A KINSHIP WITH OTHERNESS: SETTLER SUBJECTIVITY AND THE IMAGE OF THE WILD ANIMAL IN CANADIAN FICTION IN ENGLISH

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the representation of wildlife in Canadian animal narratives in English. Such representations are determined by an image of the wild animal circumscribed by the post/colonial context of the settler episteme. As part of a discursive process of settler indigenization, this image represents a radical Otherness that the settler subject may appropriate through a comprehensive scientific knowledge of wildlife. Access to such indigenizing knowledge, however, is exclusive to subjects whom these narratives regard as lacking foreign traits, or what this dissertation theorizes as *exogeneity*. Because symbolic management is so important to the identity-formation of settler subjectivity, the image of the wild animal must correspond in some factual manner to its purported referent. As such, Canadian wild animal narratives quite openly register environmental anxieties and textualize a political unconscious of the dialectical relationship between settlers and wildlife in North America.

After a detailed theorization of the role of the image of the wild animal in Canadian animal narratives, this dissertation analyzes the genre-founding works of Charles G.D. Roberts and Ernest Thompson Seton from the turn of the twentieth century. Offering a biocentric corrective to scholarly work that interprets their literary animals as metaphors for humans, this dissertation argues that the image of the wild animal represents a radical alterity that must remain impervious to the taint of modernity for the purposes of settler indigenization. Furthermore, these works establish, as a convention of a fundamentally antimodern genre, six basic human

figures whose relative possession of woodcraft knowledge and distance from commodity exchange structure their interaction with wild animals. This dissertation then surveys how this pattern continues in the postwar era by evaluating Fred Bodsworth's *Last of the Curlews* (1954), Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf* (1963), and Marian Engel's *Bear* (1976). After presenting a reading of Margaret Atwood's recent novel *Oryx and Crake* (2003) to assess the continuing potency of the settler episteme, this study concludes by suggesting that the image of the wild animal can be productively evaluated in terms of Pauline Wakeham's theory of taxidermy as a representational mode.

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INTRODUCTION

(In the) Background

In *Canada and Its Poetry* (1943), Northrop Frye makes the assertion that "Nature is consistently sinister and menacing in Canadian poetry" (142). Frye states, "Canadian poetry is at its best a poetry of incubus and *cauchemar*, the source of which is the unusually exposed contact of the poet with nature" (141). A number of scholars, however, have since found such an understanding of nature difficult to accept unequivocally.[1] In his introductory essay to the recent anthology *Open Wide a Wilderness: Canadian Nature Poems* (2009), Don McKay states that he "find[s] it hard to credit the view [. . .] that poets saw the natural world primarily as sinister" (17). Instead, he thinks it would be "helpful [. . .] to bring in a totally different tradition [. . .] as evidence that [. . .] other attitudes to primordial energies are possible, that the Canadian experience is controlled by historical circumstances, not fate or the human condition" (7). Though potentially at odds with McKay's claim that there are a multitude of responses to the natural world in Canadian poetry because poets have been so "resourceful [. . .] in struggling to meet the challenge posed by the landscape [. . .]" (7), the now commonplace understanding of the sinister nature of nature in Canadian literature speaks to the potency

[1] For instance, John Ralston Saul has recently refuted the pervasiveness of Frye's famous notion of the garrison mentality, with its "deep terror in regard to nature" (Frye *Conclusion* 225). Saul states in *A Fair Country* (2008) that "To the extent that it exists," the garrison mentality relates very little to "the Canadian experience of the preceding centuries, except in the mind of colonial elites" (234). He claims instead that Canadian settlers generally "found their sense of comfort and place and belonging, and did so with astonishing speed [. . .]" (233).

of landscape as a mediating discourse.[2] Even McKay himself reaffirms the negative qualities of nature, suggesting that the struggle Canadian poets have traditionally faced results from "the difficulty of addressing the wilderness of the new world using traditional conventions and forms" because the "landscape and climate [are] so *radically other* and so *frequently hostile*" (6 emphasis added).

Regardless of the emotional or artistic responses individuals historically may have had toward their physical environments, landscape discourse reveals a continuing dis-ease within the epistemology of Canadian settler culture. The experience of colonial displacement, as McKay has suggested above, leads to a "gap which opens between the experience of place and the language available to describe it" and this "forms a classic and all-pervasive feature of post-colonial texts" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 9). Diana Brydon similarly discusses how the landscape relates historically to artistic production in Canada, concluding, "Our histories have been determined by our struggles to synchronize our physical environments and our cultural environments" (289). Much of this struggle can be attributed to the ways in which the landscape, and the flora and fauna contained therein, is mediated as a colonial discourse. As Carol Ann Howells observes, there is a continuing, "long tradition of writing about the wilderness and its creatures (either

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[2] As indicated by my deliberate phrasing, *nature* has more than one meaning. Indeed, according to Raymond Williams, "Any full history of the uses of *nature* would be a history of a large part of human thought" (186). He explains:

> Nature is perhaps the most complex word in the language. It is relatively easy to distinguish three areas of meaning: (i) the essential quality and character *of* something; (ii) the inherent force which directs either the world or human beings or both; (iii) the material world itself, taken as including or not including human beings. Yet it is evident that within (ii) and (iii), though the area of reference is broadly clear, precise meanings are variable and at times even opposed. The historical development of the word through these three senses is important, but it is also significant that all three senses, and the main variations and alternatives within the two most difficult of them, are still active and widespread in contemporary usage. (184)

Indians or animals) and civilization's attitudes towards them" (106). The "Indians" and "animals" she identifies as conventions of literary representations of the Canadian landscape, though parenthetical, constitute the fraught semiotic locus between the colonizers and the colonized.

Terry Goldie explains that while Frye's characteristic "vision of nature as a consistently, and essentially, negative quality in Canadian literature is inaccurate, [. . .] it correctly identifies the internalization of nature in Canada [. . .] as 'unconsciousness', as essence of the Other" (40). According to Goldie, this Other, the eponymous "indigene" of his *Fear and Temptation* (1989), functions in Canadian literature as an interrelated collection of signifiers divorced from their signifieds, contained within a delimited "semiotic field" manifested by British imperialism (9). Goldie's study demonstrates how the image of the indigene is "perhaps most clearly defined in association with nature" (14) since exploration narratives, "presented as information texts, became a base from which the literary images of indigenous peoples grew" (20). From this point, like the flora and the other forms of fauna of North America, the indigene has been an element of landscape discourse, a Eurocentric ideologeme from which the indigene became, as Robert Berkhofer, Jr., claims in *The White Man's Indian* (1978), "a White invention and still remains largely a White image, if not stereotype" (3). The image of the indigene has perpetuated itself because, as Goldie posits, it "has been textually defined and, through an extended intertextuality, national and international, diachronic and synchronic, which embraces the implied discourse of apparently *hors texte* items as visual art, it constantly reproduces itself, a pervasive autogenesis" (6). Without a commitment to a referent,

"Each representation of the indigene is a signifier for which the signified is the Image" (4), and the entire process of signification remains steadfastly contained within a largely static semiotic field, rather than relating directly or unproblematically to a purported referent.

Furthermore, this semiotic field is itself determined by the ideologies and material needs at work in the colonial and postcolonial contexts of Canada. Asking how it is possible that "later generations perpetuate that conception and imagery without basic alteration," Berkhofer posits,

> The answer to this question must be sought partially in the very contrast presumed between Red and White society that gave rise to the idea of the Indian in the first place. Since Whites primarily understood the Indian as an antithesis to themselves, then civilization and Indianness as they defined them would forever be opposites. (29)

The antithetical nature of the image of the indigene to racial and national constructions of settler identity serves to verify the presumed superiority of the European over the Native. And because this image remains divorced from any precise referent, instances in which it is deployed to suggest the superiority of the Native are inherently fraudulent since it remains "a semiotic pawn" in the settler episteme (Goldie 10), in which there are only a "few basic moves" the image "has been allowed to make" (15). As Daniel Francis puts it in *The Imaginary Indian* (1992), "Europeans [. . .] projected onto Native peoples all the misgivings they had about the shortcomings of their own civilization: the Imaginary Indian became a stick with which they beat their own society" (8). So not only does this

Imaginary Indian not correspond to actual Natives in Canada, the ideologies at work in the reification of this image obscure "another reality, of a history of invasion and oppression" (Goldie 5).

The effacement of this history is part of a larger cultural imperative "on the part of non-Natives to connect to North America by associating with one of its most durable symbols, the Imaginary Indian" (Francis *Imaginary* 223). This idea, what Goldie has termed *indigenization*, is central to this study. In short, indigenization is the colonial need for the settler to perform the "impossible necessity of becoming native" in order to overcome a sense of being "the alien within" (13). This desire, the importance of which "cannot be overstated" (13), explains, according to Francis, "the impulse behind the appropriation by White society of so many aspects of Native culture, trivial as this cultural poaching often seems to be" (223), and has, specifically, led many writers to "writ[e] about the humans who are truly indigenous, the Indians [. . .]" (Goldie 13). While both Francis's and Goldie's studies focus on the image of the indigene, many of their observations can be straightforwardly applied to the ways in which the image of the indigenous wild animal functions in a similar process of indigenization.[3] Francis rightly cites "roaring an Indian chant from the bleachers at a baseball game" as an example of this "persistent desire by non-Natives to 'play Indian'" (223), a clear reference to Major League Baseball teams such as the Atlanta Braves and Cleveland Indians. The so-called "war chant" and "tomahawk chop" performed by the fans of these teams conform to

[3] This study will generally use the terms *animal* and *human* with the implicit understanding that humans are animals. Where particular emphasis is required, however, *animal* may be substituted with the less abbreviated *nonhuman animal*. As well, "image of the wild animal" will be used throughout this study specifically to describe animal species indigenous to North America.

Goldie's basic commodities of fear and temptation that are at work within the semiotic economy of the image of the indigene: consonant with the discourse of professional sportsmanship, these signs refer to the romantic figure of the noble savage, who is both a formidable and respectable opponent. However, there are also a number of other professional sports franchises, like the Chicago Cubs and the Toronto Blue Jays, to consider since the desire for indigenization does not limit itself to the image of the indigene.[4]

As part of a long tradition of what Goldie sees as "a clear agenda to erase this separation of belonging" in Canada (12), two strategies have been employed in an attempt to integrate settler culture discursively into the physical environment of North America. As he explains, "The white culture can attempt to incorporate the Other [. . .]. Conversely, the white culture may reject the indigene: 'This country really began with the arrival of the whites'" (12). The image of the indigene readily allows for such acts of appropriation and disavowal, even simultaneously when it serves as a stereotype.[5] The image of the wild animal, however, while also endorsing many forms of appropriation in a similar fashion, is more readily disavowed because of a predetermined species boundary. Following Graham Huggan and Helen Tiffin, this boundary can be understood as "the *discursive construction* of a strict dividing line between 'human' and 'animal' in

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[4] A similar comparison can be made by considering many of the brand names North American automobiles have been marketed under: Jeep Cherokee and Comanche, Pontiac Aztec, Mazda Navajo, Chevrolet Apache, Mercury Cougar and Sable, Plymouth Barracuda, Ford Thunderbird (a mythological animal in numerous North American Native cultures), and Dodge Ram (the North American Big Horn Sheep).

[5] For a detailed study of the function of the stereotype, see Homi K. Bhabha's "The Other Question: Difference, Discrimination and the Discourse of Colonialism."

terms of the possession (or lack thereof) of traits such as speech, consciousness, self-consciousness, tool use and so on" (139 emphasis in original).[6] Although the species boundary, as such a construction, has been contentiously defined throughout history—by religious doctrine, Enlightenment thought, Darwinism, post-humanism, etc.—it nevertheless confirms the superiority of the human over the nonhuman animal, be it spiritually, consciously, intellectually, ecologically, legally, or technologically. That is, regardless of where that boundary may fall, the human is able to define itself in contradistinction to the Other it names as animal.

Jacques Derrida takes up this very point in *The Animal That Therefore I Am* (2008), when he states, "*Animal* is a word that men have given themselves the right to give" (32). "[T]his word *animal*," he continues, is something that "men have given themselves as at the origin of humanity, and which they have given themselves in order to be identified, in order to be recognized, with a view to being what they say they are, namely, men, capable of replying and responding in the name of men" (32). He then observes that there has never been a philosophical consensus on the definition "of *the* limit presumed to separate man in general from the animal in general" (40 emphasis in original). "Despite that," Derrida elaborates,

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[6] Huggan and Tiffin then explain that their study, *Postcolonial Ecocriticism: Literature, Animals, Environment* (2010), does not use the term species boundary "in the strictly scientific sense (still arguably discursive) of Darwinian species differentiation based on the ability of individuals within a particular group to produce fertile offspring" (139-40). Just as they suggest, the discursivity of scientific notions of the species boundary is highlighted by the work of a number of biologists, such as Lynn Margulis. Her University of Massachusetts profile rather charmingly explains: "She is best known for her theory of symbiogenesis, which challenges a central tenet of neodarwinism. She argues that inherited variation, significant in evolution, does not come mainly from random mutations. Rather new tissues, organs, and even new species evolve primarily through the long-lasting intimacy of strangers" (Margulis). Like her earlier work on endosymbiotic theory—in which she puts forward that a number of essential cellular organelles began as independent bacteria species—symbiogenesis problematizes the prevailing scientific understanding of taxonomic distinction and specific difference.

> through and beyond all their disagreements, philosophers have always judged and *all* philosophers have judged that limit to be single and indivisible, considering that on the other side of that limit there is an immense group, a single and fundamentally homogenous set that one has the right, the theoretical or philosophical right, to distinguish and mark as opposite, namely, the set of the Animal in general, the Animal spoken of in the general singular. It applies to the whole animal kingdom with the exception of the human. (40-41 emphasis in original)

Such wholesale reductive reasoning, "This agreement concerning philosophical sense and common sense that allows one to speak blithely of the Animal in the general singular," he determines, "is perhaps one of the greatest and most symptomatic *asinanities* of those who call themselves humans" (41 emphasis in original). Since "Interpretive decisions (in all their metaphysical, ethical, juridical, and political consequences) thus depend upon what is presupposed by the general singular of this word *the Animal*" (41), Derrida's response is

> to change to the word [and] indicat[e] clearly thereby that it is indeed a matter of a word, only a word, the word *animal* [*du mot 'animal'*], and to forge another word in the singular, at the same time close but radically foreign, a chimerical word that sounded as though it contravened the laws of the French language, *l'animot*. (41)

In the strictest sense, then, the image of the wild animal is a Derridian *animot*, a linguistic artifact rather than a material being. But because this image refers specifically to the

indigenous animals of North America, and not to animals *in toto* like *the animal*, I will forego the lure of Derrida's terminology to maintain a focus on the colonial context of North American human-animal relations.

Animals in a Changing Landscape

To return to landscape, this complex and ambiguous concept mediates in part human attitudes towards nature and wildlife, and in the Canadian context it also constitutes a colonial discourse. According to Denis Cosgrove, the imprecise nature of landscape is due to its "two distinct, but in important ways related, usages": as a mode of artistic representation first arising during the European Renaissance and as a term in contemporary geography and environmental studies (9). In the former case, "landscape came to denote the artistic and literary representation of the visible world, the scenery (literally that which is *seen*) which is viewed by a spectator," and in the latter, "it denotes the integration of natural and human phenomena which can be empirically verified and analysed by the methods of scientific enquiry over a delimited portion of the earth's surface" (9 emphasis in original). However, the meaning of landscape "has defied attempts to define it with the specificity generally expected of a science" because "it incorporates far more than merely the visual and functional arrangement of natural and human phenomena [. . .] [it] extends the meaning of 'area' or 'region' [. . .]" (13). What unifies the concept across artistic and scientific discourses is its assumption of

> the active engagement of a human subject with the material object. In other words landscape denotes the external world mediated through

> subjective human experience in a way that neither region nor area immediately suggest. Landscape is not merely the world we see, it is a construction, a composition of that world. Landscape is a way of seeing the world. (13)

As such, and as Cosgrove goes on to argue, landscape "is an ideological concept. It represents a way in which certain classes of people have signified themselves and their world through their imagined relationship with nature [. . .]" (15).[7]

Landscape is also therefore subject to the material foundations and histories of human societies, and thus constitutes "multiple layers of meaning" (13). The concept of landscape itself therefore has its own history,

> but a history that can be understood only as part of a wider history of economy and society; that has its own assumptions and consequences, but assumptions and consequences whose origins and implications extend well beyond the use and perception of land; that has its own techniques of expression, but techniques which it shares with other areas of cultural practice. (1)

For instance, in *The Conquest of America: The Question of the Other* (1984), Tzveten Todorov discusses how Columbus's descriptions of the New World were mediated in large part by his Christian beliefs, which Columbus used as a determining frame of reference. Noting, "There is nothing of the modern empiricist about Columbus [. . .],"

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[7] In "Imperial Landscape" (1994), W.J.T. Mitchell identifies landscape as a "medium of cultural expression" that is represented by any number of artistic forms (14). "Before all these secondary representations, however, landscape is itself a physical and multisensory medium [. . .] in which cultural meanings and values are encoded [. . .]" (14 emphasis in original). Instead of "medium," I favour the term "discourse."

Todorov details how Columbus's interpretation of what he encounters in the Caribbean is essentially an allegorization of his beliefs: "the ultimate meaning is given from the start (this is Christian doctrine); what is sought is the path linking the initial meaning (the apparent signification of the words of the biblical text) with this ultimate meaning" (17).

Interestingly, as part of Columbus's "'finalist' strategy of interpretation" (17), his encounters with the Native inhabitants of the Caribbean are mediated through his conception of Paradise: because they are "Physically naked, the Indians are also, to Columbus's eyes, deprived of all cultural property: they are characterized, in a sense, by the absence of customs, rights, religion [. . .]" (35). From Columbus's standpoint, because "human beings wear clothes following their expulsion from Paradise [. . .]" and because the expulsion itself represents "the source of [human] cultural identity," the Natives "reveal themselves to be without law or religion; and if they have a material culture, it attracts Columbus's attention no more than their spiritual culture [. . .]" (35). The result is, "Columbus speaks about the men he sees only because they too, after all, constitute a part of the landscape. His allusions to the inhabitants of the islands always occur amid his notations concerning nature, somewhere between birds and trees" (34). Both the image of the indigene and the image of the wild animal have been mediated by a Eurocentric discourse of landscape—as examples of fauna alongside flora—since the European "discovery" of the Americas. From our standpoint, Columbus's gross misinterpretation seems evident because our conception of landscape has changed.

But *changed* within limits. While culturally determining ideological values have transformed since Columbus's time, the basic material underpinnings of modern western

culture have remained relatively consistent, as capitalism has developed. Moreover, since Columbus's early explorations of the Americas, landscape descriptions of both the northern and southern continents have been firmly embedded in the context of colonial, postcolonial and neocolonial social relations.[8] As such, the indigene continues to be denied agency, and representations of indigenes dismiss "Their sense of belonging to place [as] not a human choice but animal gene-tics" (Goldie 25). In order to provide the settler episteme a "suitable ground for the cultivation of indigenization" (40), "The indigene is often used to present the possibility of nature in a human form. In the same way, the indigene's closeness to nature is used to justify an emphasis on the indigene as land. In the one, nature becomes human, in the other, human becomes nature" (19). Corresponding representations of the image of the wild animal—either anthropomorphic or zoomorphic—also persist in various forms. One particularly appropriate example would be the beaver, as demonstrated by Gordon Sayre in "The Beaver as Native and Colonist." Sayre explains how the social habits of this "non-threatening herbivore" led both to its anthropomorphization in New France as the ideal colonist, and to the zoomorphization of the trope of the 'vanishing Indian' in descriptions of the beaver, informed by early ethnographic accounts of Native societies (659-60).[9] Both the image of

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[8] In "Imperial Landscape" (1994), considering "the roll call of major 'originating' movements in landscape painting—China, Japan, Rome, seventeenth-century Holland and France, eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Britain," W.T.J. Mitchell asks, "Is it possible that landscape, understood as the historical 'invention' of a new visual/pictorial medium, is integrally connected with imperialism?" (9). He surmises,

> Landscape might be seen more profitably as something like the 'dreamwork' of imperialism, unfolding its own movement in time and space from a central point of origin and folding back on itself to disclose both utopian fantasies of the perfected imperial prospect and fractured images of unresolved ambivalence and unsuppressed resistance. (10)

the indigene and the image of the wild animal are therefore symbolically managed within a discourse of landscape in order to foreclose any claim either might have *to* the land.

European settlement generated most of the economic activity in Canada at the turn of the twentieth century, which involved "measuring, marking, and clearing" the land (New 87). William New observes in *Land Sliding: Imagining Space, Presence, and Power in Canadian Writing* (1997) that this activity was "political not just in so far as it claimed property, but also in the way it implicitly asserted several hierarchies of power" (87). Whereas previously the land was a "physical obstruction" to European explorers and trappers "concerned with traveling *through*" it, for those "digging *into* the land, whether to mine, to farm, to harvest timber, or to dam and so rearrange the water-courses," it presents a different problem, becoming "an impediment to commerce, valuable only when reconstructed or rearranged" (74 emphasis in original).

