Virginia Joe and Marcie Peters is based around

³⁰²Lutz, *Makuk*: 26

Joan's ability to act outside of the expectations of a childcare worker at St. Mary's, and subsequently the dialogue that has occurred between each of the women. These examples of meaningful and lasting cross-cultural engagement are clear examples of circumstances that refute cultural segregation at residential schools, despite these schools being the cruelest examples of the colonial project in Canada.

When there were not any institutions to bring Indigenous and Settler peoples into contact, it would seem unlikely that cross-cultural relationships would form otherwise, given the calculated attempt to segregate Indigenous and Settler populations with the goal of assimilating Indigenous peoples. However, meaningful relationships have also developed at a community level. Leona Kelly and Lorraine George are certainly a testament to this. Despite the Indian Act governing who could live on reserve and other issues that discouraged white women from interacting with Indigenous women, Lorraine and Leona have formed a meaningful and lasting relationship. This relationship, and others suggest that there are ways that Indigenous women and Settler women have entered into dialogue with each other thereby defying the strictures of the colonial project.

Lastly, cross-cultural relationships that formed because of religion have involved both institutional reasons for contact as well as community-based encounters. Relationships that are based in religious institutions show us that despite the severe expectations of these assimilative institutions, meaningful cross-cultural relationships were possible. Extra-institutionally, religion in a community setting was a site where women came into contact with each other and developed meaningful cross-cultural relationships. Again, the relationships that formed around religion were dialogic in nature. The relationship between Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters is a great example of a cross-cultural relationship where dialogue has encouraged both women to be

flexible about understanding and accepting cultural differences and similarities. Despite the presence of institutions that have long participated in the dual goals of Christianization and Civilization, the expectations of roles in relation to this institution, have not always determined the nature of female cross-cultural relationships.

At all three sites of encounter, Indigenous and Settler women were capable of forming meaningful cross-cultural relationships that were hinged on the concept of dialogism to suggest that they learned from each other and were “de-centered” by their relationships with one another. The idea of “de-centering” suggests a collaborative relationship rather than a relationship where colonial domination determined the nature of the relationship. Using dialogism to understand the dynamics that occurred between the women involved in the relationships, it is clear that all of the relationships featured in this project were constantly changing; none were stagnant. Therefore, the same can be said of the colonial project: it remains a dynamic process that is constantly changing both the colonizers and the colonized.

Given the history of the Canadian state’s deliberate process of isolation between Settler and Indigenous populations through colonial institutions, female cross-cultural relationships that have developed within and outside colonial institutions, should be considered to be extraordinary. Dialogism and women’s adherence to roles at colonial institutions are of use to explain the nature of the cross-cultural relationships that are featured in this project, however, why were some women capable of forming meaningful relationships to begin with, while others were not?

Future Contributions: Human Difference and the Psychology of Colonialism

What attracts individuals to cross-cultural encounters and allows them to engage with a foreign cultural context? In the context of my research, I was left with this question. To fully

address this question, further studies are required that bridge disciplines to address the history of these relationships and the psychological processes at work that have allowed some women to participate in meaningful ways, while limiting others' participation in relationships.

Some historians have used theories of rationality or romanticism to try to explain cultural differences during cross-cultural encounters.³⁰³ While these approaches are useful to explain interactions between different cultures the focus here will be on individual's cognizant organization of cross-cultural encounters by understanding individual factors that explain how people will engage in cross-cultural relationships. In other words, how has human difference impacted who is involved with cross-cultural relationships?

My analysis of human difference is based on the work of Richard W. Brislin, but is not directly borrowed from his book, *Cross-Cultural Encounters: Face to Face Interaction*. Brislin identifies "Individual Factors" that are significant to this study of the experiences of cross-cultural relationships. He argues that human difference develops due to the sorts of experiences that history can account for,³⁰⁴ and that individuals develop certain attitudes and traits when participating in cross-cultural encounters, which will determine the "amount and success of intercultural interaction."³⁰⁵

According to Brislin, attitudes can manifest in stereotypes, which can lead to prejudice. He argues that "[a]lthough "stereotypes" once was a neutral term referring to people's thought processes, the link between prejudice and stereotypes has become very strong over the last 30 years. When prejudice is so intense that out-group members are dehumanized, interpersonal

³⁰³For more information on rationalistic and romantic cross-cultural encounters, see Bruce Trigger, "Early Responses to European Contact: Romantic versus Rationalistic Interpretations," (*Journal of American History* 77:4, 1991): 1195-1198.

³⁰⁴Richard Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters, Face-to-face interaction* (New York: Pergamon Press, 1981): 38.