While New's study of the discursive value of land in Canadian literature is particularly useful to this study, it also coincides with the work of a number of economic historians who describe this demographic shift in terms of a staples theory of development, first outlined in the works of Harold Innis and W.A. Mackintosh.[10] The

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[9] Both anthropomorphic and zoomorphic uses of the image of the wild animal have long histories predating the European arrival in the Americas. There are numerous examples of animals with human characteristics and of humans transforming into animals throughout European folk traditions and religious history, for instance. Aesop's fables and the folk tales of Perrault and the Brothers Grimm all anthropomorphize animals, as did medieval European judiciaries. In the same period, the zoomorphic werewolf was popular in folklore but also appeared in religious-legal proceedings (Wynne 225). Subsequently, during the infamous witch trials in Salem, Massachusetts, of 1692-93, the devil was described in testimony as a man dressed in black who could change shape, sometimes transforming himself into a dog, pig, or rat (Roach 29). The Puritans, it should be noted, by this time viewed the American landscape in biblical terms, as a cursed or evil wilderness antithetical to the Garden of Eden. Two dogs were hanged in Salem for witchcraft in 1692 (Wynne 226).

staples theory accounts for the international colonial context in which "The economic history of Canada has been dominated by the discrepancy between the centre and the margin of western civilization" (Innis 385). The economic disparities between the imperial metropolis of Great Britain and its colonies, such as capital concentration and manufacturing infrastructure, were largely factors of population, but population and economic growth were largely determined in turn by the export sector of the colonial economy. In Canada this led, from the early nineteenth century, to a pattern of settlement based on a series of dominant export commodities. "The most promising source of early trade," Innis submits, "was found in the abundance of fish, especially cod, to be caught of the Grand Banks [. . .]. In the interior, trade with the Indians offered the largest returns in the commodity which was available on a large scale and which yielded substantial profits, namely furs and especially beaver" (384). Neither the fisheries nor the fur trade required heavy settlement, but as subsequent export commodities developed and the economy expanded, populations were increased through a number of stages of mass immigration. Innis elaborates, "With the disappearance of beaver in more accessible territory, lumber became the product which brought the largest returns. [. . .] Agricultural products—as in the case of wheat—and later minerals—gold, nickel, and other metals—have followed the inroads of machine industry" (384-85).

Frye describes this later period as "the second phase of Canadian social development" ("Conclusion" 245), which resulted specifically from "a growing settlement of the country that eventually began to absorb at least eastern Canada into the

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[10] For a detailed, albeit dated, literature review of the staples theory 'school', see M.H. Watkins's "A Staple Theory of Economic Growth" (1967).

north temperate zone" (244).[11] As part of the process, constituting a "marking" of the land, the nineteenth century witnessed "the sentimental pastoral myth taking shape" from earlier conceptions of nature (245). However, "In this version nature, though still full of awfulness and mystery, is the visible representative of an order that man has violated, a spiritual unity that the intellect murders to dissect" (245). This violation stems from "a civilization conquering the landscape and imposing an alien and abstract pattern on it" (246), and "the writers, the poets especially, tend increasingly to see much of this process as something that is human but still dehumanized, leaving man's real humanity a part of nature that he continually violates but is still inviolate" (246).

This "dehumanized" aspect of nineteenth-century settlement—or "conquering the landscape"—resonates with the material foundations of European settler culture, in which wilderness is converted into "a marketable commodity" (New 74). Under the conditions of colonial mercantile capitalism, human relationships with the land, and with the animals and other humans who inhabit it, constitute a system of commodity-exchange relations, which Marx describes as alienating in how they supplant more cooperative relations based on mutual need.[12] Indeed, as Gary Teeple perceives, between the Conquest of New

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[11] Frye does not explicitly define what the preceding phase of social development is in the "Conclusion" to *The Literary History of Canada*. We may draw from his essay "Letters in Canada," however, that this first phase occurred during the age of exploration, when Canada seemed "a country of isolation and terror, and of the overwhelming of human values by an indifferent and wasteful nature" (10-11), and when it produced "the first phase of Canadian poetic imagination" (10).

[12] Interestingly, although the word *capital* is originally derived from the Latin *capitāle* 'principal, property, goods' (from *caput* 'head'), it is more recently derived from the twelfth-century French *cheptel* (pronounced *chetel*), from where both *chattel* and *cattle* are also derived ("capital"). In fact, these latter two words were synonymous (and in some regions homonymous) until the sixteenth century when *cattle* came to mean bovine animals. In contrast to the concept of cattle as capital or property, the word *deer* originally referred to any quadrupedal wild beast (distinct from birds and fish) and shares an etymology with the contemporary German *tier* 'animal' ("deer").

France and Canadian Confederation, land in British North America was controlled by an oligarchical merchant class, "whose power and wealth accrued from government office, ownership of the land, and trade in furs and later in grain and timber" (45). Various land granting schemes devised by this class led to widespread land speculation, with the result that "Very little of the land was developed or opened for settlement, as the speculators were interested only in the profit they could make from the rising prices of land as immigration increased" (49). While "land was largely inaccessible to those without means" (48), which comprised the majority of settlers arriving from Europe, "The land companies did little more than to continue the earlier hoarding practices. Speculation was their preoccupation and lumbering their fastest ways to profits" (54). In short, European settlement in nineteenth-century Canada was corrupt big business, and most settlers were alienated from the land by their lack of capital. Furthermore, for the minority who were able to secure land and might have become "independent producers, who work[ed] for themselves instead of for capital [. . .]" (Marx 936), they nevertheless remained objectified by a regime of commodity exchange in such a colonial economy, a "nexus between man and man" of "naked self-interest" and "callous 'cash payment'" (Marx and Engels 11). In this sense, settling the land is at the same time unsettling: in addition to the dispossession faced by First Nations peoples and the "fractur[ing] beyond restitution" of "the original accommodated relations between environment, other animals and humans" (Tiffin xiii), the commodities of both private property itself and the labour power of the settler required to clear it become alienating.[13]

[13] The European migration to Canada occurred on a more massive scale only after Confederation,

The alienation which resulted from the commodification of land ironically seems to have played some role in "the wilderness then [coming] in some measure to be perceived as *home* [. . .]" (New 96), a sense of European rootedness and belonging to a Canadian landscape rather than elsewhere. Frye explains that at this point, "The conflict of man and nature," which had been conventional to earlier representations of the Canadian landscape, "is expanded into a triangular conflict of nature, society, and individual. Here the individual tends to ally himself with nature against society" ("Conclusion" 245). That is to say, though land "could be made acceptable if it were cleared [. . .]" and thereby assume an economic value as private property (New 74), the system that mandated this transformation is symbolically cast as adversarial: "Thus when the poet finds a 'blessèd power' in nature it is the society he leaves behind that tends to become the God-forsaken wilderness" (Frye "Conclusion" 246). This shift seems a necessary first step in the process of indigenization, and signals a time at which a postcolonial subjectivity arises that asserts both an incipient nationalism and its own indigeneity.[14] As George Altmeyer observes of the predominant view of the theme of

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not peaking until the first three decades of the twentieth century. In relation to the independence and national movements elsewhere in the Americas, the formation of the Dominion of Canada was belated and only semi-autonomous of the United Kingdom until 1931. (The American Revolution occurred in the late eighteenth century, and the Peninsular Wars in Europe triggered the dissolution of the Spanish Empire in Mexico and much of South America in the early nineteenth century.) As a result, Canada's economic development as a colony can be seen as an example of modern, systemic colonization: the creation of a robust wage-labour market along with rapid industrialization, urbanization, and market-capital centralization.

[14] According to Pacey, Roberts came of age during this period:

> He grew up in the eighteen-seventies, when the current of national idealism which had issued in Confederation was still running strongly. Canadian intellectuals and public men [. . .] and the Canada First party were declaring that the young nation needed a literature to give it a sense of cohesion and common purpose. Magazine and newspaper articles were clamoring for poets and novelists to put into permanent literary form the aspirations of the Canadian people and the distinctive features of the Canadian land (xiii).

nature in Canadian literature after Frye, "Certainly, at the turn of the [twentieth] century, many Canadians, even in their literature, did not view Nature in the way these literary critics suggest. Indeed, as a reaction against certain distressing tendencies in their society, many Canadians wanted to get 'back to nature', to better manage her resources and to use her as an instrument of religious expression" (97-98).

Such ex-centric, postcolonial subjectivity corresponds to what Alan Lawson describes as the "settler subject-position" evident in what he terms "cultures of the Second World" (par. 16). In such "Settler postimperial cultures" like those in Canada and the United States (par. 15), he states, "there are always two kinds of authority and always two kinds of authenticity that the settler subject is con/signed to desire and disavow" (par.16).[15] Suspended as it is "between 'mother' and 'other', simultaneously colonized and colonizing" (Lawson par. 15), the Second World can thus be seen as points of intersection between the First and Fourth Worlds or, as Lawson describes, "liminal sites at the point of negotiation between the contending authorities of Empire and Native" (par. 11). That is, while on the one side there is the authenticity and authority of the imperial enterprise that the settler subject represents and is separated from, on the other, there is the authenticity and authority of the indigene, who along with the land is an object of the settler subject's desire (par. 16-17). This desire, according to Lawson, has been textualized in Second World writing as "a desire for Native authenticity in a long series of narratives of psychic encounter and indigenization" (par. 17).

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[15] Stephen Slemon similarly discusses the "neither/nor territory of white settler-colonial writing" and references the Fourth World indigenous cultures of Canada (Sugars 139).

The question of whether early Canadians were lured by or driven to a symbolic alignment with nature "to become 'native', to belong here" (Goldie 13), seems addressed by Frye's statement that

> The environment, in nineteenth-century Canada, is terrifyingly cold, empty and vast, where the obvious and immediate sense of nature is the late Romantic one, increasingly affected by Darwinism, of nature red in tooth and claw. We notice the recurrence of such episodes as shipwreck, Indian massacres, human sacrifices, lumbermen mangled in log-jams, mountain climbers crippled on glaciers, animals screaming in traps, the agonies of starvation and solitude—in short, the "shutting out of the whole moral creation." ("Conclusion" 243)

The viability of the idea of nature as an identitarian alternative to "civilization," despite the deepening starkness of its terms, perhaps speaks to the severity of the alienating effects of expanding settlement and market capitalism in late nineteenth-century Canada. On the other hand, however, the ruthlessness of reductive understandings of Darwinism combined with Romantic abstractions of spirituality and sublimity perhaps made for an appealing counter-discourse to what the cultural historian Jackson Lears identifies as "the Promethean optimism of the official culture" (4).[16] This might count amongst the "other attitudes to primordial energies" that Don McKay detects in the Canadian poetic tradition that do not conform to Frye's (and others') view of the wilderness as being consistently represented as "sinister and morally nihilistic" (7). Goldie makes a similar point when

[16] This amalgamation of Romanticism and Darwinism also appears as Frye's seemingly oxymoronic term (borrowed from Keats), the "cold pastoral" ("Conclusion" 244).

calling attention to a critical oversight in Frye's reading of nature in Canada: "Frye misses the important note that throughout literature the *cauchemar*, the nightmare, can be seen as divine guidance and those 'subconscious stampedings' can be attractive answers to irrational questions" (40). Indeed, the irrational cannot be affected by land settlement since it represents the very aspects of both Romanticism and Darwinism that cannot be rationalized or commodified.

Conceptual Framework

If the image of the wild animal has been overlooked as such in Canadian literary studies it is not difficult to see why. Not only do critics and scholars have to contend with cultural assumptions of human superiority over animals, and with the functional similarities of the image of the indigene and the image of the wild animal, but Canadian literature also provides us with numerous examples of "the indigene-animal analogy" (Goldie 26). This is a firmly established racist discourse in which, whether pejoratively or positively, "various similes and metaphors [. . .] relate the indigene to animals" (25). Such an association serves a psychological need in settler culture: the natural Other suggests an opportunity for liberation from the civilized self since, "To the extent that they are perceived as human, the indigenes demonstrate a potential bridge to freedom of the non-man in nature" (25). At the same time, the indigene is denied agency because such forms of representation dismiss "Their sense of belonging to place [as] not a human choice but animal gene-tics" (25). This way, the indigene-animal analogy reasserts "The indigene's closeness to nature" (19) in order to emphasize the idea of "the indigene as

land" (19) and as "suitable ground for the cultivation of indigenization" (40). Safely contained by the discourse of landscape, the similarities enforced between the image of the indigene and the image of the wild animal render the former as silent as the latter, and thereby foreclose any claim the indigene might have *to* the land. That wild animals have traditionally been precluded from a similar claim goes without saying.

Perhaps the logical response to this type of denial of agency has been instead to anthropomorphize literary animals by reading them as metaphors of the human. James Polk's and Margaret Atwood's thematic arguments of the 1970s, for instance, allegorize these figures as Canadians threatened by national extinction. As Atwood encapsulates in *Survival* (1972), "The animals, as Seton says, are us" (79). One of the key weaknesses of this statement, of course, is Atwood's Humanist assumption of a singular national subject-position that overlooks significant differences in Canadian society; and since she is not Native (nor was Seton), one can reasonably assume that this subject-position—the 'us' to which she refers—is white. A similar rhetorical presumption occurs in Misao Dean's more recent study, "Political Science: Realism in Roberts's Animal Stories" (1996), which argues that "the animal 'self' created by the stories, while naturalised by scientific theory and reported observation, is the very human self created by 'classic realist fiction'" (5). These animals, according to Dean, "masquerade as 'other', but [. . .] they are really (m)animals, reproductions of the ideological subject offered to turn-of-the-century readers of realist fiction" (5). Like thematic criticism, successive interpretations of animals in Canadian fiction in English have been predisposed to read textual animals as metaphors for the human. Such readings, however, assume an anthropocentric

typology: that humans—rather than animals—prefigure textual animals. While at the same time excluding a more biocentric understanding of history,[17] these kinds of interpretations, relying on such universals in order perhaps to account ethically for the indigene-animal analogy as a literary convention, nevertheless perform an indigenizing function by anthropomorphizing representations of indigenous animals as settlers, or at least as whites who read literary fiction.

A great concern of this study is how anthropocentric readings of literary animals largely rely on a politics comparable to that of the indigene-animal analogy itself. Rather than asserting the inferiority of the indigene by maintaining proximity between its image and brute animality, however, such readings appropriate for the settler subject the indigeneity of this very animality by collapsing the image of the wild animal and the settler subject into metaphor. Not only can such readings thus reinforce the indigene-animal analogy by confirming the superiority and legitimacy of the settler over the indigenous, they may also rule out meaningful ethical considerations of North American wildlife by focusing on arguments about that *metaphor's* referent. Any concerns we might have about the status of animals in Canada, that is, become effaced when the image of the wild animal is read exclusively as a "trait in our national psyche" (*Survival* 75).[18]

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[17] A more comprehensive view of history, which considers the numerous exchanges made between various species within colonial spaces, has been advocated by David Worster in "Transformations of the Earth: Toward an Agroecological Perspective in History" (1990) and by Alfred Crosby in *The Colombian Exchange* (1972) and *Ecological Imperialism* (1986).

[18] Not to add to the considerable amount of criticism of *Survival*, but Atwood's use of the wild animal story to support her theory of a Canadian "national psyche" seems particularly flawed by the publication history of these texts. As Nick Mount discusses in *When Canadian Literature Moved to New York* (2005), both Seton and Roberts were part of an expatriate community of Canadian writers in the United States, and for Seton "North America consisted of two spaces: the prairie where he did his work, and the city where he sold it" (102). For his part, Roberts "made the most" of the boom in animal fiction

Although the image of the wild animal is unequivocally anthropogenic—Atwood rightly notes that "'realism' in connection with animal stories must always be a somewhat false claim [. . .]" (74)—this does not necessarily mean that it is an anthropomorphic symbol of the settler subject. Indeed, this very stance has led North American wildlife to being "saddled with the burden of national identity" (Loo 2) and tasked with "reproduc[ing] the selfhood of the reader" (Dean 4). However, since textual representation remains the provenance of the imaginary and not the real, the literary animal cannot be hidden away so easily. If, as Goldie suggests, "The indigene is a semiotic pawn on a chess board under the control of the white signmaker" (10), so too is the animal. To push Goldie's metaphor further, within the discursive field of British imperialism, more than one game of chess is being played at one time. And since similar ideologies and needs are at play in the semiotic field associated with the animal, it therefore must also contain its own "poles of attraction and repulsion" (15). It is only once the indigene-animal analogy is recognized as a relationship between analogous images that a biocentric interpretation of animal representations in Canadian fiction can begin.[19]

Of the philosophical and political issues anthropocentrism raises in postcolonial studies and elsewhere, its reliance on a species boundary is perhaps the most problematical to any reading of the image of the wild animal since the species boundary

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that followed the publication of Seton's *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898), "publishing some forty animal stories between 1900 and his departure from New York in 1907" (134). As Mount further observes, "it wasn't just the continental range of the animal stories' models that made the genre accessible to authors and readers on both sides of the border; of equal importance, their sympathy for their animal heroes served a growing and necessarily *continental* concern about the disappearance of animals and their habitat" (102 emphasis added).

[19] As I see it, while each image is an analogue of the other, both are contiguities of the discourse of landscape: metonymical discourses of the imaginary manifested by British imperialism.

engenders a Manichean code much like that which Abdul R. JanMohammed identifies.[20] As Stephen Slemon explains,

> the "other" is read as the inferior term in a binary opposition and then, by extension, fixed as the inferior term in a permanent position of subordination within a master code of binary thinking. Both codes of recognition depend upon allegorical thinking to effect the assimilation of the "other" into an overarching, supposedly universal, metaphysical code, and both show how allegory can be indicted as a mode of representation that energises the imperial enterprise. (162)

Because animals, whether humanized or animalized, are firmly positioned on the Other side of the species boundary, they are always already objectified and marked for sacrifice for "the ideological work of marking human others as animals for the purposes of their objectification and sacrifice [. . .] to be effective" (Wolfe 101).[21] Although the indigene has been animalized within a number of colonial discourses to authorize criminal behaviour on the parts of governments and settlers,[22] it remains the species boundary and the speciesism it engenders that "is the indispensable basis of racism and genocidal othering; and is necessarily implicated in patriarchal dominance and abuse as well"

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[20] See JanMohammed's "The Economy of Manichean Allegory: The Function of Racial Difference." *Critical Inquiry* 12 (1), 1985.

[21] See Cary Wolfe's Derridean view of "how the law of culture arranges its species significations [. . .]" in *Animal Rites: American Culture, the Discourse of Species, and Posthumanist Theory* (2003) (100-102).

[22] For a more detailed account of these events of the colonial era, see the first chapter of Laurence Armand French's *Native American Justice* (2003).

(Ashcroft, Griffiths, and Tiffin 492).[23] The colonization of the Americas involved a well-documented mistreatment of indigenous human populations, including their dispossession of traditional lands, enslavement, and even attempted genocides, but a clear distinction must nevertheless be maintained between these legacies and those of North American wildlife, especially since they are linked by the colonial discourse of landscape.

Anthropocentric readings of the image of the wild animal thus embody a clear speciesist shortcoming by simply fixing the animal as the tenor of metaphor and propagating the assumption of their status as unspeaking Others. Whereas the textual representations of animals covered in this study in some sense deny the referent in deference to the image of the wild animal,[24] much of the scholarship goes a step further to anthropomorphize the image of the wild animal out of existence, too. Such a stance therefore precludes a consideration of the history of wildlife, and once again we are critically drawn away from this vital material connection so that we are left to wonder, as Lawrence Buell laments, "Why must literature always lead away from the physical world, never back to it?" (11). But of course literature is well and part of the physical world, and the representation of animals is culturally determined. In Canada, I believe such representations, which arose in sudden popularity in the late nineteenth century,

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[23] The term "speciesism" was first coined by Peter Singer in his seminal work *Animal Liberation* (1975). Likening it to racism and sexism, he defines speciesism as, "a prejudice or attitude of bias in favor of the interests of members of one's own species and against those of members of other species. [. . .] If possessing a higher degree of intelligence does not entitle one human to use another for his or her own ends, how can it entitle humans to exploit nonhumans for the same purpose?" (6).

[24] Such is the result of the circuit of signification within the image. As Goldie notes with the image of the indigene, while "There is no evidence that the various writers on the indigene have intended [. . .] to deny the referent, [. . .] this is the effect of their creations" (4).

themselves display a postcolonial modernity and the development of a growing ecological awareness. By historicizing social relations of this period in Canada biocentrically, I am able to avoid conflating the linked colonial histories of First Nations peoples and North American wildlife in order to consider the indigenizing function of the image of the wild animal.

Understanding that the image of the wild animal works autonomously as an agent of indigeneity, mitigating the settler anxiety "that we could never be at home in [North] America because we were not Indians, not indigenous to the place" (Francis *Imaginary* 223), potentially allows for new and exciting engagements with animals in Canadian literature. Noting that land is "a verbal trope in Canadian writing, not simply [. . .] a neutral referent" (5), W.H. New goes on to explain that the land is also "an indicator variously of nature and morality—one that, by differentiating between a paradisal earthly garden and a savage earthly wilderness, encoded what was taken to be the 'natural right' to territorial expansion" (22). Thus, "Representations of 'Canadian Land' illustrate many of the sociocultural and socioeconomic issues raised by postcolonial theory: the issues of colony and empire, wealth and power, center and margin, the opportunity to speak and the likelihood of being heard" (11). The fact that North American wildlife species do not speak with human voices makes this latest issue particularly relevant to ecocritical literary studies, especially today in a time of unprecedented environmental degradation and loss of biodiversity around the world.

And wild animals abound in Canadian literary fiction in English: their representation comprises a remarkable body of writing that started at the turn of the

twentieth century, in the midst of the urban-industrial revolution in English Canada.[25] These works reflect particular assumptions and codifications about wildlife, nature, and landscape shared within a cultural hegemony originating in Europe and transforming itself politically and discursively to the physical environment of the North American continent. The resulting sense of un-belonging has led to what Frye describes as a "prevalence in Canada of animal stories, in which animals are closely assimilated to human behaviour and emotions [. . .]" (240). Frye's key examples of such texts were the popular realistic wild animal stories of Charles G.D. Roberts and Ernest Thompson Seton. Both of these writers described their works in terms of a scientific realism, while Frye later saw their writing as embodying a "belief in the superiority of the primitive and the instinctive over the civilized and the conventional" (*Conclusion* 240). Such descriptions, each of which is arguably accurate, exemplify the "two symmetrical figures for representing the confrontation with the Other" (Terdiman 32): the penetrating scientific gaze of the naturalist-writer-narrator, and the settler subject's "attempts [. . .] to capture the subjectivity [. . .]," in this case, of the indigenous animal itself (Goldie 15).

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[25] Although "English Canada" is a problematic term because it is exclusive and could refer to ethnicity, language or culture, I nevertheless use it throughout this dissertation specifically to mean "the *largely* English-language culture of Canada to which those of diverse ethnic origins have contributed; and the territory in question would be the very extensive terrain, essentially outside Quebec and populated by nonaboriginals, that has English speakers as its dominant grouping" (Resnick *Thinking* 22). Such a qualification is necessary, both to acknowledge works in languages other than English in Canada and to account for the distinctness of the Québécois literary tradition. While Robin Mathews convincingly argues that there are parallels between the *roman de la terre*, the dominant literary genre of nineteenth-century Québec, and what he terms the novel of the land in nineteenth-century English Canada, he nevertheless observes that the latter is "at once more secular and more various in its manifestations than is the *roman de la terre* in Quebec" (150). In part because of the powerful influence of the Roman Catholic Church before the Quiet Revolution of the 1960s, and specifically its anti-Darwinian stance, "Quebec never produced animal fiction like the animal fiction produced in English Canada" (150). For more on these differences between English and French Canada, see Mathews's "The *Roman de la terre* and the Novel of the Land: Charles G. D. Roberts at Work in a Major Canadian Literary Genre" (1984).

While the image of the wild animal that is at work in these texts is contained within a relatively static semiotic field, the textual representation of animals and animal subjectivities in Canada can differ widely.[26] With specific regard to wild animals, however, a number of shifts in their representation can be traced. These shifts are implicit to Janice Fiamengo's comparison of three representations of the wolf in the introduction to her edited volume, *Other Selves* (2007).[27] After remarking that "It is surprising that there are not more studies of the role of animals in Canadian literature," Fiamengo discusses the wolf as one of the "important encounters with animals [that] abound in canonical works" (5). The wolves "that terrify Susanna Moodie [. . .] the externalization of her fears of being devoured by the New World; imagined as coming down through her chimney [. . .]" might connect to "Seton's indomitable wolf Lobo, who inspires in the hunter-narrator both sympathetic admiration and the drive to dominate [. . .]," and who then might be altered again into "the family of wolves alongside whom Farley Mowat takes up residence in *Never Cry Wolf* (1963), forming an association that enables him to reveal the complex sociality of these much-maligned creatures in contrast to the careless destructiveness of their human predators" (5). It should not be surprising that over the same period in which the works Fiamengo cites were written, wolf populations in the

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[26] Compare, for instance, the animals in this study with the more sentimentalized versions in works like Marshall Saunders's *Beautiful Joe* or the popular television and print ad campaigns of TELUS Communications Company.

[27] *Other Selves: Animals in the Canadian Literary Imagination* is the resulting proceedings from the annual *Reappraisals: Canadian Writers* symposium series of 2005 and represents the bulk of recent critical work done in this field.

more densely settled southern regions of Canada radically declined.[28] A biocentric reading of the wolf image perhaps offers insight into how the literary representation of wolves relates to the changing relationships between humans and wolves in Canada.

The plasticity of the figure of the wolf can initially be explained by considering Sander Gilman's observation that the line between self and Other

> is as dynamic in its ability to alter itself as is the self. This can be observed in the shifting relationship of antithetical stereotypes that parallel the existence of "bad" and "good" representations of self and Other. But the line between "good" and "bad" responds to stresses occurring within the psyche. Thus paradigm shifts in our mental representations of the world can and do occur. We can move from fearing to glorifying the Other. We can move from loving to hating. (*Difference* 18)

Such representational moves, however, remain contingent upon ideological and socio-political realities. In this example, the general view held by early settlers of wolves as evil was tenable during a period of homesteading in a largely agrarian colonial economy, when wolves could pose a threat to livestock. However, regardless of whether or not that threat was dire, North American wolves were perceived in the same ideological terms as

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[28] As Boitani outlines,

> the wolf was already rare in southern Quebec and Ontario by 1870; it disappeared from New Brunswick in 1880, from Nova Scotia in 1900 and from insular Newfoundland before 1930 (Hayes and Gunson 1995). By the first decade of the twentieth century, persecution had been very successful in eliminating many of southern Canada's populations. Following the formidable campaigns of the early 1900s, wolf populations were greatly reduced even in Western Canada, and in 1930 they reached their all-time low. (Mech and Boitani 321)

their "old world" counterparts by early European colonists and were thus allegories.[29] Only once the wolf was "recognized" as indigenous could its image be appropriated by romantic discourse in indigenizing narratives.[30] At the same time, however, the economy by the end of the nineteenth century had begun developing into a mode of urban market capitalism, and contemporary representations of the wolf had often become primitivist fantasies of a pervasive antimodernism of the time. With the later consolidation of market capitalism into a modern industrialism in the first half of the twentieth century, the wolf in Fiamengo's example transforms into a victim of human persecution, an antimodern image corresponding perhaps more closely than ever to its referent.[31] Once pressed into the service of indigenization, the image of the wild animal curiously also becomes and remains steadfastly antimodern.

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[29] Such a view might explain why Susanna Moodie is able to wax poetic in *Roughing It in the Bush* (1852) about the noble savage, "one of Nature's gentlemen—he never says or does a rude or vulgar thing" (25), while her description of the indigenous wolf does not likewise conform to the conventions of romanticism. In contrast to colonial experiences in North America like Moodie's, early European encounters with the animals of Australia—"the marvelous oddities of a topsy-turvy land"—foreclosed the possibility of creating allegorical frames of reference (White 7). Indeed, these flora and fauna upset accepted notions of natural law in Europe. As Ridley demonstrates,

> Early images of the platypus suggest the discomfort that the unfamiliar and incredible Australian species caused: illustrators ignoring the conventions of representing distinctive animal or vegetable features in cartouches or separately within the frame of an illustration, as if a unique male poisonous spur and an egg-laying mammal was more than the view could be expected to credit. (204)

[30] See Margaret Atwood's poem "Further Arrivals" from *The Journals of Susanna Moodie*: "I need wolf's eyes to see / the truth" (20-21).

[31] I say "perhaps" because I remain mindful that my views are necessarily limited by my own ideological commitments—both those I am aware of and those I am not—even while my political sympathies lie with wolves rather than with the forces that continue to seek their destruction. Moreover, I am aware that even while the image of the wild animal has been affected by historical change, the "semiotic control and the power of that image" remains unaffected (Goldie 6). Thus I endeavour to be a "thinker with a sense of history" who is able "to recognize the danger in judging contemporary material successful in contrast to past failures" (7).

As Jackson Lears explains in his study *No Place of Grace* (1981), by the fin-de-siècle a "crisis of cultural authority" had led to an antimodern impulse in both Europe and America (6). He explains that "the feeling of overcivilization [. . .] was a sign of a broader transatlantic dissatisfaction with modern culture in all its dimensions: its ethic of self-control and autonomous achievement, its cult of science and technical rationality, its worship of material progress" (4-5). He adds that it is not surprising that people "yearned to resurrect a solid sense of self by recapturing the 'real life' of the premodern craftsman, soldier, or saint" (6). This primitivism inherent to antimodern sentiment also included a romantic identification with Nature, and therefore with the images associated within this discourse: the indigene and the wild animal. Lears explains that antimodernism, "despite its role in revitalizing and transforming capitalist cultural authority, was far more than a response to the effects of market capitalism; it contained a critique of modern culture applicable to all secular, bureaucratic systems, whether socialist or capitalist" (7). He locates the root of the antimodern impulse in a societal "revulsion against the process of rationalization" necessitated by modernity,

> the systemic organization of economic life for maximum productivity and of individual life for maximum personal achievement; the drive for efficient control of nature under the banner of improving human welfare; the reduction of the world to a disenchanted object to be manipulated by rational technique. (7)

In the Canadian context, nevertheless, this form of modern living is inseparable from the development of capitalism and the role of indigenizing narratives in the nineteenth

century, and from the growing qualms about the environmental effects of an emerging modernity.

Indeed, the late nineteenth century witnessed the popularization of a "literature of action" in American magazines, largely in the form of adventure stories aimed at "a wider adult audience" (103), such as the wild animal stories of Roberts and Seton. In materialist terms, this genre is part of a dialogical system in which "popular narrative from time immemorial—romance, adventure story, melodrama, and the like—is ceaselessly drawn on to restore vitality to an enfeebled and asphyxiating 'high culture'" (Jameson 86). Thus, as a genre, the wild animal narrative accommodates itself particularly well to antimodern prescriptions for countering the effects of modern life with "an encounter with the primitive" (Loo 30), a path which often "led outdoors" (31). Later examples of wild animal narratives written after the industrialization of Canada continue this tradition of romantic writing pioneered by Seton and Roberts and embody a similar antimodern sentiment "promot[ing] eloquent protest against the limits of liberalism [. . .]" (Lears 6).[32] That this tradition of writing is romantic is key: as Jameson explains,

> Frye's theory of romance, as has been suggested, is the fullest account of this genre as a mode. Romance is for Frye a wish-fulfillment or Utopian

[32] In her 1991 Clarendon Lecture "The Grey Owl Syndrome," Atwood makes a similar observation about the environmental movement to which these later writers are tied:

> as the age of explorers receded [. . .], living like the Natives in order to survive in the wilderness was translated into living like the Natives in the wilderness in order to survive. Survive what? The advancing decadence, greed, and rapacious cruelty of white civilization, that's what. This is the subtext of the lives and work of both Grey Owl and Ernest Thompson Seton—or Black Wolf, as he was sometimes known—and it's this subtext that has surfaced again in the Canadian environmental movement of the 1980s and 1990s—a movement that has yet to claim Seton and Grey Owl as ancestors [. . .]. (44-45)

> fantasy which aims at the transfiguration of the world of everyday life in such a way as to restore the conditions of some lost Eden, or to anticipate a future realm from which the old mortality and imperfections will have been effaced. (110)

The dialogic of the romance thus offers a symbolic promise of the reconciliation of difference, a subtext which also happens to represent the final achievement of indigenization in a postcolonial context. This is not to say that romance "involve[s] the substitution of some more ideal realm for ordinary reality [. . .], but rather a process of *transforming* ordinary reality" (110 emphasis in original). In these terms, the appropriation of the wild animal in Canadian writing in English can be understood as a de-centering of the discourse of landscape alongside the development of an ex-centric, postcolonial settler subjectivity.

That the texts examined in this study also rehearse a problematic relationship between humans and animals, however, signals another related subtext. The same economic factors that led to diverse cultural changes and the rise of antimodern sentiment in the late nineteenth century also necessitated an indigenized national identity in Canada. Following European and American examples from earlier in that century, "Canada's cultural producers literally 'naturalized the nation' by rendering certain landscapes iconic" and worthy of preservation (Loo 1). These landscapes were symbolically managed, however, to appropriate the indigenous humans and nonhumans contained within them.

The use of nature as a basis for nationalism began in North America shortly after the American War of Independence in the late eighteenth century, when hegemonic forces sought "the justification of [America's] newly won freedom" in the "Creation of a distinctive culture [. . .] thought to be the mark of true nationhood" (Nash 67). By the early nineteenth century, "American nationalists began to understand that it was in the *wilderness* of its nature that their country was unmatched. While other nations might have an occasional wild peak or patch of heath, there was no equivalent of a wild continent" (69 emphasis in original). This realization coincided with the exploration and increasing settlement of the American West,[33] and it is perhaps most clearly evident in the tradition of landscape painting in the U.S. As Angela Miller remarks, "The paradox of landscape as a subject of art and a source of national pride was that it arose at a time when the United States was busily occupied in converting those same landscapes into commodities through industry and market capitalism" (92). Moving away from earlier representations of animals, largely in the form of natural history drawings, examples of which "provided a distinctly distorted view of the New World" (Harris 17), American artists in the early nineteenth century "became increasingly interested in North American wildlife, especially as they began to accompany expeditions venturing west [. . .]" (9).[34] As a

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[33] Relevant to this point is the Louisiana Purchase of 1803 and the consequent expedition undertaken by Meriwether Lewis and William Clark in 1804-06. Their team, the Corps of Discovery, started out in May of 1804 from Camp Dubois (near present-day Hartford, Illinois), reached the Pacific Ocean at the mouth of the Columbia River that December (near present-day Astoria, Oregon), and returned to St. Louis, Missouri, in September of 1806. President Thomas Jefferson, who commissioned the expedition, specifically asked Lewis to take note of "the animals of the country generally, & especially those not known in the U.S. the remains or accounts of any which may be deemed rare or extinct" (qtd. in Harris 10).

[34] It is important here to distinguish landscape painting from the hand-coloured etchings and engravings of naturalists like John White, Mark Catesby and John James Audubon. American landscape

result, the bulk of American landscape painting from the early nineteenth century that includes representations of animals provides us with examples of wildlife native to western regions of the continent, and this connection between wildlife painting and the frontier continued over the course of the century.[35]

In the colonized areas of Canada, the development of the visual arts in general came somewhat later than in the U.S. Acknowledging the cultural differences between French and English Canada, Graham McInnes explains that the majority of artistic work done in Québec "was produced for the Church, and [this] art is not understood save in reference to the church which supported it and made it possible" (14). He then explains that "Early French-Canadian painters are interesting mainly from a historical point of view" (22), and that "The woodcarving tradition seems to have occupied the creative energy of the French, and it was not until the end of the nineteenth century that painters of worth appeared" (23-24). Turning his attention to English Canada, McInnes describes the period roughly from the Conquest of New France, in 1760, to the mid nineteenth century as belonging to "the Topographers" since "theirs were the only paintings and drawings of any consequence" (28). These were "English army and navy officers, or gentleman amateurs, resident in Canada as *attachés*, surveyors, explorers, or for military and naval duty" whose "main purpose was to render accurately the topographical aspect of the country, often for scientific or military purposes" (28). Serious professional art,

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artists who ventured West in the early nineteenth century include Titian Ramsey Peale, Samuel Seymour, George Catlin and Karl Bodmer. Mid and late nineteenth-century American wildlife artists include Alfred Jacob Miller, Charles Wimar and William Jacob Hays.

[35] Quite fittingly, then, the National Museum of Wildlife Art, established in 1987, is located in Jackson, Wyoming, where, according to the museum's Chairman Emeritus, William G. Kerr, it "resid[es] intimately with much of its subject matter" (Harris ix).

according to McInnes, did not occur anywhere in Canada until the 1840s, when Cornelius Krieghoff and Daniel Fowler migrated from Europe (in 1840 and 1843, respectively) and when Paul Kane, Irish-born but raised in Toronto, "made his famous voyage to the West" in 1846 (29).

Kane's work was deeply influenced by the American artist George Catlin, whom he met on a trip to Europe in 1841. After encountering "a delegation of American Indians in Philadelphia" in 1826, Catlin had "resolved to record [the] appearance and customs" of the Native tribes of the American West "before these disappeared forever" (Harris 29). Making a number of excursions up the Mississippi and Missouri rivers between 1830 and 1836, he created "over five hundred paintings of American Indian life" and also depicted "the wildlife he encountered along the way [. . .] most notably the bison" (29). Repeating Catlin's method, Kane traveled first to Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario, in 1845 and then took a "two-year expedition with the Hudson's Bay Company to the Pacific in 1846 and 1847" (40). While in the West, he produced "over five hundred sketches of Native Canadians and wildlife [. . .]" that he used to develop "over one hundred oil paintings," and in 1859 he published a popular account of his journey, *Wanderings of an Artist among the Indians of North America* (40). Not surprisingly, the bison features heavily in Kane's works as well since it was a keystone species of the Great Plains and central to Native societies in the region.

By the 1880s, however, the bison population had collapsed after prolonged commercial hunting in addition to "an aggressive military campaign against native peoples" on the part of the U.S. government, starting in the 1830s during Andrew

Jackson's presidential administration (Wagner 77-78). "A key tactic of this campaign was the eradication of American bison. Bison were a staple for native peoples [. . .] and a powerful spiritual symbol as well, making it possible for the U.S. cavalry to undermine Indian life completely by eliminating one species" (78). This catastrophic event did not go unnoticed by the artists of the time, including the Canadian Frederick Arthur Verner, who "documented dwindling bison populations" in the late nineteenth century as "the frontier era was coming to a close" (Harris 19). The works produced by these late-century wildlife artists "mourned the wholesale slaughter of the American bison" (19), a sentiment that coincided with "the elegiac trope of the dying Indian" (Brantlinger 46), a commonplace of colonial discourse and Manifest Destiny. As Harris observes,

> The bison and the American Indian came to represent the West, in all of its complexity, as both a celebrated space and a locus for sadness and guilt. [. . .] the association endured: James Earle Fraser's 1913 Indian head-buffalo nickel epitomized the sentiment. The nickel features an American Indian man's profile on one side and silhouette of a bison on the other: two iconic images of the American West, one the flip side of the other. (20)

Once these original human and nonhuman populations were cleared sufficiently "To make western territories safe for settlers to occupy" (Wagner 77), the image of the indigene and the image of the wild animal could be pressed into the service of indigenization. The loss of these populations "was tempered by settlers' success in colonizing the West, but there remained a mournful feeling that America had lost a part

of what had made it exceptional, and that greedy easterners had despoiled a once-pristine continent" (Harris 19). By the turn of the century, once the West was safely settled, Natives could be relegated to the past as remnant populations of a dead race while naturalists and sport hunters in both the U.S. and Canada could promote conservation as a political issue.[36]

Indeed, Brian Johnson argues that both indigenization and conservation discourses have a "common grounding [. . .] in a poetics of extinction and transgression" and both are marked by the performative discourse of proleptic elegy (339). While such a point generally holds true, some distinction must nevertheless be maintained between the image of the indigene and that of the wild animal. First off, whereas the discourse of "race extinction" that held such wide sway at the turn of the century specified that savagery was the inborn weakness leading to the demise of Native peoples, the supplanting of wild animals with introduced species was understood as the result of human interventions such as hunting, trapping, poisoning, deforestation, etc. Moreover, when not subject to these forms of "improvement," the presence of wild animals on the land has traditionally qualified in part its economic value. According to a 1999 Fraser Institute bulletin on endangered species in Canada, the connection between Canadian identity and wildlife "has deep roots. The promise of fortune from fishing, trapping, and

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[36] Naturalists and sport hunters, according to Wagner, "influenced Theodore Roosevelt to use his office after he became president of the United States to advance the Conservation Movement by placing it high on his agenda for the nation" (165). Similarly in Canada, "The scale and extent of the destruction elicited a response from the state. From about 1897 to 1917, the structure of wildlife management in Canada was substantially remade" (Loo 17-18). Loo continues:

> Canada's push to systematize, centralize, bureaucratize wildlife conservation was influenced by developments in the United States. Inspired by American president Theodore Roosevelt's National Conservation Commission, formed just the year before, the Liberal government of Wilfrid Laurier established a Canadian Commission of Conservation in 1909 to investigate the state of the country's natural resources. (18-19)

hunting attracted the first explorers and colonizers to this country" (Jones and Fredricksen 2). Even in the agrarian context of subsequent periods, wild animals were seen as indices of land productivity or bounty even if their extirpation was considered necessary to land settlement. On the western frontier of the latter part of the nineteenth century, for instance,

> the disappearance of wild animals from their native ranges implied that newcomers could then claim the natural wealth. The sheer number of buffalo before the transfer suggested a richness of the soil that could be tapped by settlers. Soils that once supported such a large ruminant population were now free to support cattle and crops alike. (Colpitts 44)

But even though wildlife like the buffalo "was associated with an unsavoury wild past" (42) because the land was needed instead to support agriculture and ranching in order to "yield to farmers immeasurable wealth" (38), the ultimate survival of wild animals *in toto* is not foreclosed as it is with the image of the indigene since their demise would be anathema to indigenization within a capitalist context.[37] Nevertheless, individual animals in these texts struggle because of social relations in Canada that predetermine animality as otherness and relegate animals as an oppressed class.