³⁰⁵Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters, Face-to-face interaction*: 40.

cruelty is a probable outcome.”³⁰⁶ He makes the distinctions between prejudice, discrimination and stereotypes in the following ways: prejudice is a person’s emotional reactions, discrimination is a person’s behaviour “which puts out-group members at a disadvantage,” and stereotypes frequently refer to a person’s beliefs about out-group members.³⁰⁷ These “[m]anifestations of people’s attitudes” are listed as the most relevant to cross-cultural encounters and help to describe human difference when considering cross-cultural relationships.³⁰⁸

Individual’s traits are also significant to determining people’s cross-cultural interactions. In particular, Brislin states that tolerance, sociability and task orientation are traits that will “determine the amount and type of interaction.”³⁰⁹ The word ‘traits’ denotes the qualities of an individual’s personality. Brislin writes that

Traits are products of a person’s unique experience within a culture and they are possibly also affected by an individual’s heredity. (...) Personal traits are, in a sense, a complement to the study of culture. “Culture” refers to those aspects of a society that all its members share, are familiar with, and pass on to the next generation. “Personality” refers to unique combinations of traits (which all people in a culture know about, even though a given trait does not describe a given person) which differentiate individuals within a culture.³¹⁰

Brislin’s investigation into attitudes and traits is significant to this project, because both attitudes and traits are able to change and are not necessarily consistent throughout people’s lives. Brislin describes changes to attitudes and traits as being influenced by situational pressures;

People actively seek out information about the situations in which they find themselves, and use that information in deciding how to behave. In effect, they combine information about the situation with knowledge about their own traits. The resulting behaviour, then,

³⁰⁶Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters, Face-to-face interaction*: 40.

³⁰⁷Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters, Face-to-face interaction*: 40.

³⁰⁸Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters, Face-to-face interaction*: 40.

³⁰⁹Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters, Face-to-face interaction*: 51.

³¹⁰Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters, Face-to-face interaction*: 52.

is a combination of traits and situations.³¹¹

While the work that psychologists studying cross-cultural encounters goes much more in depth than what has been presented here, the arguments that attitudes and traits determine how individuals engage with cross-cultural relationships, and that both attitudes and traits are flexible and able to change depending on how individuals “seek out information and interpret it according to their individual needs,” are of particular importance for the conclusions present here.³¹²

The psychology of individuals involved in cross-cultural relationships is significant because there is a real psychological impact of colonialism that works to normalize the colonial project in the mind of the colonizer and the colonized. The psychology of colonialism refers to a process that occurs within individuals when they are exposed to a type of modern colonialism that

won its great victories not so much through its military and technological prowess as through its ability to create secular hierarchies incompatible with traditional order. These hierarchies opened up new vistas for many, particularly for those exploited or cornered within the traditional order. To them the new order looked like – and here lay its psychological pull—the first step towards a more just and equal world.³¹³

The internalization of colonialism for both the colonizer and the colonized means that the colonial project always has the potential to enter into individuals’ relationships because it “colonizes the mind in addition to bodies and it releases forces within the colonized societies to alter their cultural priorities once and for all.”³¹⁴

A major tenant of this project has been to demonstrate that colonialism is not just a word

³¹¹Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters, Face-to-face interaction*: 53.

³¹²Brislin, *Cross-Cultural Encounters, Face-to-face interaction*: 71.

³¹³Ashis Nandy, *Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under colonialism*, (Delhi, India: Oxford University Press, 1988): x.

³¹⁴Nandy, *Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under colonialism*, xi.

to describe a type of economic relationship between a metropole and colony, but a force that is “deeply imprinted” by Canada’s colonial legacy, which orders contemporary culture and interactions between Indigenous and settler populations.³¹⁵ At one point in time, colonialism was used to describe a political economy “which ensues a one-way flow of benefits, the subject being the perpetual losers in a zero-sum game and the rulers the beneficiaries.”³¹⁶ Such a description of

the colonial process fails to recognize “that colonizers are at least as much affected by the ideology of colonialism, that their degradation, too, can sometimes be devastating.”³¹⁷

Colonialism continues to be a reality for those living within the borders of the Canadian state. Ideologically, the colonial project is a way of ordering Canadian society that a lot of Canadians adhere to and participate in. In Elizabeth Furniss’ words,

Aboriginal people in rural communities are also confronting the very terms of Canadian culture itself: the frontier histories celebrating the early white “discoverers” of British Columbia, the widespread assumption of the historical inevitability – and desirability – of cultural assimilation, the liberal-democratic myth of the “self-made man” and the demeaning stereotypes of Aboriginal people that deny their individuality, humanity and integrity.³¹⁸

Even as I write the conclusion, the “hegemonic potential” of the colonial project in Canada continues to be normalized by dominant Canadian society.³¹⁹ Prime Minister Stephen Harper announcing at the G20 summit that “[w]e also have no history of colonialism. So we have all of the things that many people admire about the great powers but none of the things that

³¹⁵Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 186.

³¹⁶Nandy, *Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under colonialism*, 30.

³¹⁷Nandy, *Intimate Enemy: Loss and Recovery of Self under colonialism*, 30.

³¹⁸Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 4.

³¹⁹Furniss, *The Burden of History: Colonialism and the Frontier Myth in a Rural Canadian Community*, 188.

threaten or bother them,” is an attempt to continue to normalize colonialism in Canada.³²⁰

Despite the backdrop of internalized colonialism and normalization of the colonial project in Canada, the experiences of cross-cultural relationships between Indigenous and Settler women featured in this project prove that meaningful relationships which challenge the trajectory of colonialism have, and continue to be, a reality for many Indigenous and Settler women. The reciprocal friendships between Joan McGeragle, Marcie Peters and Virginia Joe, Lorraine George and Leona Kelly, Sister T  r  se and Lila Peters are significant examples of how colonialism has not succeeded and demonstrates that large- scale/nation-wide meaningful, healthy cross-cultural relationships are possible.

³²⁰David Ljunggren, “Every G20 nation wants to be Canada, insists PM,” *Reuters*, September 25, 2009. <<http://www.reuters.com/article/GCA-G20Pittsburgh/idUSTRE58P05Z20090926>>

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