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[37] As Goldie observes, "The inevitability of the demise of indigenous peoples so permeates nineteenth-century images of indigenes that it is difficult to find examples which do not reflect the theory" (153-54).

Methodology

This project's consideration of the image of the wild animal and its function in Canadian fiction in English leads me, almost inevitably, to questions of hermeneutics and the purpose of literary interpretation. Specifically, since this dissertation is ultimately the realization of my own engagement with a number of art objects created in the historical past, it becomes necessary to establish a methodological approach adequate enough to license my interpretation and account for the radical otherness of history.

The act of interpretation itself presents a problematic in that it consistently relies on allegory as a trope.[38] To begin with, as Sayre Greenfield observes, "The apprehension of meaning depends on previous knowledge, and the majority of effort expended in any reading is that directed at assimilating new information to previous fields of reference" (16). Interpretation as an institutionalized practice, in turn, becomes the act of demonstrating how a literal or manifest level of a text gives way to a symbolic or latent one that pertains to issues salient to that school of criticism.[39] As Fredric Jameson states,

> a criticism which asks the question "What does it mean?" constitutes something like an allegorical operation in which a text is systematically

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[38] The term *allegory* presents a number of semantic difficulties because of both its modern usage and "disparities in the historical applications of the label" (Greenfield 49). As Greenfield determines,

> "Allegory" can designate (1) a rhetorical device, (2) a way of interpreting literary works, or (3) literary works of certain form. These uses of the term become further complicated by the *extent* that allegory covers. Though rhetorical allegory is always local within a speech or text, allegorical interpretation and literary allegory can apply to a passage within a text, an entire text pervasively, or a strand of images and ideas throughout a text. (49)

[39] Noting that "Interpreters usually belong to an institution," Frank Kermode identifies "the right to affirm, and the obligation to accept, the superiority of latent over manifest sense" as "Perhaps the most important" of the "certain privileges and [. . .] constraints" faced by these initiates (2). See *The Genesis of Secrecy: On the Interpretation of Narrative* (1979).

> *rewritten* in terms of some fundamental master code or "ultimately determining instance." On this view, then, all "interpretation" in the narrower sense demands the forcible or imperceptible transformation of a given text into an allegory of its particular master code or "transcendental signified": the discredit into which interpretation has fallen is thus at one with the disrepute visited on allegory itself. (58 emphasis in original)

This discredit has largely occurred since the turn to theory, when many post-structuralist analyses have laid claim to an anti-interpretive project. According to Jameson, however, such gestures have "amount[ed] less to a wholesale nullification of all interpretive activity than to a demand for the construction of some new and more adequate, immanent or antitranscendent hermeneutic model" (23). Because even deconstructive maneuvers require the allegorization of a primary text—its function rather than its meaning—into a theoretical discourse, "much contemporary theory [. . .] rewrite[s] selected texts from the past in terms of its own aesthetic and, in particular, in terms of a modernist (or more properly post-modernist) conception of language" (17).[40] Such an interpretive strategy, however, for Jameson only represents to traditional literary history a "dialectical counterpart" that has proven "ultimately no more satisfactory [. . .]" (17).

In addition to the inherent limitations and ideological horizons that scholarly works are subject to, the process of allegorization itself—what Maureen Quilligan has

[40] Such a view is further supported by Stephen Slemon, who observes that "a considerable body of post-structural theory now takes allegory to be the ultimate trope for discourse itself, so that *all* writing is deemed allegorical, and all reading allegorical misreading" (157). This is lent further credence by a consideration that the sign functions allegorically in relation to its referent.

termed *allegoresis*—presents its own set of pitfalls.[41] Likewise observing that "the task of interpretation is virtually one of translation" (5), Susan Sontag, in her well-known essay "Against Interpretation" (1966), characterizes "The modern style of interpretation" as violent: "as it excavates, [it] destroys; it digs 'behind' the text, to find a sub-text which is the true one" (6). Indeed, *allegoresis* that ignores the text in favour of a sub-text may prove to be "reactionary, impertinent, cowardly, stifling" (7): as Quilligan warns,

> While the habit of talking about the action of allegorical narrative as simply a baseline for the thematic translation into an *other* set of terms is an old one and therefore exceedingly difficult to break, break it we must if we are ever to perceive [. . .] the radical significance of that much-dismissed literal surface. (29)

Though comparable, translation and *allegoresis* are nevertheless not the same operation: the meanings of the literal surface—analogous to the source text in translation discourse—are constitutive of, rather than determining of, any meanings derived from the symbolic level. The apprehension of both levels is thus required in order to develop an adequate reading of a text.[42]

In *The Fiction of Truth: Structure of Meaning in Narrative and Dramatic Allegory*, Carolynn Van Dyke similarly problematizes the notion that a text "says one

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[41] In order to define allegory as a literary genre, Quilligan distinguishes it from *allegoresis*. As a genre, allegories comprise a "pure strain" of writing "among all the multitudinous works displaying allegorical modalities" (14), while *allegoresis* is "the literary criticism of texts" (26). As she further elaborates, "all commentary is actually *allegoresis*, whereby the critic treats the text in front of him as a veiled offering of a hidden message [. . .]" (224).

[42] In *The Poetics of Prose* (1977), Tzvetan Todorov distinguishes "reading" from "interpretation," whereby the former "instead of replacing one text by another, [. . .] describes the relation of the two" (238).

thing and means another" (42), explaining, "that cannot really be true [. . .]. If a text says one thing it also means that thing" and "a text that says and means two things must say and mean one complex thing" (42).[43] The assumption that meaning is derivable from a simply correlative relationship between the literal and symbolic not only requires our "willing[ness] to ignore half of what we read" (42), but also represents a trap inherent to *allegoresis*. When applied as an heuristic method, this assumption relies ultimately on another assumption of limited intentionality. Van Dyke explains that these interpretations imagine that "certain meanings, implicit or explicit, constitut[e] the text's intention, while other meanings, although explicit, [are] insignificant" (44-45). By insisting on their own precedence, these examples of *allegoresis* effectively dismiss their source texts and any other interpretation of them—that the truth they have revealed is of the primary significance—and are perhaps more than "stifling": according to Van Dyke, they represent, "in short, a method of suppressing meaning" (45). For her part, Sontag offers a more polemical critique of interpretation, albeit one that has been traditionally directed at allegory: "interpretation is the revenge of the intellect upon art" (7).

But perhaps such is the nature of literary criticism, rooted as it is in rhetoric. Acknowledging that "we may see commentary as specifying one possibility at a time to the exclusion of others" (qtd. in Greenfield 57), Gordon Teskey takes a more holistic approach to epistemology: "The true purpose, therefore, of that increasingly problematic structure of meaning which we accumulate as we read is not to capture the truth but to

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[43] Van Dyke's example of the character Napoleon in Orwell's *Animal Farm* clarifies her point: "Orwell's character is a peculiar synthesis of Stalin, Napoleon, and a fictional pig, and the reader's task is not simply to identify the components but also to understand the nature of the synthesis—the common denominator, the residual incongruities, the shiftings of balance—by following the signs that constitute and develop the relationship" (42).

engage us in further, and more powerful, interpretive play" (57). As Greenfield observes, "however much we may argue for our allegorical interpretation of a work, we mostly remain aware that this way of reading goes beyond other possible responses, superseding someone else's reading" (15); taken together within what Stanley Fish has called the critical conversation, these interpretations engage in the polysemy of meaning and "solve otherwise intractable problems for us" (15). This process "can put the text in a new light, leading those who read the allegorical interpretation to understand the text in a new way" (156), even if "one accepts the allegory because (and only if) it conforms to what one already knows" (156).

Nevertheless, there remains something mysterious about works of literature that impels them through history and compels scholars and critics. Morton Bloomfield reflects in "Allegory as Interpretation" (1972):

> It is the literal sense which is by far the most profound, because it always provides us with a new possibility of interpretation. Any particular signification is unchanging. In order to extend signification we must go back to the literal sense. The literal gives life and continuity to the text. It acts as the corrective force to misinterpretation. (317)

The economy Bloomfield sketches, one in which texts circulate, are read, reread, interpreted and reinterpreted, emphasizes how historical context is requisite to an understanding of interpretation as the site of a (re)generation of literary meaning. Historical context, however, is also central to Sontag's premise that at the heart of any

interpretive project lies a presupposition of "a discrepancy between the clear meaning of the text and the demands of (later) readers" (6). She goes on to explain that interpretation

> seeks to resolve that discrepancy. The situation is that for some reason a text has become unacceptable; yet it cannot be discarded. Interpretation is a radical strategy for conserving an old text, which is thought too precious to repudiate, by revamping it. The interpreter, without actually erasing or rewriting the text, is altering it. (6)

As time passes, she suggests, texts become dated even while their cultural value remains intact, so new interpretations are required as a kind of accommodation or apologia that permanently changes the reception of these texts. This is a cynical view, which implicitly assumes the possibility of fixed, transcendental textual meaning in its objection to a perceived violation that texts must endure under the gaze of (inherently deceitful) scholars and critics. Moreover, Sontag's position also fails to account for "how little allegory inheres in the text itself and how much it depends upon the process of reading" (Greenfield 14). Meaning is not objectively secured within a text, primary or secondary; rather, it remains tentative and is constituted not only by an evaluation of literal and symbolic significations taken together in that text, but by an accretion of these interpretations over time. Texts therefore cannot but become "unacceptable" if they are to be museum pieces closed to interpretation and the world, if such a thing were possible.

Bloomfield's position opposes Sontag's, with the view that "most scholars and literary critics are allegorists" (302),[44] and he sets out the purpose of literary scholarship: "Allegory, in this sense, is the method of modernization, that which has made, makes or keeps modern those literary documents of the past which can bear such a load of continual reinterpretation" (302). The danger here, however, is that "modernization" risks the kind of discursive violence Sontag decries if the present is privileged at the expense of the past.[45] What is needed, it seems, is a balanced interpretive method capable of positing the conditions of possibility for the emergence of a given historical artifact, while also maintaining a sense of urgency or contact with the past. Moreover, such a method needs to be self-reflexive enough not only to consider itself part of an ongoing tradition of interpretation, but to understand that any analysis it produces "along with the analyst, then comes to be reckoned into the 'text' or phenomenon to be explained" (Jameson 47).

And such is the task of this project in providing an *allegoresis* of its own to elaborate on current postcolonial and ecocritical scholarship concerning the semiotics and politics of animal representation in Canadian fiction in English. Mindful of Greenfield's caveat that "as critics, we all construct our paper nests," and that my readings "are—necessarily, by the nature of the form—just as comforting and myopic and suffer from all the same limitations as anyone else's" (16), I endeavour to add any insights I may have to

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[44] Bloomfield qualifies: "Except for textual scholars who attempt to preserve and correct the verbal surface of a work (and who may occasionally use significance 'allegory' to do it), we may put all interpreters of literature into the general category of allegorists—many of whom are modernizers" (302).

[45] Such a danger has an analogue in the act of translation, if transparency is abandoned in favour of fidelity.

a growing body of interpretive work that speaks to important political and cultural issues. The balanced method I am seeking in this project will therefore consider the relation of its own interpretation to the source texts, and to the historical context that these texts mediate. That is, although textual production is privileged by the genre of the literature dissertation, the importance of the referents—actual animals in Canada—and how they are regarded and treated because of their value in a symbolic economy determined by a history of European imperialism, cannot be ignored.

I must also recognize the current historical context in which I write and how this relates to my reading: a time of prolonged environmental crisis, among many others, and the growing public awareness that Globalization is closer to a euphemism for neo-imperial economic policies designed to prop up a first-world mass consumerism that is ultimately both ecologically and socially unsustainable. Of course, this state of affairs has been a long time in the making, but the past itself is nevertheless always lost to us. The question, then, becomes one of historicism, the consideration of a frame sufficient enough to accommodate a study of literary works that precede this current moment. Jameson emphasizes that

> only a genuine philosophy of history is capable of respecting the specificity and radical difference of the social and cultural past while disclosing the solidarity of its polemics and passions, its forms, structures, experiences, and struggles, with those of the present day. (18)

Part of the great appeal of Jameson's idea of history is that it provides an absolute horizon of all reading and interpretation because all things are subject to the passage of

time. Moreover, his "proviso that history is inaccessible to us except in textual form, or in other words, that it can be approached only by way of prior (re)textualization" legitimizes, without recourse to a transcendental signified, interpretive activity (81). Although history itself is inapprehensible, as "Althusser's 'absent cause', Lacan's Real," its effects—social, biological, geological, astronomical—are indisputable, so "One does not have to argue the reality of history: necessity [. . .] does that for us" (81).

Because the process of history is discernable in the recording of material relations between humans and between humans and the environment (from where material resources are derived), it affords a non-transcendental unity upon which literary analyses can adequately be based. For Jameson, past events

> can recover their original urgency for us only if they are retold within the unity of a single great collective story; only if, in however disguised and symbolic a form, they are seen as sharing a single fundamental theme—for Marxism, the collective struggle to wrest a realm of Freedom from a realm of Necessity [. . .]. (19)[46]

A perhaps more dispassionate approach would view history less in terms of class struggle and more as the narrative expression of myriad social relations. That is to say, while history itself "is *not* text, for it is fundamentally non-narrative, and nonrepresentational" (19), historical objects themselves, if (re)contextualized within a unifying materialist understanding of history, are the imminent sites of an interpretation less limited than that

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[46] Jameson views history as a steadfastly material concern, drawing here from both *The Communist Manifesto* and Volume 1 of *Capital*. In the latter, Marx identifies that "the realm of freedom actually begins only where labour which is determined by necessity and mundane considerations ceases; thus in the very nature of things it lies beyond the sphere of actual material production" (*Capital*). In the former, "The history of all hitherto existing society is the history of class struggles" (Marx and Engels 219).

of "more specialized codes" (21). The purpose of interpretation, then, becomes that of "detecting the traces of that uninterrupted narrative, in restoring to the surface of the text the repressed and buried reality of this fundamental history," what Jameson has termed the political unconscious (20).[47]

The concept of the political unconscious "projects a rival hermeneutic" to the various other interpretive methods used by literary scholars, but it is one that is both collaborative and conventional (21). Jamesonian Marxism does not work "so much by repudiating their findings as by arguing its [own] ultimate philosophical and methodological priority" (21). Because its conception of history is inclusive of the issues and contradictions determined by "other interpretive modes or systems," ultimately "Marxism subsumes [them]" (47). Methodologically, however, there are few differences. Like any of these other forms of literary interpretation, Jamesonian Marxism requires that an *allegoresis* be developed from a presumed allegorical element inherent to a given text. This presumption is tenable because language itself is mystifying: "If everything were transparent, then no ideology would be possible, and no domination either: evidently that is not our case" (61). Furthermore,

> if interpretation in terms of [. . .] allegorical master narratives remains a constant temptation, this is because such master narratives have inscribed themselves in the texts as well as in our thinking about them; such allegorical narrative signifieds are a persistent dimension of literary and

[47] By locating the political unconscious within the historical object rather than history itself, Jameson's hermeneutic maintains the Marxist tradition of viewing the mode of production "as the central organizing category of Marxism," while resisting the Marxist "versions of a properly teleological history" discredited by Althusser and his school (Jameson 33).

> cultural texts precisely because they reflect a fundamental dimension of our collective thinking and our collective fantasies about history and reality. (34)

Indeed, not only is *allegoresis* in accord with the ways history and reality are imagined, but an interpretive method itself cannot be conceptualized outside history. As such, Jamesonian Marxism relies of course on the Marxian tradition, but also draws on "the Freudian interpretive system" that centers around "wish-fulfillment, or its more metaphysical variant, 'desire', [. . .] as the very dynamic of our being as individual subjects" (65). Observing, however, that "if the theory of desire is a metaphysic and a myth, it is one whose great narrative events—repression and revolt—ought to be congenial to a Marxist perspective" (67), Jameson also draws on the work of Northrop Frye in order to "transcend individualist categories and modes of interpretation" (68). Recognizing that Frye's "archetypal system" is "comparable only to the psychoanalytic one in the persistence of just such a valorization of desire," it also "has the additional interest for us of conceiving of the function of culture explicitly in social terms" (68). Namely, that "all literature, no matter how weakly, must be informed by what we have called a political unconscious, that all literature must be read as a symbolic meditation on the destiny of community" (70).

The definition of whom this community comprises has been more than a little contentious, but it also presents one of the oft-cited shortcomings of Marxist thought, namely that of the seemingly determining anthropocentricism of the notion of class struggle and political thought. Add to this that Jameson makes no mention of the

environment in his delineation of the political unconscious, and it might seem that Marxism and ecocriticism are incompatible as a unified interpretive strategy. While various leftist critics concede that Marx himself maintained an anthropocentric worldview and thus "was simply immersed in a nineteenth-century conception of progress through scientific advance and industrial control over nature" (Munck 23), there nevertheless is some debate on the subject. At the center of this debate, according to Foster and Burkett, is Marx's description of nature in his *Economic and Philosophic Manuscripts of 1844*, a collection of his early work that otherwise has "often been characterized as deeply ecological" (405). In his delineation of the aspects of estranged labour, Marx states, "Nature is man's *inorganic body*, that is to say, nature in so far as it is not the human body" (*Early* 328). Marx's apparent opposition of the inorganic body of nature as the dominion of the organic body of humankind has been interpreted as his instrumentalist view of nature vis-à-vis human exceptionalism. Foster and Burkett convincingly argue, however, that Marx was instead furthering the dialectic of "Hegel's understanding of inorganic/organic relations" (410). As they state,

> The relation between the organic body of a human being and the inorganic world is one that is conditioned by the subsistence needs of human beings and their capacity through social labor to transform the "external" conditions of nature into means of satisfying these needs. Rather than postulating a sharp ontological break between human beings and nature [. . .], Marx thus attempted to describe the material interconnections and dialectical interchanges associated with the fact that human species-being,

> similar to species-being in general, finds its objective, natural basis outside itself, in the conditioned, objective nature of its existence. (411)

Arguably, Marx's dialectical understanding of inorganic/organic relations, "influenced by the 'immanent dialectics' of materialism" (411), can be understood in biocentric terms because of its avoidance of anthropocentricism. As organic creatures, humans are "dependent on inorganic nature as part of their own species being" (411) while nature itself "is both external to and the material and biological substance of the human condition" (412).

So while any materialist analysis and the political unconscious itself rest within the historical context of human consciousness, a biocentric understanding of social relations allows me to take my approach a step further to suggest that wildlife in Canada has historically constituted a class. Despite the ways in which instrumentalism has insisted upon their status as raw materials, and in which romanticism has insisted upon their status as totems, owing to their permanent subject position in relation to the species boundary wild animals in Canada, in addition to facing habitat loss and being hunted—in some cases to extinction[48]—are *beings* who have been and remain commodified *in corpore*. As such, their value and, more recently, their rights have largely been determined by their economic use to humans. In this way, the history of wildlife parallels

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[48] Modern extinctions are usually the result of a combination of factors such as habitat loss, often stemming from agricultural and logging practices; disease resulting from introduced microbial agents; and over-competition and predation by other introduced, 'invasive' species, including hunting, fishing, and extirpation programs. However, a number of animals in Canada confirmed to be extinct since European colonization were *hunted* out of existence, including three bird species—the Passenger Pigeon, the Labrador Duck, and the Great Auk—and seven mammals—the Sea Mink, the Dawson's Caribou, two species of elk, and three species of wolf.

that of Native Canadians, who were once "forced to succumb to the needs of British imperial expansion [. . .] with the Indians essential as fur traders to the early economy and of less *value* thereafter" (Goldie 5 emphasis added). The key difference here between Natives and animals as classes, however, is the severity of the degree to which commodification can be determined by a species boundary at a further remove than racial difference.

The history of North American wildlife is therefore an ongoing, dynamic confrontation between a settler hegemony and populations of indigenous nonhumans.[49] The image of the wild animal in Canadian fiction in English thus presents a site of "(re)contextualization" in order to "restor[e] to the surface of the text the repressed and buried reality of this fundamental history" (19), specifically that of British imperialism. My approach, however, does not seek to reject the conclusions drawn by other critical methods so much as to assert, after Jameson, the "philosophical and methodological priority" of a biocentric political unconscious (21). To that end, this kind of textual analysis must consider both sign and referent, the imaginary and the real. Otherwise, as Jameson warns,

> to overemphasize the active way in which the text reorganizes its subtext (in order, presumably, to reach the triumphant conclusion that the

[49] Such a dialectical view is in keeping with the cosmology posited by Dennis Lee in *Savage Fields: An Essay in Literature and Cosmology* (1977). He deconstructs the "tidy dualism" of nature/civilization (5) by establishing that "world" "includes 'civilisation' [. . .]. And world's main purpose is to dominate the earth" (4). "Earth," on the other hand, "sets itself against world by tantalizing or humiliating world; it accomplishes this by the fact of existing, which obliges world to recognize that it too is earth—material, alive, and powered by instinct" (4-5). "The first fact of life," he then explains, "is that the beings which make up world and those which make up earth are engaged in war against each other" (11). The "savage fields" in "strife" with one another, in turn, constitute "planet," which, like the biocentric stance I propose in this dissertation, "obliges us to see [. . .] world and earth simultaneously" (10), and presents a cosmology that "makes sense of the terrible era of modernity" (11).

> "referent" does not exist); or on the other hand to stress the imaginary status of the symbolic act so completely as to reify its social ground, now no longer understood as a subtext but merely as some inert given that the text passively or fantasmatically "reflects"—to overstress either of these functions of the symbolic act at the expense of the other is surely to produce sheer ideology, whether it be, as in the first alter-narrative, the ideology of structuralism, or, in the second, that of vulgar materialism. (82)

In the former instance the result would entail the depoliticization of the real and the text's relation to it, while the latter would understand the text as a simple allegorical reflection of the economic base.[50] A more subtle approach is necessary with the texts that comprise this study, one that can account for both their indigenizing function and their subtextual environmental anxiety.

Chapter Breakdown

In accounting for a biocentric political unconscious in Canadian wild animal narratives in English, it is necessary to examine not only the image of the wild animal as a colonial artifact, but also the way in which representations of human knowledge of wildlife serve in a process of indigenization. Indeed, while delineating the semiotics of the image of the wild animal, this dissertation just as much focuses on the relationships a settler subject-position maintains with indigenous wild animals and its foreign Others.

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[50] For more on Jameson's Althusserian theory of levels, see *The Political Unconscious* (32-38).

Because such a subject-position is a matter of nationalist identity and politics, the majority of my dissertation therefore examines works from the turn of the twentieth century, a critical point in Canadian history when national subjectivities initially developed while the country experienced rapid urbanization and industrialization. This period also witnessed the development of the wild animal story, a genre established by Charles G.D. Roberts and Ernest Thompson Seton, both of whom were successful writers publishing in American magazines.

In chapter one, "Theorizing the Image of the Wild Animal and Its Literary Origins," I discuss the way in which the wild animals featured in these foundational stories are uniformly represented as an image of radical Otherness while also providing the settler subject a bridge to indigenous animality. This bridge permits the settler subject-position some claim of kinship—be it biological, spiritual, or observational—to an indigenous animality forever impervious to the forces that the settler subject-position repudiates in its effort to conceal its participation in the colonizing act. Such forces are what I term "exogenous," an expedient portmanteau of "foreign Otherness" that can be applied biocentrically to elements external to the political or regional boundaries of a given settler society. The concept of "exogeneity" aids in understanding the process of settler indigenization as a simultaneous process of de-exogenization, in which certain settler subjects are determined to be permanently exogenous and therefore excluded from the possibility of indigenization. In keeping with a pervasive antimodern sentiment first arising in the latter half of the nineteenth century, these individuals are marked by exogenous traits in the form of either atavistic or overcivilized degeneration, and they are

therefore denied an indigenizing connection to wildlife. In contrast, indigenized settler subjectivity was imagined as a cultural hybridity free of both the taint of exogenous modernity and indigenous savagery, the attainment of which combines scientific study with traditional woodcraft knowledge to understand wildlife. I conclude chapter one by considering how the nature faker controversy (1903-1907) set off by the wild animal story can be understood in terms of the anxieties that changing scientific views of human-animal kinship posed to the indigenizing function of the image of the wild animal.

Chapter two, "The Wild Animal Stories of Charles G.D. Roberts," and chapter three, "The Wild Animal Narratives of Ernest Thompson Seton," each focus primarily on the representation of the interaction of six main human figures with wild animals: "the boy," the woodsman, the Indian, the trophy hunter, the settler, and the squatter. Each of these figures' relative claims to the land is predicated upon both their possession of woodcraft knowledge and their distance from the taint of modern commodity exchange. While Roberts represents wanton forms of hunting as disqualifying their participants from the possibility of indigenization, Seton focuses more on the exogenous traits of various characters relative to the scientifically pure woodcraft knowledge practiced by an autobiographical figure of the naturalist. Although Seton emphasizes that humans and animals share biological and moral similarities far more than Roberts, both writers nevertheless must also present the image of the wild animal as radically Other. In order to remain impervious to the taint of exogenous modernity, the image of the wild animal is conventionally represented with a characteristic dynamic consciousness. I continue my discussion by examining these human-animal relations in Seton's *Two Little Savages*, and

I analyze how Seton's portrayal of exogeneity problematically relies on contemporary discourses of atavism and degeneration in order to valorize Yan, an autobiographical figure of "the boy."

Chapter four, "The Postwar Wild Animal Narrative: Fred Bodsworth's *Last of the Curlews*, Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*, and Marian Engel's *Bear*," considers how conventional representations of the image of the wild animal in these later works constitutes a Canadian literary tradition. I initially discuss that the heightening of the tensions between humans and entire wild animal species signals an assumption, since the turn of the century, that the power of settler society over the land has finally been consolidated. Moreover, the settler subject-position is also vindicated in antimodern terms by its relative superiority to the degeneration represented by exogenous modernity. The pessimism of these works concerning the fate of the wilderness therefore nevertheless triumphs in the success of the settler subject even while iterating deep environmental anxieties.

I conclude my dissertation with a consideration of the possibility of the image of the wild animal being de-colonized by examining Margaret Atwood's dystopian SF novel, *Oryx and Crake*. I argue that the settler episteme that structures human-animal relations cannot be evaded, so the image of the wild animal is an inevitability in contemporary literature. As such, it continues to be represented in the conventional terms of dynamic consciousness in very recent Canadian writing. As well, the settler subject-position, no matter how politically disagreeable it may be, continues to be inflected by social differences and antimodern discourse, both of which predetermine its proximity to

wildlife and wilderness. I then end my discussion by adapting Pauline Wakeham's notion of semiotic taxidermy to suggest a context in which the image of the wild animal can be read self-reflexively as a problematic and insightful colonial artifact. Such a strategy, I maintain, is not an effort to keep old texts relevant, but a means of addressing a colonial inheritance responsible in part for the current environmental crisis.

CHAPTER 1

THEORIZING THE IMAGE OF THE WILD ANIMAL AND ITS ORIGINS

Postcolonial Subjectivity: Between a Rock and a Hard Place

The turn of the twentieth century represents a critical period in Canada in terms of both the development of its national subjectivities and the changing relationship between its settler societies and its wildlife. The conservation movement in Canada, for instance, has a markedly different history from its counterpart in Great Britain and more closely resembles that of its settler-society neighbour to the south. The United States and Canada successfully drafted the North American Declaration of Principles on Conservation in 1909—which led to the establishment of the Canadian Commission of Conservation later that year, a highly influential federal agency—and concluded talks that produced the Convention for the Protection of Migratory Birds in 1916. The British parliament, however, failed for years after the introduction of "the first comprehensive plumage bill" in 1908 to effect comparable bird protection laws (Abbott 268), and the passage of the Plumage Act of 1921 came well after World War I disrupted feather trade networks and much of the demand for feather fashions in Britain. Moreover, while "One interpretation of final constraints upon ornamental feather imports holds that humanitarian principles and a growing appreciation of nature and wild creatures prevailed over narrower materialistic and economic goals," Robin W. Doughty writes, "In England, however, another view suggests that except for the austerity and simplicity of ornament engendered

by World War I, coupled with the imponderable caprices of Dame Fashion herself, feather wearing doubtless would have continued in vogue" (51).[1]

Even as Britain struggled to create conservation legislation at the national level, a diversity of human stakeholders in 1890's North America, including "both hunters' and ornithologically oriented organizations, were increasingly turning to inter-state and continental governance questions as a result of the issues presented by migratory birds, the growing hunting economy and the plumage trade" (Boardman 40). The result of their efforts, a "greater success in terms of early international ventures [. . .]" (40), speaks to the greater symbolic importance of wildlife in North America. Provided that animals remain wild and thus subjects falling outside the bourgeois colonial economy, the image of the wild animal can "demonstrate a potential bridge to the freedom of the non-man in nature" (Goldie 25). Some of the motivation behind this colonial need stems from the dis-ease of land settlement and the reduction of social relations amongst humans and animals to that of commodity exchange. In short, the "freedom" being sought by the settler episteme constitutes an antimodernism, a phenomenon "far more than a response to the effects of market capitalism; it contain[s] a critique of modern culture [. . .]" (Lears 7).

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[1] Europe continues to struggle politically to protect migratory birds. Indeed, a very recent article by the writer Jonathan Franzen for the *New Yorker*, "Emptying the Skies: Songbird Slaughter in the Mediterranean" (2010), details how the European Union continues to have difficulty enforcing "its landmark Birds Directive, which was issued in 1979 and requires member states to protect all European bird species and preserve sufficient habitat for them" (51). Because the European Commission "is reluctant to interfere with sovereign enforcement" (51), Franzen writes, Cyprus and Malta are home to "the most intensive songbird-killing operations in the European Union" (48). Of the five billion birds migrating from Africa to Eurasia each year, "as many as a billion are killed deliberately by humans, most notably on the migratory flyways of the Mediterranean" (53). Franzen evaluates, "While Europeans may think of themselves as models of environmental enlightenment—they certainly lecture the United States and China on carbon emissions as if they were—the populations of many resident and migratory birds in Europe have been collapsing alarmingly in the past ten years" (53).

Roberts's own description of the value of the wild animal story implies this very point. I quote him at length:

> The animal story, as we now have it, is a potent emancipator. It frees us for a little from the world of shop-worn utilities, and from the mean tenement of self of which we do well to grow weary. It helps us to return to nature, without requiring that we at the same time return to barbarism. It leads us back to the old kinship of earth, without asking us to relinquish by way of toll any part of the wisdom of the ages, any fine essential of the "large result of time." The clear and candid life to which it reinitiates us, far behind though it lies in the upward march of being, holds for us this quality. It has ever the more significance, it has ever the richer gift of refreshment and renewal, the more humane the heart and spiritual the understanding which we bring to the intimacy of it. ("Animal" 29).

The two metaphors he uses to express what it is that "we" need to be emancipated from—"a world of shop-worn utilities" and "the mean tenement of self"—I think are quite telling. While the vehicle of the first metaphor might suggest the banality of routine, the tenor itself signifies commodities of reduced value. Similarly, the second metaphor might suggest the limitedness of individual consciousness, but the tenor here signifies a small residence of low value. What Roberts's description of the wild animal story therefore sub-textually conveys is that the emancipation offered by the genre to the reader—albeit an imaginative one—is freedom from the alienating effects of commodity exchange, that aspect of modern culture Lears in another context describes as "a spreading sense of

moral impotence and spiritual sterility—a feeling that life had become not only overcivilized but also curiously unreal" (5). Accordingly, the wild animal story for Roberts is emblematic of the shift in the view of nature in the late nineteenth century in Canada described by Frye, a shift which de-centres the landscape from a colonial "obstacle, blocking the way to the treasures of the East, to be explored only in the hope of finding a passage through it" ("Conclusion" 217), into an antimodern and "visible representative of an order that man has violated" (245).

The position from which this "order" is made intelligible and "visible," however, is that of an ex-centric, postcolonial subjectivity, or what Lawson has identified as the "settler subject-position." Settler cultures like those of North America maintain a "negotiation between the contending authorities of Empire and Native" (par. 11), and the desire for Native authenticity has been textualized in such Second World writing "in a long series of narratives of psychic encounter and indigenization" (par. 17). Specifically in English Canada, its "central organizing problematic" as a cultural endeavour, as Daniel Coleman discusses, "has been the formulation and elaboration of a specific form of whiteness based on a British model of civility. By means of this conflation of whiteness with civility, whiteness has been naturalized as the norm for English Canadian cultural identity" (*White* 5). Settler subjectivity in English Canada thus discursively authorizes its possession of the land by insisting on both its own civility and its whiteness.[2] At the same

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[2] In "'I Followed England Round the World': The Rise of Trans-Imperial Anglo-Saxon Exceptionalism, and the Spatial Narratives of Nineteenth-Century British Settler Colonies of the Pacific Rim" (2009), Penelope Edmonds enumerates that

> Many writers have charted the various manifestations of whiteness and its operations. Homi Bhabha has argued that whiteness, rather than being an "authentic or essential identity," is a "strategy of authority." For writers such as Paul Gilroy and bell hooks,

time, however, it seeks the same ends by strategically positioning itself in close proximity to indigenous culture so that its knowledge of the human and nonhuman inhabitants of the land becomes authoritative.

While this process of indigenization can involve either the incorporation of or rejection of the indigene by the settler subject (Goldie 12-13), a corresponding reaction to foreign Otherness can also be understood as part of this process. Because, as Phyllis M. Senese observes, "Nationalism always demands comparison" (124), in the years following Confederation, the nation-building project of English Canada required a settler subjectivity maintained by ambiguous relationships with a number of its Others, both foreign and domestic. While domestic Others included the First Nations and North American wildlife for their lands and their indigeneity, and the Québécois and Acadiens for their cultural intransigence, foreign Others included non-whites for their physiognomic difference, Americans for the political threat they posed at the forty-ninth parallel, and Europeans—including the British—for their old worldishness. As the mirror image of both the indigene and the wild animal, then, the "exogene," for lack of a better term, presents a further useful challenge to essentialist conceptions of colonial consciousness in terms of a reductionist colonizer/colonized binarism. And like the indigene and wild animal, the exogene sustains a powerful semiotic field in which it ambiguously signifies. I derive *exogene* from the adjectival form *exogenous*, used in geology as a general term for rock "produced by the action of forces external to the

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> "whiteness has been and still is often experienced as terror." For others, whiteness is a global product, not a color at all but a set of political relations. And, for Cheryl Harris, whiteness *is* property. (100)

Although the settler subject-position is thus discursively white, this dissertation will not use the terms interchangeably in order to avoid confusing the discursive category of whiteness for the racial phenotype.

material from which it was formed" ("exogenetic"). Just as sedimentary rock, for instance, is the result of the external forces of erosion and deposition, the exogene is the product of a culture external to a given settler society. More abstractly, as a semiotic effect that does not correspond directly to its referent, the image of the exogene is the product of settler cultural forces quite external to the image's referent homeland.

The term *exogene* thus applies to any subjectivity that begins outside the political boundaries of a settler society and marks an individual as comparatively foreign to a so-called "native-born" settler of that society. Exogeneity, however, is not necessarily limited to first-generation arrivants because the settler subject-position implies an acculturation to hegemonic values that is not always extended to and/or sought out by exogenous subjectivities. That is to say, while Canadian society is patently racialized on the one hand, on the other exogenous cultural practices are widely maintained in so-called "ethnic" communities, as are sometimes anxieties over the loss of exogenous identities. Moreover, within a pluralistic or multicultural settler society exogeneity is not straightforwardly determined by social differences such as language, religion, race, or class. Although racialized terms like "visible minority" are prevalent in Canada, and distinctions are made between foreign-born and Canadian-born individuals even within immigrant communities, the criteria that determine English Canadian settler subjectivity are variable because even the concept of race itself—namely, that of English Canadian whiteness —is socially constructed and therefore historically specific.

In *Who is White? Latinos, Asians, and the New Black/Nonblack Divide* (2003), George Yancey examines American racial politics and observes that current

conceptualizations of whiteness are far more inclusive than they were in the past, generally because European "ethnicity is not very salient to [. . .] current racial identity" (30). While acknowledging possible "limitations," Yancey suggests that whiteness continues to expand, speculating that the "civic assimilation" of Latino and Asian Americans "is not only possible but also likely" in the future (38). He explains,

> it is a mistake to believe that complete assimilation of groups who are not European is impossible because of phenotype differences. While Latino and Asian Americans have clearly not experienced a thinning of their racial attitudes to the same degree as European ethnic groups, there is evidence that these groups are experiencing certain levels of acceptance and incorporation into the dominant culture. (37-38)

However, Yancey also explains that African Americans "live in a racial reality whereby their social status is fixed. It is fixed because they have historically experienced a degree of alienation that ties their racial identity more completely to the historical ravages of racism than for other minority groups" (47).[3] Nevertheless, rather than a rigid conceptualization of race, it is the loss of exogeneity that is the pre-requisite of unconditional settler-subjectivity. The exogene, therefore, lacks the potential for indigenization that the settler subject-position insists it alone possesses.[4] This is to say, the process of indigenization is simultaneously a process of de-exogenization.

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[3] One nevertheless wonders if the same situation would apply to English Canadian whiteness and its differing historical context.

[4] The most famous exception to this schema might be the English-born Archibald Belaney, who adopted the First Nations identity of Grey Owl in the early twentieth century. The controversy that erupted when his origins were posthumously exposed, however, supports my point: although he was widely

In her compelling work *Exalted Subjects: Studies in the Making of Race and Nation in Canada* (2007), Sunera Thobani delineates how "the categorization of human beings into Canadians, Indians, and immigrants" in Canada "ranks them in terms of their legalistic and sociocultural status" (6). "The governance of these subjects/objects has been organized through state policies and popular practices," she argues, which "produc[es] certain subjects as exalted (nationals), others as marked for physical and cultural extinction or utter marginalization (Indians), and yet others for perpetual estrangement or conditional inclusion as supplicants (immigrants, migrants, and refugees)" (6). In order to accord with the biocentric stance of my own project, however, I would add to Thobani's schema North American wildlife as a further example of "subjects/objects" controlled by "state policies and popular practices" in Canada. As well, since my project takes a different, though complementary, approach, I favor my broader idea of exogeneity over her figure of the immigrant since the image of the exogene may include immigrants as well as "hyphenated Canadians," Canadian-born descendents of so-called "visible minorities," and foreign nationals of any race, along with introduced species of plants and animals.[5] Nevertheless, Thobani's discussion of the triangulated political relations amongst humans in Canada offers a useful comparison for

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denounced as an imposter, he has remained an iconic figure in Canada not least because he represents a fulfillment of the settler subject's desire for indigenization.

[5] My only critique of Thobani's work is that it assumes a singular national Canadian identity without accounting for the striking differences between English Canada and Québec. To some degree, Québec and English Canada are exogenous to each other even though they comprise a single state and, as Senese remarks, "an unending dance of the two nationalisms" (122). Indeed, as Senese explains, "The way English and Canadien nationalisms contended to define Canada after 1867 created a nationalist quagmire for non-British immigrants to the new Dominion" (122). When these immigrants established themselves outside Québec, she continues, they traditionally faced "three conditions of settlement": assimilation, adopting the English-Canadian "nationalist definition of the nation's enemies," and cultivating a "hostility to things French and Québécois" (122-23).

my own examination of how the discursive management of the settler subject-position's Others relates to wild animal narratives. As with the indigene, the settler culture "can attempt to incorporate" the exogene with varying degrees of dedication (Goldie 12), evidenced today in Canada by *de jure* multiculturalism and by such popular trends as aesthetic exoticism, the persistence of monarchism, and a comfortable acquiescence to American mass culture. "Conversely," however, the settler culture "may reject" the exogene (12): concomitant racist and Orientalist discourses in Canadian society, for instance, delimit certain representations of exogeneity. Thobani similarly observes that even while non-European immigrants in Canada are always "ontologized as strangers," they can be excluded "as the site of danger or tolerated as sites of diversity" (15).

When exogeneity corresponds to what Alan Lawson identifies as a "cultural homeland" of a Second World society, this homeland can be rendered as "atavistic" and oppressive (par. 13). For many Canadians, such homelands are often represented accordingly as a comparison to an idealized Canadian national self-image. In the English-language culture of English Canada, anti-Americanism is thus typically based on stereotypes of Americans being ignorant, loutish, and aggressive—qualities associated with a perceived American morality as uninhibited as its economic and political power.[6] In their discussion of "The Limits of Cultural Convergence" in *Canada and the United*

[6] These stereotypes tend to apply to Americans more consistently across class distinctions than the corresponding stereotypes of the British. That is, wealthy Americans are as likely to be stereotyped as vulgar and atavistic as the working class, perhaps due to the connotations surrounding the self-made wealth of the "nouveau riche." Since the origins of American fortunes cannot be as easily obscured by notions of "pedigree," aristocracy, or the civilizing mission of empire as they can be with the British, they are traceable to capitalist exploitation: the most successful American industrialists of the nineteenth century and Wall Street executives of the twentieth and twenty-first are called "robber barons," southern wealth is considered to be tainted by a history of plantation slavery and racial discrimination, and the affluence of the west coast is associated with the fraudulence, decadence, and corruption of the Hollywood film industry.

States: Ambivalent Allies (2008), for instance, John Herd Thompson and Stephen J. Randall observe that recent "Canadian critiques of the U.S. 'Other' surged in response to the Bush administration's aggressive international policies" (312). "Canadians," they remark, "had cast Americans as the 'Other' against which they defined their 'imagined community' for more than two centuries" (311-12). They go on to cite a 2003 *Toronto Star* op-ed piece, "Anti-Americanism Fact of Daily Life in Toronto, Canada," in which Jacqueline Swartz, an American expatriate living in Toronto, claims Canadians stereotype Americans as "pushy, self promoting, arrogant, individualistic, greedy, out for yourself, and imperialistic—they want to conquer the world" (312). "Swartz had not yet encountered," Thompson and Randall muse, "the Canadian stereotypes of Americans as immoral, racist, and hypocritical, but she had only lived in Canada for a short time. Like virtually all Americans, she had been blissfully unaware that she had been playing the villain in the melodrama of Canadian national identity" (312).[7]

At the same time, however, in order to distinguish itself from Europe, English Canada just as readily identifies itself with a concept of Americanness in order to maintain a triangulated relationship with Great Britain, what Philip Resnick calls "an ongoing dialogue" between a Canadian sense of its own Americanness and Europeanness (82). As Resnick notes in *The European Roots of Canadian Identity* (2005),

> Being North American can open the door to a more capacious sense of self, to a future-oriented mentality, to a greater willingness to champion technological and scientific experimentation and individual endeavour.

[7] For an interesting literary analysis of anti-Americanism in Canada, see Glenn Willmott's "Canadian Ressentiment" (2001).

> These characteristics are something Canadians share with Americans far more than they do with Europeans. (82)

Canadian stereotypes of the British accordingly present a fitting contrast to stereotypes of Americans by tending to focus on the effects of old world overcivilization, such as effeteness, prudishness, and snobbery.[8] The differences English-speaking Canadians have felt from their British counterparts first started because of Europe's physical distance from Canada and "a harsh North American geographical climate," in which settlers were "thrown back on their own resources, and far removed from old world conventions and norms" (73). The result was a sense that "A rougher and readier equality would prevail in the British North American colonies than in the United Kingdom" (73). So even while national identity in English Canada in the years after Confederation was predicated on a sense of Britishness that implied a "racial identification with the British Isles," this identarian concept was also forced "to be extended to encompass a citizenry of more diverse origins" due to "demographic and economic reasons" (25). Britishness, then, came to connote something different to settler subjectivity in English Canada from its now exogenous denotation.[9] Eventually, this discursive break

> would spark something closer to a love-hate relationship of its own. At one level, most Canadians were prepared to identify with British symbols

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[8] To account for members of the British working class who do not fit stereotypes of overcivilization, a secondary set of stereotypes based on notions of atavism come into play: northern accents, football hooliganism, alcoholism, etc.

[9] Daniel Coleman draws many of the same conclusions in *White Civility: The Literary Project of English Canada* (2006). This notion of Britishness, according to Coleman, was appropriated in nineteenth-century English Canada to the point that "Canadian Britishness became, in fact, superior to British Britishness" (24).

> and the British Empire until 1945. At another, one began to see increasing rejection of the trappings of the British metropole, e.g., *ressentiment* towards the snootiness often displayed by visiting Englishmen in Canada, the banning of British honours like knighthoods for Canadians by the 1920s, and growing desire to hive off on one's own. (73-74)

The relationship English Canada has had towards Britain thus shares the same characteristics as the one it holds with the United States. Indeed, as Carl Berger observes of the political movement in favour of imperial federation at the turn of the century, its followers "believed that Canada could attain national status only by maintaining the connection with the Empire and by acquiring an influence within its councils" (1). That is, although as "a state of mind" imperial unity may have represented a Canadian identity as part of a larger political entity (2), it nevertheless stemmed from a concern over Canada's specific future within that framework. Moreover, much of the imperialist sentiment in Canada at this time was a response to the threat of continentalism posed by the prospect of unrestricted free trade with the United States, which was thought "would [. . .] ultimately end in political extinction" (2). While "imperial unity began as a defence of Canada," as Berger remarks (2), we can understand it in terms of Canada's triangulated relationship with its imperial metropoles. Such a relationship not only conveniently idealizes Canada as a bridge between two extremes, but the exogeneity of both the US and Great Britain represents a modernity for which the image of the wild animal serves as an antimodern corrective for an indigenizing settler subjectivity in English Canada.

Antimodernism and the Threat of Degeneration

The parameters of this modernity, which met with "transatlantic dissatisfaction" (Lears 4) at the turn of the century, were defined by expanding market capitalism. According to Jackson Lears, once "Europeans and Americans alike began to recognize that the triumph of modern culture had not produced greater autonomy (which was the official claim)," they began to experience "a spreading sense of moral impotence and spiritual sterility" (4-5).[10] Pervasive within the cultural hegemonies of the West, various forms of antimodernism

> stemmed from revulsion against the process of rationalization first described by Max Weber—the systemic organization of economic life for maximum productivity and of individual life for maximum personal achievement; the drive for efficient control of nature under the banner of improving human welfare; the reduction of the world to a disenchanted object to be manipulated by rational technique. (7)

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[10] Related to this point is Heidegger's notion of "standing reserve." As Smith explains, "Heidegger asserts that modern technology [. . .] is a mode of 'bringing forth' into unconcealment," a mode by which "Man and Nature are revealed as raw material to be fashioned and transformed and then held in a standby state for ready use. [. . .] Everything, that is, is transformed into 'standing reserve' (*Bestand*). All of reality, Being, is transformed into standing reserve, man included" (169-70). The result of this transformation appears to be the very condition of modernity experienced at the turn of the century. Because humans "cannot control the *essence* of technology because modern man himself [*sic*] is determined by [that] same essence," and, moreover, "*modern technology determines how reality is viewed and how man views himself*" (169 emphasis in original), "The things that appear and surround us are totally evanescent and have no presence or weight whatsoever. We are left with the total objectlessness of standing reserve. In effect, nothing is really present; 'reality' has been transferred into nonappearing abstraction" (170). Smith observes, "In this regard, standing reserve has the same status for Heidegger that 'capital' has for Marxists. And in each case, our own creation comes back to enslave us" (170).

Although Lears takes great pains to avoid "The Marxist idiom, shopworn though it may be" (9), he nevertheless finds it "inescapable" in his discussion of antimodernism and the history of the United States: "rationalization promoted many interests but primarily those of an emergent national ruling class—still embryonic, torn by tension, sometimes barely cohesive, but an incipient ruling class nonetheless" (9). In order "to stabilize production and consolidate control over a national market," the American bourgeoisie "embraced the functional rationality and technological innovations of organized capitalism," in spite of the "popular rhetoric [which] spoke of 'subduing nature'" (9). Behind a popular discourse of progress, that is, were a number of material factors that engendered a widely observed "feeling that life had become not only overcivilized but also curiously unreal" (5). This sentiment is echoed by George Altmeyer's study of "the Laurier years as a time of optimism" in Canada: "it tends to conceal a certain uneasiness about what this new era of industrialization, urbanization and materialism meant for people on a personal level" (98). "Canadian response to rapid urbanization," he continues, "was generally unfavourable. A recurring motif in contemporary journals portrayed city life as artificial [. . .]" (99).

The feeling of overcivilization at the end of the nineteenth century was thus a response to "modern culture in all its dimensions: its ethic of self-control and autonomous achievement, its cult of science and technical rationality, its worship of material progress" (4-5). Deriving from long historiographic and religious traditions in both the US and Britain, as a teleological discourse overcivilization posits that "man [is] a depraved creature whose history [is] not a linear path of progress but a cyclical process

of development and decline. The inevitable end of all human societies [is] not perfection [. . .]" (4). While controversy surrounded the "'morbid self-consciousness' [of] the Decadent movement in art and literature" in Britain (49), in the US "the notion that America had become overcivilized occurred naturally to the intellectual heirs of Cotton Mather and Thomas Jefferson. Puritans and republicans alike had been haunted by fears of urban 'effeminacy' and 'luxury' produced by material progress" (4). In the US, a number of prevalent antimodernists were especially concerned with the "'feminization' of American culture" and an apparent "decline of vital energy in art and life" (104). Lutts further observes, "they traced enervation to feminization because they equated masculinity with forcefulness. To men who feared a loss of will, both in themselves and in the culture generally, women offered a convenient target" (104).[11] As Misao Dean also explains, "The perceived 'crisis of masculinity' in English, American and Canadian cultures consisted in the belief that men were becoming 'soft', physically weak and morally corrupt through sedentary or industrial work" (3-4). The aesthetic response, she continues,

> portrayed British colonies as appropriate fields for the exercise of British masculinity, preferably through a "cleansing" encounter with the natural world in adventures which emphasised "instinctive" reactions; the ability of the frontiersmen or backwoodsmen to adapt to and overcome any

[11] The gender crisis perceived by antimodernism was ubiquitous enough that even Roberts's cousin, the Canadian poet Bliss Carman, believed that

> the popularity of Kipling, Stevenson, and other "masculine world wanderers" suggested a widespread desire for spontaneity. "We had become so over-nice in our feelings, so restrained and formal, so bound by habit and use in our devotion to the effeminate realists, that one side of our nature was starved," he wrote in 1894. "We must have a revolt at any cost." (Lears 106)

> conditions was the stuff of popular novels set in the American West, along the Canadian Railway or in south central Africa. (4)

Ironically, the very culture that these works imply is in decline—remembering that *decadence* derives from the Latin *decadere*, to fall apart or to fall down ("decadence")—was in fact undergoing a sustained expansion.[12] Any ambivalence about civilization thus seems imaginatively resolved by the aesthetic valorization of previous economic modes of production and their social formations; both urban and rural readers could continue enjoying the spoils of industrialization and urban market capitalism even as the very things these readers venerated were being supplanted.

Thus, the Canadian context of the late nineteenth century was particularly accommodating to the discourse of overcivilization because of the role nature had come to take as a therapeutic remedy to the ills of modern urban life.[13] Moreover, the exogeneity that could be attached to overcivilization functioned to bolster the self-

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[12] Statistics Canada reports the following information in a census summary table of the percentage of Canadians living in an urban space comprising 1000 or more persons: 13% in 1851, 16% in 1861, 19% in 1871, 25% in 1881, 31% in 1891, 37% in 1901, 45% in 1911, 49% in 1921, 54% in 1931, etc. (Canada). Based on this information, almost half of all Canadians were therefore living in urban areas at the height of the wild animal story's popularity in the first decades of the twentieth century.

[13] As a paradigm, antimodernism produced a variety of remedies to overcivilization, many of which were imaginatively sought, both spatially and temporally, in other romantic, un-rationalizable locations in various media. Lears expands:

> To a bourgeoisie which seemed stagnant and vulnerable to revolution, some antimodern cultural critics exalted robust simplicity, moral certainty, and the ability to act decisively. This activist version of antimodernism preached regeneration through preindustrial craftsmanship and a pastoral "simple life," or posed the violent lives of medieval warriors as a refreshing contrast to the blandness of modern comfort. Other more inward-turning antimodernists escaped the emotional constraints of bourgeois life and the spiritual limitations of a positivistic or therapeutic outlook by exploring the joys and terrors of medieval or Oriental religious belief. Those who recognized problematic qualities of modern identity sought a wider selfhood by embracing the "childlike" or "feminine" aspects of premodern character. Disparate as their odysseys were, these critics shared a common view that modern culture had narrowed the range and diffused the intensity of human existence. They longed to rekindle possibilities for authentic experience, physical or spiritual—possibilities they felt had existed before, long ago. (57)

definition of the settler subject-position in English Canada. Altmeyer, for instance, observes of some social critics at the turn of the century: "Taking stock [of] the overall physical condition of Canadian manhood, they saw in Nature a way of rejuvenating a rapidly degenerating race. Again the cause of this malady was urban, industrial life" (102). Further, such a life, and the deterioration it forced, was understood at the time as resulting from "the increase in the number of factories and other industries incidental to the demands of trade" (102). Canada's antimodern "answer" to the problems posited by an exogenous modernity, therefore, "was to show how the trials of colonial settlement were a kind of crucible that refined the civility inherited from Britain [. . .]" (Coleman *White* 24). These antimodern trials were then codified in Romantic and Darwinian terms in order to represent "natural" mechanisms to correct for the flaws inherent to modern human societies exogenous to Canada:

> What has come to be called "the Northern myth" was central to this figuration of Canada as a testing and improving ground for effete European manhood. According to this myth, the rigours of life in a stern, unaccommodating climate demanded strength of body, character, and mind while it winnowed away laziness, overindulgence, and false social niceties. Canada's placement in the North meant that by a process of social Darwinism, over time its population would shed all over-bred, aristocratic European delicacy as well as repel "southern" lassitude and hedonism. (24)

In effect, the Northern myth works on both spatial and temporal axes: spatially, human contact with the irrational aspects of Romantic nature—an ungovernable climate—is equated with material success in a rationalized, patriarchal society; temporally, this contact occurs over generations as the survival outcomes of social Darwinism.[14]

The Northern myth is indisputably tied to post-Confederation nationalism in Canada since it speaks to a prominent "anxiety in Canadian settler society to address its dependency upon and belatedness in relation to the metropolitan centre," represented by both Britain and the US (22-24).[15] As Daniel Francis explains, "The 'cult of the North' gained coherent expression for the first time shortly after Confederation with a short-lived but influential group of young nationalists who called themselves Canada First" (*National* 153).[16] Although the Canada First movement did not last very long, Francis elaborates, "what today we recognize as the Aryan Nation theme it articulated gained great popularity in subsequent decades. It was believed that the struggle to survive in a

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[14] The axes the Northern myth operates on also correspond to McClintock's concepts of *anachronistic space* and *panoptical time*. In the case of the former, the rigours of the Canadian landscape are timeless in that they are both primordial and continual. In the latter, history becomes a spectacle that can be wholly visualized as "a global allegory of 'natural' social difference" (McClintock 37).

[15] One aspect of Atwood's thesis in *Survival*, "that every country or culture has a single unifying and informing symbol at its core" (31), is traceable to this "settler anxiety." According to Atwood, Canada's symbol, "Survival, *la Survivance*," has manifested itself in contemporary writing as cultural survival "in English Canada now while the Americans are taking over [. . .]" (32).

[16] Roberts was connected to the Canada First movement indirectly by his working relationship with the historian and journalist Goldwin Smith, for whom he edited the literary magazine *The Week* for a six-month period in 1883-84. The two men had a falling out, however, when, after the demise of the movement, Smith supported the idea of the annexation of Canada by the USA "as a prerequisite to moral unification of the Anglo-Saxon race" ("Smith"). Roberts left the editorship because, as he related in an interview to Lorne Pierce in 1927, "I was a staunch Canadian, and he was full of annexation, and he would not allow me to edit the paper on my own policy. He wanted to dictate" (Whalen "Lorne"). The character of Roberts's nationalism, however, changed over the course of his life: "his earlier advocacy of complete independence for Canada transformed into the concept of autonomy within the British Empire" (Adams 56). Like many others in favour of Imperial Federation, Roberts viewed it as a means of staving off the inevitable annexation of a Canadian republic by the United States.

northern climate created a set of national characteristics [. . .] which set us apart as a separate people" (154). Such a nationalist discourse is of course an indigenizing one, in which the settler subject is able to tap into indigeneity itself through a prolonged contact with nature and genetically express this indigeneity across generations. Like conceptions of nature itself in the late nineteenth century, the Northern myth is positioned at an intersection of Romanticism and Darwinism: the physical features of a nation's environment determine in part the heredity of its citizens.[17]

As a form of indigenization, the Northern myth constitutes a progress narrative by representing the landscape of Canadian wilderness as an antimodern space in which the negative effects of overcivilization could be cast away. Moreover, Canada's status as a young federal state at the turn of the century—Confederation having just occurred in 1867—also lent itself to such narratives because of its assumed potential for maturation and national development. However, because progress narratives are necessarily contingent upon some opposing idea of decline or regression, turn-of-the-century works set in the Canadian wilderness consistently subscribe to the notion of "degeneration." This widespread discourse was quickly applied to evolutionary thought in the decades following Darwin's publication of *On the Origin of Species* (1859) and *The Descent of Man* (1871). As McClintock explains, "From the outset, the idea of progress that illuminated the nineteenth century was shadowed by its somber side. Imagining the degeneration into which humanity could fall was a necessary part of imagining the

[17] Darwinist eugenics was popular throughout the European sphere of influence in this period. First articulated in the 1880s by Darwin's cousin Sir Francis Galton, eugenics led to a variety of racial hygiene policies before being largely abandoned by the end of the Second World War.

exaltation to which it could aspire" (46). Edward Chamberlin and Sander Gilman identify degeneration as "an element of a dialectic of thought which became in the Hegelian heyday of the second half of the nineteenth century a nice balance to the idea of progress" (xiii). They go on to state,

> And while the idea of degeneration was in a sense only one side of the coin, it was the magical side, for it seemed to be the image of a profound and disturbing power that operated in the universe. The theologians and the scientists of the period shared very little, but the common ground they both claimed was the perception that the only kind of account that really mattered was an account of decline and fall. Just as the nature of evil has always had a more compelling appeal to the imagination than the nature of goodness, so the idea of degeneration engaged the nineteenth-century mind with a troubling sense that here, perhaps, might be found the essential reality. (x)

Early evolutionary science and genetics were heavily inflected by the theological doctrine of original sin. The starting point of human progress became accepted in scientific discourse as the wild animality at the vital core of all life, but this conceptualization was also a correlative of the Judeo-Christian belief in the Fall of Man. The idea of civilization, then, became thought of as an affect or veneer that was continuously threatened by entropic forces.

These forces in turn could be imagined as originating from within or without Western civilization or so-called white Christendom. On the one hand, throughout the

nineteenth century degeneration was applied variously to external factors in the developing science of racial biology, namely concerning what was then believed to be the imminent extinction of a number of indigenous peoples, the hastening extinction of freed Blacks in post-Emancipation America, and the 'tropicalization' of Europeans in the less temperate colonies of the global south.[18] On the other hand, "By mid-century the idea of degeneration was beginning to take hold in fields outside race biology—in medical pathology, psychiatry, and criminology. The fear was growing that degenerations within civilized peoples threatened civilization itself" (Stepan 112). "Paradoxically, one end point of extinction discourse," Patrick Brantlinger observes, "from the late nineteenth century on, was widespread anxiety about the degeneration or even extinction of the white race, as in Madison Grant's *Passing of the Great Race* (1908)" (15). Nancy Stepan explains that in the mid nineteenth century

> classes and other social groups were in the process of being socially reconstructed as alien races in the midst of society who threatened civilization with racial degeneration and adulteration of the stock. Was the European race, the progressive race by definition, destined to undergo its own decay within, from the unnatural confusion of different races and classes? (109)

Stepan notes "the extraordinary inclusiveness with which the term 'degeneracy' was used" (112), as it was applied to differentiate such "classes and other social groups" like

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[18] For more on the ideology of degeneration as it applied to the indigene, the African, and the European, see Patrick Brantlinger's *Dark Vanishings: Discourse on the Extinction of Primitive Races, 1800-1930* (2003) and Nancy Stepan's "Biological Degeneration: Races and Proper Places" (1985).

criminals, juvenile delinquents, prostitutes, homosexuals, biracial individuals, European Jews, and the developmentally delayed. The term also took on a particularly close tie to any number of perceived sexual pathologies, as Sander Gilman observes, because the modern city, "as opposed to the image of the garden, is yet another image of the fall from grace" and came to be "represented as the breeding ground of perverse and unnatural sexuality" ("Sexology" 88). Sexual decadence, as with other forms of behaviour deemed socially degenerate, was taken as evidence of the essentially animalistic nature of all humans, be they lascivious savages, atavistic libertines or apostate gentlefolk. As a result, turn-of-the-century animal narratives frequently valorize homosocial collectives, such as hunting parties and boys' playgroups, as normative and progressive.

Because the white race was perceived at the turn of the century as vulnerable to animality, the most unequivocal form of atavism was understood at this time to be the physical manifestation of animal characteristics on the human body, as practitioners of scientific racism "theorized the appearance of these signs as a reversion to some earlier moment of species history" (Seitler 7). As Dana Seitler illustrates of this particular concept of degeneration,

> Atavism functioned as a way to make visible, to exteriorize on the surface of the body, characteristics that might otherwise conceal themselves in the more undetectable realms of the body's interior spaces. Constituted by discernible signs of ancestral recurrence in a present-tense body, atavism made the past of the human present, and it rendered this past not only

> visible but material, figuring forth the modern human subject as a subject of the deep past. (6)

As such, atavism was a seminal pseudo-Darwinian concept undergirding scientific racism in the late nineteenth century, a field McClintock describes as "the most authoritative attempt to place social ranking and social disability on a biological and 'scientific' footing" (49). Reminiscent of the related pseudo-science of phrenology, supposedly atavistic individuals were identified according to a number of arbitrary physiognomic criteria:

> the length and shape of the head, protrusion of the jaw, the distance between the peak of the head and brow, flatheadedness, a 'snouty' profile, a long forearm (the characteristic of apes), underdeveloped calves (also apelike), a simplified and lobeless ear (considered a stigma of sexual excess notable in prostitutes), the placing of the hole at the base of the skull, the straightness of the hair, the length of the nasal cartilage, the flatness of the nose, prehensile feet, low foreheads, excessive wrinkles and facial hair. (McClintock 50)

Toward the end of the nineteenth century, at the height of imperialism and the popularity of the wild animal story, the animalistic disfigurement of the human body was thus increasingly "drawn on to identify and discipline atavistic 'races' within the European race: prostitutes, the Irish, Jews, the unemployed, criminals and the insane" (McClintock 50). Atavism as such represents the converse of the image of the wild animal: rather than a progressive form of indigenous animality to be appropriated by the modern settler

subject in a bid for cultural hybridization, "atavism signal[s] a retrogressive animalism" to be applied to certain classes and social groups to mark them as exogenous to North America and therefore excluded from settler subjectivity (Seitler 7).

Indigenizing Settler Subjectivity in Early Canadian Wild Animal Narratives

The settler subject-position occupied by a progressive figure is regularly identifiable in both Roberts's and Seton's works at the turn of the century. Although the human characters in these texts have been categorized before by a number of scholars, these figures have not been discussed in terms of settler subjectivity and its constitutive discourses of overcivilization and woodcraft.[19] The figures of boys born and raised in the Canadian countryside and backwoodsmen, for instance, articulate with their intimate knowledge of woodcraft an indigenizing subjectivity unencumbered by European and American overcivilization and imaginatively freed of a sense of the "alien within." However, because the self cannot ultimately be merged with the Other—in this case, representations of de-exogenized Europeans and colonized North American wildlife—indigenization as a completed process is unattainable, so any image in its service, as Goldie says of the image of the indigene, "constantly reproduces itself, a pervasive autogenesis" (6). Reified and divorced from its referent, the image of the wild animal marks the imaginary boundary between the irrational, colonized Other and the civilized, colonizing Self. This boundary represents in a Marxian sense the line between freedom

[19] See Thomas Dunlap's "'The Old Kinship of Earth': Science, Man and Nature in the Animal Stories of Charles G.D. Roberts" (1987), W.J. Keith's "A Choice of Worlds: God, Man and Nature in Charles G.D. Roberts" (1974), and Joseph Gold's "The Ambivalent Beast" (1984).

and necessity, and it is perhaps most clearly discernible in Roberts's and Seton's works by the ways in which the species boundary is maintained by Romantic and Darwinian discourses. Not only are these discourses kept in creative tension within these texts by this boundary, but irresolvable critical debates surrounding the wild animal story, which generally involve questions of anthropocentrism, authenticity, and genre, are also predicated on the assumption of radical difference between the human and the animal. While these debates are themselves germane to what Jameson might identify as "this or that local law of a fragmented social life, [or] this or that subsystem of a complex and mushrooming cultural superstructure" (10), a biocentric reading of Roberts's and Seton's works offers an interpretation at a wider theoretical horizon that accounts for the dialectic of the colonial history of North American wildlife.[20]

The symbolic order to which animals are subject in Canada is a system of power-knowledge fundamentally rooted in this dialectic.[21] Roberts is quite explicit on this point in his description of the wild animal story, which bears repeating in part: reading such works,

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[20] It bears repeating that I hope the hermeneutic attempted by this dissertation will complement the body of interpretive works on wild animal narratives, even if it "subsumes such apparently antagonistic or incommensurable critical operations, assigning them an undoubted sectoral validity within itself, and thus at once canceling and preserving them" (Jameson 10). That is to say, I hope my interpretation adds to this field of inquiry, even if a wider theoretical horizon might generate an interpretation that risks bulldozing the works of others upon which it also relies.

[21] Following a number of ecocritics and environmental studies scholars, I borrow here from the work of Michel Foucault. I think his ideas of both power-knowledge and governmentality are particularly useful in these fields, and this latter concept has indeed been further developed into the concept of eco-governmentality or environmentality. For more detailed information on eco-governmentality, refer to Eric Darier's *Discourses of the Environment* (1999), Arun Agrawal's *Environmentality: Technologies of Government and the Making of Subjects* (2005) and Sam Binkley and Jorge Capetillo-Ponce's *A Foucault for the 21st Century: Governmentality, Biopolitics and Discipline in the New Millennium* (2009).

> helps us to return to nature, without requiring that we at the same time return to barbarism. It leads us back to the old kinship of earth, without asking us to relinquish by way of toll any part of the wisdom of the ages, any fine essential of the "large result of time." ("Animal" 29)

What he describes is an imaginary synthesis of self and Other, that vanishing point of indigenization, and he seems to be unaware that this synthesis is impossible. The so-called "wisdom of the ages" or "large result of time" are anthropogenic, positivist constructs that determine the value of categories like "nature," "barbarism," and "earth." Moreover, these constructs have resulted from the very acts of epistemic and historiographic violence accompanying colonization that indigenization seeks to conceal or exorcize. Roberts's appeal to knowledge, in that the animal story "reinitiates us" into the wilderness, cannot engender such a synthesis because such knowledge is inseparable from the power of the colonizer. That is, as Goldie figuratively observes of the semiotic field of the indigene, "the chess match can appear to vary but there is still a definable limit to the board. The necessities of indigenization can compel the players to participate but they cannot liberate the pawn" (18).

What can be effected in participation, however, is the "evocation of cultural codes which are ideological" (3), as Misao Dean demonstrates in her unmasking of Roberts's (m)animals as "simulacra of social subjects" whose "motivations, actions, and fates are created by the conventions of realist narrative, turn-of-the-century gender politics, and the historical intersection of biological and sociological discourses" (6). Although Dean anthropomorphizes the animals in Roberts's works, she does in some sense locate the

image of the wild animal, albeit as these (m)animals, who "reproduce the selfhood of the reader [. . .]" (4). According to Dean,

> By encouraging identification with the animal subject, and with the position of the knowledgeable backwoodsman who lingers in the text as author and authoriser, the stories literally "naturalise" the position of the reader as the result of this supposed primal return to the essence of being-in-nature. (4)

Although Dean's reading does not address questions of indigenization or the innovation of the wild animal story itself (as a genre), she is particularly insightful to observe how the stories position the reader. The stories do indeed rely on the reader's identification with the animal subject, but the imaginative "return to the essence of being-in-nature" promised by such an identification incorporates the reader as an ex-centric, post-colonial subjectivity within an indigenizing narrative because the stories are rehearsals of woodcraft. Their wide appeal and apparent authenticity perhaps have more to do with the compulsive desire on the reader's part to engage in a process of indigenization than with the reader being simply tricked by "the work of politics" of the stories' realism (14). Dean's contention that "The stories demand analysis as 'realist', that is, as attempts to create an illusion of reality" thus falls flat rhetorically in some sense because it assumes that the reader is somehow predisposed to "judg[ing] naively that they [the stories] reproduce reality" (3).

But what should otherwise straightforwardly represent a straw-man argument on Dean's part—because Roberts's wild animal stories, like Seton's, would unequivocally

seem to be works of realist fiction and were marketed as such—nevertheless seems necessary because the critical tradition has largely privileged the texts' scientific validity over their status as fiction. Indeed, a great deal of analyses of Roberts's and Seton's works describe their authors as rather heroic natural historians. For instance, the introduction to Ethel Hume Bennett's 1947 collection of Roberts's wild animal stories, *Thirteen Bears*, first establishes Roberts's ethos as a naturalist by depicting his engagement with nature as a lifelong endeavour: on the Tantramar as a boy, "he showed unusual curiosity about the wild creatures of the fields and woods, and with the years this interest and enthusiasm became an absorbing passion" (Hume Bennett v). Instead of wasting his youth in idleness, "He spent long holidays penetrating far into the forest by canoe on the little lakes and rivers and on foot following 'the secret trails'" (v). While Roberts is a relentless pursuer of knowledge, the secrets of nature are waiting to be unlocked by the scientific observation of the "penetrating" naturalist. Moreover, the nationalist icon of his canoe suggests a permit for him to conduct such studies as an indigenized Canadian. Almost an anthropologist, Roberts relies on local informants, according to Hume Bennett, to accomplish his work: "He learned from trappers and hunters how to construct blinds and hide-outs from which he could watch, unnoticed, the forest's inhabitants as they went about their daily business [. . .]" (v). By remaining hidden and "unnoticed," his ethos is further strengthened by a "scientific form of the virtue of modesty," which "guarantees that the modest witness is the legitimate and authorized ventriloquist for the object world, adding nothing from his mere opinions, from his biasing embodiment" (Haraway "Modest" 224). Thus, for Hume Bennett, "His

observations and conclusions have undoubtedly added much to our knowledge of Canadian wild life" (vi), despite that the studies she describes were conducted in his youth and that Roberts himself spent most of his life residing in cities far removed from canoes: New York, Paris, London, and Toronto. Like the figure of "the reader" as naïf, then, the figure of Roberts as naturalist proves problematically limited. Instead of reading Roberts's animals as deceptively "masquerad[ing] as 'other'" (Dean 5) or insisting on the objectivity of his scientific methodology, it seems more useful to engage with such representations in terms of the image of the wild animal. Such an approach allows for an ecocritical consideration of the relations between the image and its divorced referent and how these relationships are politically mediated as a Marxian dialectic.

Woodcraft: "man's disquieting eye"

The same balance between instinct and reason that predicates the image of the wild animal is also a central facet of Roberts's and Seton's wild animal narratives. As Roberts explains in "The Animal Story" (1902), the wild animal story functions to "help us to return to nature, without requiring that we at the same time return to barbarism" (29). Wild animal narratives therefore habitually valourize woodcraft, a crucial and indigenizing colonial discourse. Woodcraft represents a far more complex form of specialized knowledge than its *OED* definition would imply: "(chiefly *N. Amer.*, *Austral.*, etc.) applied esp. to such knowledge of forest conditions as enables one to maintain oneself or make one's way" ("woodcraft"). More concretely, woodcraft includes the survival skills necessary to live in the wilderness, such as camping, hunting, and fishing,

but it also includes a proficiency in plant and animal identification, an understanding of animal behaviour, and skills in first aid. What these skills ultimately impart to their possessor is a naturalized feeling of belonging in the untamed landscape.

In Roberts's and Seton's wild animal stories, woodcraft is acquirable for *both* humans and animals, and it is perhaps most clearly evident in the articulation of human-animal interactions since these encounters are predicated upon the human characters' relative proficiency in this form of expert knowledge. In a discussion of early Canadian literature, Daniel Coleman underscores the importance for the settler of what Roberts would understand as woodcraft:

> Through proximity to Indigenous culture, the settler is represented as having become natural or native to the Canadian landscape; he learns the ways of the land and becomes intimate with its lore, ecology, and inhabitants to such a degree that other characters consider his local knowledge authoritative. ("National" 145)

Woodcraft as a learning of "the ways of the land" not only represents a "strategy follow[ing] the pattern of 'indigenization' theorized [. . .] as essential to the discourse of colonial settlement" (145), it is inherently mediated in a North American context by the penetrative and appropriative colonial gaze since the white settler gains this knowledge by interacting with both Natives and wildlife. Moreover, since Roberts's and Seton's wild animal narratives themselves in some sense serve as manuals of woodcraft for their (white) readers, they rehearse the very indigenizing function they imaginatively depict. The potency of this function is heightened by the way this colonial gaze also mediates

Native woodcraft in their wild animal stories: when they do factor in the narrative, Natives tend to use their woodcraft for (needed) financial remuneration from whites or as part of their role as a "native informant." What is far more striking, however, is their relative absence from the stories as a whole. More often than not, Natives are mentioned in the context of how successfully a white character has emulated their skills. It is in this sense of absent-presence that these stories sub-textually convey their colonial presumption of the trope of the dying Indian. More to the point, the presence of Natives in these works would only detract from the value woodcraft has for the indigenization of the settler subject.

As a colonial discourse, woodcraft may appropriately be viewed in relation to other discourses in the service of the "Enlightenment project [that] coincided with the imperial project" (McClintock 34). In her discussion of domesticity and commodity racism of the nineteenth century, Anne McClintock describes this overlapping project as a period when "hosts of explorers, botanists, natural historians and geographers set out with the vocation of ordering the world's forms into a global science of the surface and an optics of truth" (34). Like exploration and ethnographic accounts, studies and sketches of American plants and animals, or cartographical projections, the function of woodcraft, beyond its accepted objective of aiding the settler in wilderness survival, has been dedicated to a process of indigenization and to establishing European dominance in "not only a boundless imperium of commerce but also a boundless imperium of knowledge"

(23).[22] Further, in order to construct and perpetuate these combined imperia, according to McClintock, European domestic relations were replicated in a form of colonial control: "animals, women and colonized peoples were wrested from their putatively 'natural' yet, ironically, 'unreasonable' state of 'savagery' and inducted through the domestic progress narrative into a hierarchical relation to white men" (35).[23] In short, "the ways of the land" and the beings who populated it were domesticated by any number of discourses of specialized knowledge while the dominion of European settler patriarchy expanded throughout the world. Not surprisingly, Roberts's and Seton's wild animal narratives as a whole focus primarily on the interactions of white men with various species of North American wildlife.[24]

Not only does the acquisition of local knowledge as woodcraft constitute an indigenizing strategy on the part of the settler, it also operates in conjunction with other colonial forms of visualization to appropriate and maintain for the colonizer a control over the land, what McClintock describes as a process by which "colonial space became domesticated" (36). In this sense, woodcraft can be thought of as a form of colonial

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[22] Although the Government of Canada had a relatively belated interest in both anthropology and ecology, the Province of Canada did establish the Geological Survey of Canada in 1842. The colonial government's objective was straightforwardly motivated by commerce, as explained on the GSC website: "The decision to undertake a geological survey of the fledgling nation was based on the realization that the development of an industrial economy in Canada—an economy that could compete with those in Europe and the United States—would depend to a considerable extent on a viable mining industry" (Vodden).

[23] McClintock elaborates on this state, a trope which she terms "anachronistic space": "Within this trope, the agency of women, the colonized and the industrial working class are disavowed and projected onto anachronistic space: prehistoric, atavistic and irrational, inherently out of place in the historical time of modernity" (40).

[24] As I will discuss in greater detail below, the majority of human-animal interactions depicted in Roberts's wild animal stories involve one of the following six human figures: the trophy hunter, the squatter, the settler, the woodsman, the Indigene, and the boy.

surveillance. The discourse of woodcraft in late nineteenth-century Canada was particularly imbricated with the then recent invention of photography and the development of the academic discipline of anthropology. Despite the truth claims and scientific objectivity commonly attributed to all three, they each nevertheless rely on the gaze of an observer from a privileged vantage point, often discursively obscured, to construct their objects of study.[25] In her work on nineteenth-century European travel writing, "Conventions of Representation: Where Discourse and Ideology Meet" (1988),[26] Mary Louise Pratt identifies this vantage point as the "monarch-of-all-I-survey scene" (22), a device that is a "commonplace of European romanticism in particular, and is found widely in nineteenth-century poetry and narrative alike" (22). She continues, "In travel accounts, the monarch-of-all-I-survey scene is typically used by Victorian explorers to render moments of discovery of geographically important phenomena such as lakes, river sources, islands, and so on" (22). Like a Victorian explorer with his rifle and guides, the writer of the animal story is equipped with his knowledge of woodcraft and is similarly positioned at a vantage point of discovery. Roberts describes, "Looking deep into the eyes of certain of the four-footed kindred, we have been startled to see therein a something, before unrecognised, that answered to our inner and intellectual, if not spiritual selves. We have suddenly attained a new and clearer vision" ("Animal" 28).

In their introduction to *Colonialist Photography: Imag(in)ing Race and Place* (2002), Eleanor M. Hight and Gary D. Sampson discuss how such a colonial gaze, the

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[25] For a detailed critique of allochronism in the discipline of anthropology, see Johannes Fabian's *Time and the Other: How Anthropology Makes its Object* (1983).

[26] Pratt later expanded this paper into the seminal *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (1992).

"visualization of place," relates to "the development of colonialist ideology" (4). They are meticulous enough in their analysis of colonial encounters to differentiate between racial and cultural prejudices, noting that "indigenous peoples would be slighted if these [photographic] images were read only as embodiments of racial prejudices that could be used to suppress colonized people through surveillance and discipline" (4). The "Western visualization of native people and their environments as primitive or exotic," they write, "was more often an attempt to make the unfamiliar or strange seem desirable in a traditionally legible way, than it was a deliberate racial or ethnographic denigration" (4). This need to make the "strange seem desirable in a traditionally legible way" was motivated in large part "for the control and comfort of foreign government officials, military personnel, civil servants, entrepreneurs, land developers, and agriculturalists" (4). McClintock also links the rise of photography with colonial domestication, but she takes a slightly different tack in her reading of imperialism as commodity spectacle, observing, "The camera embodies the panoptic power of collection, display and discipline" (123). Describing photography in terms of a "universal currency" and a "universal language" that "shifted the authority of universal knowledge from print language to spectacle," she writes,

> It should not be forgotten that photography emerged as a technology of surveillance within the context of a developing global economy. A circulation of notions can be observed between photography and imperialism. Emissaries of the imperial bureaucracy set out with the

> explicit, if haphazard, aim of ordering and assembling the myriad world economies into a single commodity culture. (123)

Added to these ranks of bureaucrats, no doubt, were countless other "emissaries" of empire faced with one form of migration or another.

William H. New makes a number of comparable observations applicable to colonial domestication in *Land Sliding*. When first discussing Lady Aberdeen's travel journal *Through Canada with a Kodak* (1893), New observes how she displays a set of "assumptions (relating language and propriety to space and land) [which] came to be associated with Empire, power, and a particular British-based notion of class," and how her observations about late Victorian Canada also display "culturally shaped expectations about beauty, utility, society, and race [that] indicat[e], further, how the language of apparent description is also a language of coded evaluation" (12). Because ultimately her "observations are all informed by a conventional association between development, morality, and land," Lady Aberdeen's travel journal offers a paradigm in which

> [t]he wild might on occasion be magnificent, beautiful or 'grand', but the civilized observer [. . .] must be wary of identifying with it: far better to tame it in the conventions of art, to sketch it, or—better still?—to snap a photograph of 'scenes' and carry on, investing time and money in the familiar. (15)

Whether the "authority of universal knowledge" has shifted "from print language to spectacle" or not, *Through Canada with a Kodak* is able to domesticate the Canadian landscape both discursively as a travel narrative and spectacularly by the photographs it

includes. Whether printed or visual, "Language [. . .], not the land itself, is a medium *of* the familiar" (15 emphasis in original).

Perhaps more directly comparable to woodcraft as both a form of domesticating discourse and colonial surveillance, anthropology as a professional discipline was taken up in Canada at the same time that Roberts's wild animal story enjoyed immense popularity. Canada's official interest in this particular field of research was belated in relation to the US, where the federal government had been commissioning ethnographic reports on indigenous peoples as far back as the 1820s. By the turn of the twentieth century, when government officials in Ottawa began to "demonstrate a modicum of interest in ethnology" (C. Willmott 219), the trope of the dying Indian had become widely accepted as fact. The corresponding form the ethnographic work of this period largely took, "salvage ethnography," endeavoured "to preserve the vanishing cultural remnants of supposedly moribund First Nations" (Nurse 54). The dominant methodology of this "'salvage' mode" (52) therefore required the collection of extensive materials that "constituted the 'data' of cultural anthropology, construed as an interpretive 'science' whose aim was to reconstruct Aboriginal cultural history" (54). As Andrew Nurse further observes,

> this conception of effective ethnographic field research carried with it an implicit model of cultural authenticity. [. . .] the objective of field research was not to collect whatever cultural material was available. Instead, effective ethnographic research required discrimination. (54)

In this regard, salvage ethnography as an anthropological methodology is particularly comparable to the discourse of woodcraft that underwrites the wild animal story. For Roberts, "The animal story at its highest point of development is a psychological romance constructed on a framework of natural science" ("Animal" 28), but the framework—in this case woodcraft, and in the case of salvage ethnography "interpretive 'science'" or "discrimination"—is itself paradigmatic of colonial discourse. Fittingly, as Roberts also proposes, "Our chief writers of animal stories at the present day may be regarded as explorers of this unknown world, absorbed in charting its topography" (24). Rather than clear-cut examples of the ideal detached observer, "Our chief writers of animal stories" are figured (like contemporary anthropologists) as imperial agents tasked in the unveiling of the world's secrets by means of observational science.

The Nature Faker Controversy

Because the importance of woodcraft to turn-of-the-century settler subjectivity was so great, its accuracy in contemporary nature writing was a source of considerable anxiety. Indeed, the factuality of the "framework of natural science" that Roberts and Seton based their wild animal stories upon was brought into question during the heyday of the genre (Roberts "Animal" 28). By 1905, for instance, the botanist and "foremost chronicler of New Brunswick's past" (MacEachern x), W.F. Ganong observed,

> those who know Mr. Roberts are aware that the requirements of his literary work for several years past have not permitted him to make those journeys into wild New Brunswick essential to the study of its animal life,

> and that his few earlier trips had not this object in view, and were not of a character to permit it. The experiences of his boyhood in the wilderness about his home [. . .] must necessarily have been confined to the smaller and commoner forms found near the settlements, and could not have included the moose, caribou, bear, lynx, and other great animals about which he chiefly writes. (qtd. in Lutts *Nature* 96)

As Lutts further explains, "Thus, Ganong concluded, Roberts's stories must be based on his studies in libraries, museums, and zoos and the resources of his own imagination" (96). Ganong made his critique in the midst of what has come to be known as the nature faker controversy, which continued for four years largely within the pages of a number of American magazines and newspapers, from 1903 to 1907.

The revered elderly naturalist John Burroughs and, eventually, US President Theodore Roosevelt engaged in a protracted denunciation of the popular practice of realistic nature writing as bogus science, beginning with Burroughs's magazine article "Real and Sham Natural History" in *The Atlantic*. Burroughs "singled out Charles G.D. Roberts, Ernest Thompson Seton, and Reverend William J. Long as the objects of his displeasure" in the article (Lutts *Nature* 38), and Lutts further surmises that although "Roberts escaped easily" (38), "Seton and 'his awkward imitator', Long, were less fortunate" (39). Perhaps most acerbically, Burroughs proposes that Seton's collection *Wild Animals I Have Known* would be better titled *Wild Animals I Alone Have Known*, but he nevertheless poses a valid question: "Are we to believe that Mr. Thompson Seton, in his few years of roaming in the West, has penetrated farther into the secrets of animal

life than all the observers that have gone before him?" (qtd. in Lutts *Nature* 38-39). Although it was widely considered a tempest in a teapot at the time, the curiously acrimonious character of the nature faker controversy, along with the active participation of a sitting president, indicates that it "involved far deeper issues than [. . .] ever imagined" (Lutts *Nature* 138).

The controversy ostensibly centered around the issue of deception, with Burroughs observing in his opening salvo that Seton's truth claims amounted to "the old trick of the romancer: he swears his tale is true, because he knows the reader wants this assurance; it makes the thing taste better" (qtd. in Lutts *Nature* 40). When the time came for Burroughs's friend President Roosevelt to weigh in on the issue, he remarked in "Literary Misrepresentations of Nature" (1907), "If these stories were written as fables, published as fables, and put into the children's hands as fables, all would be well and good. As it is, they are read and believed because the writer not only says they are true but lays stress upon his pledge" (qtd. in Jack 45). To some degree Roosevelt's concern was justified since wild animal stories had been widely adopted in public school curricula as factual studies in nature. "There is no more reason why the children of the country," he said, "should be taught a false natural history than why they should be taught a false physical geography" (45). However, as Harold S. Deming, one of the nature writers accused of nature fakery, put it, "to the ordinary eye it would seem clear enough that these are not scientific monographs, but literary sketches" (qtd. in Lutts *Nature* 104). If there were a cause for any alarm, it can be seen as an issue of reception and (mis)interpretation since these essays and animal stories were, ultimately, published as

fiction. Realism as the dominant literary form of the time, after all, had problematized the line between fact and fiction in various other ways.

The stakes were much higher than generic considerations, as Lutts observes, because the nature faker controversy was part of the larger fallout resulting from Darwin's scientific work. As in other parts of the Western world in the late nineteenth century, Darwinian scientific discourse quite rapidly displaced religious views of animality and nature in English Canada. Consequently, as Robin Mathews notes, "English Canadian Protestant thought moved towards scientific views of man's essential being in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries" (160). The wild animal story as a genre was informed by these developments in and public acceptance of Darwinian evolution, a discourse that also supplanted the accepted scientific thought of the day. Namely, these earlier discourses were comprised of mechanistic conceptions derived from the seventeenth-century philosophy of Descartes, which determined that animals operated solely by instinct and could feel neither pain nor suffering. As utilitarian and non-utilitarian standpoints on the meaning of animality and the purpose of human-animal relations jockeyed for discursive validity, "The debate over our obligations to animals shifted from the question of whether animals suffer pain to include the question of whether animals can reason" (146-147). A "major reason that the controversy became so heated," according to Lutts, was "because animal psychology at the end of the nineteenth century offered instinct and reason as the only options for explaining the mental life of animals" (147).

The degree to which this instinct/reason binary bears upon the settler episteme is suggested by the nature faker controversy playing out in North America amongst American and Canadian writers, politicians, scientists, and critics. In order to accord with the colonial needs of indigenization and antimodernism, any change in the general perception of animals necessarily entails corresponding changes in the symbolic management of the image of the wild animal—in a sense, to echo Burroughs, to "mak[e] the thing taste better." Such an assessment is in keeping with Homi K. Bhabha's view that colonial discourse relies on official knowledge production in order to install the colonized subject as epistemologically inferior:

> colonial power produces the colonized as a fixed reality which is at once an "other" and yet entirely knowable and visible. It resembles a form of narrative in which the productivity and circulation of subjects and signs are bound in a reformed and recognizable totality. It employs a system of representation, a regime of truth, that is structurally similar to realism. ("Other" 76)

If, on the one hand, animals are envisaged as purely instinctual automata, their corresponding image would lack the "kinship" required as the bridge to the freedom of nature *hors* the commodification and reification of modernity.[27] On the other hand, if wild animals are discursively recast as excessively rational, the image would risk

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[27] Perhaps this helps explain why automata (unfeeling androids, robots, aliens, monsters, etc.) are frequently cast as malevolent in narratives. Rather than offering a symbolic route to freedom, they more often than not represent violence, enslavement, destruction and death. Just as often, they are embodied as modern commodities such as: possessions of a master, labouring inventions, lab specimens or research models, weapons, inventions, etc.

becoming too much like the settler subject—particularly its modernity—and thus would offer no indigenizing function.[28] The image of the wild animal must therefore embody both instinct and reason, Other and Self. As it so happens, the discourse of natural science in the late nineteenth century validated this fundamental ambivalence of the image of the wild animal in its delineation of the evolutionary relationship between humans and nonhumans. As Dunlap remarks, "Darwinism, fortunately, lent itself to the vision of man within, but not part of nature. It showed him as a creature of the animal kingdom but it also, in its emphasis on change, suggested that he had 'evolved' beyond nature" (Dunlap 111). Thus, human and nonhuman animals could be "factually" positioned both to have a share in instinct and reason in varying degrees, and to maintain the superiority of the human by situating it at the same time as trans-natural. Such a schema—an extended family of man of sorts—continues to allow the settler subjects of North America to simultaneously recognize and disavow nonhuman animals in order to justify their domination, dispossession, and *consumption* as colonial subjects.

[28] Mickey Mouse might serve as one such allegory. Not only is he a quintessential commodity as a product, brand, and icon of the Walt Disney Company, he maintains a curious worldwide appeal on the vanguard of American cultural imperialism. Coincidently, Walt Disney's father Elias was Canadian.

CHAPTER 2

THE WILD ANIMAL STORIES OF CHARLES G.D. ROBERTS

Introduction

During his lifetime Sir Charles G. D. Roberts had often been called the Father of Canadian Literature, and he "assumed the paternal role willingly and proudly" (Adams 149). He was the first among what would come to be called the Confederation Poets to publish a collection: *Orion and Other Poems* came out in 1880, when he was twenty-one.[1] He also wrote romances, novels, and over two hundred wild animal stories, gaining international recognition early in his writing career. Roberts secured a professorship at King's College (later the University of King's College in Dalhousie University) in 1885, was elected a Fellow of the Royal Society of Canada in 1890, served in the First World War, became the fifth president of the Canadian Authors' Association in 1927, and was knighted in 1935.

By the time of his death in 1943, however, as a public figure Roberts embodied a number of contradictions about Canadian culture in the early twentieth century. Although the years that followed the First World War had witnessed "A new burst of national idealism" in Canada that led in part to the banning of foreign titles for Canadians, when

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[1] Roberts's *Orion and Other Poems* is a landmark work in Canadian literature, and it famously inspired the poet Archibald Lampman. As Lampman recalls in his 1891 "Two Canadian Poets: A Lecture,"

> One May evening somebody lent me *Orion and Other Poems*, then recently published. Like most of the young fellows about me I had been under the depressing conviction that we were situated hopelessly on the outskirts of civilization, where no art and no literature could be, and it was useless to expect that anything great could be done by any of our companions, still more useless to expect that we could do it ourselves. I sat up all night reading and re-reading Orion in a state of the wildest excitement and when I went to bed I could not sleep. It seemed to me a wonderful thing that such work could be done by a Canadian, by a young man, one of ourselves. (qtd. in Adams 23)

Roberts received the knighthood during a brief lifting of the ban, "the honour was regarded as inevitable and proper" (Pacey *Selected* xviii). Just as the knighthood was viewed as both a colonial throwback and rightfully ennobling, Roberts was immensely popular and also often regarded as a Victorian relic. John Coldwell Adams remarks that in the final decade of Roberts's life, while "radical young intellectuals thought of Roberts [. . .] as nothing more than a literary dinosaur" (185), "No Canadian literary gathering of any pretensions was complete unless Roberts attended" (182).[2] This contradiction perhaps suggests a Bloomian anxiety of influence, which seems to have been Roberts's own opinion:

> It seems to me it is all a matter of the succeeding cycles of reaction. Reaction is life. The more healthy and vigorous the reaction, the more inevitably does it froth up into excess. The excess dies away of its own violence. But the freshness of thought or of technique that supplied the urge to the reaction remains and is clarified, ultimately to be worked into the tissue of permanent art. (Roberts "Prefatory" viii)

In any case, academic interest in Roberts by the 1980s "was marked by a reappraisal of [his] poetry. New works or works-in-progress by critics [. . .] have refuted or modified much of the adverse criticism of the past" (Adams 213). Thus Roberts "has a secure place in the literary history of Canada" because he has been "the acknowledged leader of our

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[2] Adams states that, in the 1920s, *The McGill Fortnightly Review* and the *Canadian Mercury* "campaigned against the kind of poetic tradition for which they held Roberts' generation responsible—the Maple Leaf brand of Victorianism that had dominated Canadian literature much too long" (185). Though this Montréal group "had long regarded Roberts as the symbol of stuffiness," they admitted later, however, "they knew next to nothing about the so-called Confederation poets at the time [. . .]" (185). Indeed, A.J.M. Smith "confessed in 1963 that once he became an anthologist himself he 'found that Lampman, Roberts, and Carman had written some very fine poetry'" (185).

first significant literary movement, the movement which, in the eighties and nineties of the [nineteenth] century, brought the people and especially the landscape of the young nation to the attention of the English-speaking world" (Pacey *Ten* 34).

The landscape of Roberts's childhood plays a significant role in the biographical and critical work on him. Born into the relative comfort of a middle-class family in 1860, Roberts spent his childhood in Westcock, New Brunswick, in the Tantramar region near Fredericton. The Tantramar, a large marshland extending inland from the Bay of Fundy, is often considered an especially picturesque area, and it features in Roberts's perhaps best-known poem, "The Tantramar Revisited" (1886). Biographers and critics routinely note how greatly this region affected his poetic sensibilities. For instance, Desmond Pacey posits that the Tantramar, "by its unusual beauty of waving marsh grasses, surging tidal streams and rivers, and red tide flats, is likely to inspire a poetic response even in the most insensitive persons" (*Selected* xii). Misao Dean notes, "Critics read the stories as marking an important stage in the development of Canadian realism, citing the development of credible animal characters and the location of the stories in a meticulously accurate and recognisable New Brunswick landscape" ("Political" 1). And W.J. Keith goes so far as to assert, "So far as his writings are concerned, this was undoubtedly the most influential part of his life [. . .]. The best of his poetry, his novels and his short stories are permeated with the 'spirit of place' of Westcock and its environs" (*Charles* 2).[3]

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[3] Charles H. H. Scobie gives a full-length treatment of the relationship between Roberts's works and the Tantramar—what he has "ventured to call 'Roberts Country'" (vii)—in *Sir Charles G.D. Roberts and the Tantramar*. Funded in part by the Tantramar Heritage Trust and the Town of Sackville, New Brunswick, the book catalogues how "Roberts' historical writings, his wildlife stories, his novels, and

While the Tantramar surely did make an impression on Roberts as he matured, his engagement with this space was not *sui generis*, because "A cultural concept like the landscape idea does not emerge unprompted from the minds of individuals or human groups" (Cosgrove 2). Like anyone, Roberts was instructed in a specific "language of land, [. . .] together with the implicit set of dimensions that accompanies and underscores it, [which] at once conveys some particular political attitudes and appears to ratify them as 'natural'" (New 16). Indeed, his "fascination with the outdoors was stimulated by his father, who taught him his first lessons in natural science [. . .]" (Adams 7). Roberts's understanding of landscape can therefore be viewed as part of a broader cultural context in which he benefited intellectually from being raised in a family that "for generations had a keen interest in literary and scholarly matters" (Pacey *Selected* xii). As bourgeois European settlers, both sides of his family were classically educated in an Anglo-American tradition that carries with it specific class considerations, of course, but also entails any number of visual codifications about landscape. Moreover, Roberts's depictions of the Canadian landscape are culturally valued as literary artifacts precisely because they accord with generally held beliefs about what such a landscape, and its inhabitants, mean.

Because human populations of both Canada and the United States were rapidly urbanizing at the turn of the twentieth century, the types of contact North Americans had with wilderness became less reflections of experience than of the imagination. In terms of literature in Canada at this time, Frye has noted the "prevalence [. . .] of animal stories"

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above all his poetry were all profoundly influenced by his boyhood years on the Tantramar between 1860 and 1874" (vii).

("Conclusion" 240) centered around characters he wittily describes as "animals screaming in traps" due to the influence of Romanticism "increasingly affected by Darwinism" (243). Thomas Dunlap arrives at the same conclusion in his study of Roberts, claiming that "The ideology of Robert's animal stories owed as much to [. . .] Darwinian evolution, as it did to Romanticism [. . .]" ("Old" 105). Dunlap persuasively argues that Roberts combined Darwinism "with older Romantic conceptions to make an emotionally satisfying and scientifically correct vision of nature and of man's place in it. He constructed a new nature myth for an industrial, urban society that sought the authority of science [. . .]" (105).[4] Although Dunlap's work goes a great distance to account for "why [Roberts] was so popular beyond Canada," and demonstrate "Roberts's genius" (116), his approach largely overlooks the immediate context in which Roberts lived in favour of a cosmopolitan interpretation of his works. A biocentric reading, while avoiding the pitfalls of Humanist anthropocentrism, might extend Dunlap's insights to offer an interpretation more specifically attuned to the disparity in social relations between humans and animals within the colonial context of turn-of-the-century Canada. In keeping with his view that "The issues [Roberts] addressed in his fiction were part of the situation of Western civilization" (116), Dunlap tends to rely on a number of universalizing concepts. He argues that "Roberts emphasized the links that bound man

[4] Dunlap rejects Robert MacDonald's earlier interpretation that sees "Seton's and Robert's stories as a revolt against Darwinian determinism" (Dunlap 105), claiming instead, "Roberts was not revolting against a Darwinian determinism; far from it"(105). Dunlap also quite rightly takes issue with the "tendency to lump" the two writers together in scholarly criticism, since "The two men wrote very different kinds of stories, based on different views of nature" (106). His opinion has since been sustained by Lutts: "Seton and Roberts agreed that nature was ordered and full of meaning for humans, and man was kin to the beasts, but they differed on what that order was and how humans fit into it" (*Wild* 241). The two writers are treated in separate chapters in this study for the same reason.

with the animals in a common natural economy—the round of life and death which was the fabric of the world [. . .]" (110), but such a view cannot consider the social relations that oftentimes determine both within such an economy.

In his reading of "When Twilight Falls on the Stump Lots" (1902), for instance, he claims the story "shows that man's participation in this round of life and death is not limited to pioneer life; it is part of all existence" (111). Considering the number of animal deaths in the story, this conclusion is not baseless. In the story, a bear sow is driven by hunger to attack a cow and her calf but is gored and dies on her way back to her den; unprotected, her cubs are killed by two foxes; the injured cow manages to care for her calf; and they are rescued by a farmhand the next morning. However, Dunlap neglects to comment on the irony of the end of the story, when the calf is returned "safely back to the settlement," where "it was tended and fattened, and within a few weeks found its way to the cool marble slabs of a city market" (Roberts "When" 189). Although in a very broad sense all forms of life are subject to death, one's position in what Dunlap terms the "common natural economy" ("Old" 110) is not always determined by nature—especially if one exists solely as a food commodity for humans like the calf, whose "fortune was ordinary" (Roberts "When" 189). Despite that the story's conclusion lacks any subject preparing the calf for slaughter and omits any description of the animal's death and dismemberment, the economy in which the calf is a foodstuff to be transported to "a city" is both human and modern. Indeed, the "cool marble slabs" upon which the calf is butchered not only stand in juxtaposition with the motherly tenderness of the cow, who "for all her wounds, was able to nurse and cherish [her calf] through the night" (189),

they also contrast starkly with Dunlap's metaphor of life and death as "the fabric of the world" ("Old" 110). By limiting himself to an anthropocentric standpoint, much of Dunlap's interpretation becomes an allegory of the relationship of nature to human society: Roberts's "genius" is "to show within that seeming chaos continuity, order, and a place for man [. . .]" (116).

Not only does appealing to such Humanist assumptions seem an inadequate interpretive strategy for a body of writing that concerns itself with the status of animals, it also falls short of accounting for the specific social and historical context in which Roberts wrote. Once questions of indigenization and antimodernism are raised, a biocentric interpretation of Roberts's works offers a valuable alternative. More than for the purposes of a continued critique of Dunlap, I quote him again at length to point toward this alternative. He states,

> Attributing emotions and thought to animals was not, for Roberts, a literary device or a concession to anthropomorphism. It was a recognition that the mental life of animals resembled that of man. The opposite was also true: man was an animal, a creature of nature. Roberts pursued this theme in several ways—emphasizing the common emotional life of man and animals; portraying man as an animal, or civilized man as the inheritor of more "primitive" "instincts"; and emphasizing the ties that bound man, as they did animals, to the economy of life and death that drove the world. All these themes were affected by Romanticism and a glorification of the primitive, but they also drew on scientific theories. ("Old" 109)

Once again I largely agree with Dunlap, but this emphasis on the similarities shared between humans and animals he observes in Roberts—humans retaining animal instincts and animals possessing psyches—represents a challenge both Romanticism and Darwinism pose to the species boundary as part of an indigenizing discursive formation. That is, although the species boundary is necessary to justify the direct exploitation of animals, it must also be permeable enough for the indigeneity of North American wildlife to be appropriable for an indigenizing settler subjectivity.[5]

Roberts's Wild Animal Stories

Like the image of the indigene, the image of the wild animal serves a "Second World" need to generate such an ex-centric postcolonial subjectivity by "emphasiz[ing] the evil powers of the invading techno-human, the white," while also "demonstrat[ing] a potential bridge to the freedom of the non-man in nature" (Goldie 25). Throughout Roberts's wild animal stories, there are numerous examples of human-animal interactions in which the latter are deceived by human predation technologies in order to be exploited as commodities. In "A Treason of Nature" (1902), for example, two trophy hunters are able to lure a bull moose to his death with the aid of a "treacherous tube of birch-bark" (Roberts "Treason" 195): the senior hunter could "utter through it his deadly perfect

[5] A contemporary analogy is detectable, I think, in the figure of the cyborg in Donna Haraway's Posthumanist discourse. Although Haraway is sensitive to the subject-positions of indigenous people—for example, those who populate the Amazon basin in "A Regenerative Politics for Inappropriate/d Others"—the cyborg itself requires the breakdown of the traditional boundaries between human/animal, organism/machine and physical/non-physical. But Haraway is specific: "By the late twentieth century in United States scientific culture, the boundary between human and animal is thoroughly breached" (Manifesto 10). What she does not discuss in "A Manifesto for Cyborgs" is that the boundary between humans and animals has been breached a number of times and for varying reasons since the European colonization of the Americas. If the cyborg presents a discursive problematic, it is perhaps as an indigenizing figure akin to the image of the wild animal.

mimicry of the call of the cow-moose in rutting season" (193), and use a wooden bucket to emulate the sound of a moose (either a female or rival male) urinating in a rutting pit. The final paragraph of the story describes these hunters as being "no longer of the secretive kindred of the wilderness, but pleased children" (196). The betrayal of nature in the story lies not only in the bull moose's inability to resist a counterfeit mating call, but in the fact that the two hunters are not seeking sustenance but a "prize": "The old woodsman eyed shrewdly the inimitable spread of the prostrate antlers. As for the boy, he stared at his victim, breathless, his eyes a-glitter with the fierce elemental pride of the hunter triumphant" (196). Although the hunting experience may have prompted this instinctual sense of exhilaration, much of the boy's reaction is discredited by the commodity value the woodsman recognizes in the moose's antlers.[6] That is, at the same time the text emphasizes "the fierce elemental pride" that humans and animals may share as animal instinct, it also depicts an "inimitable spread" being "eyed shrewdly" by the woodsman. As indicated by its title, "A Treason of Nature" aligns the reader with the indigenous wild animal while subtly condemning the exogenous commodity in order to elicit his or her identification with an ex-centric postcolonial subjectivity.

In another story dealing with trophy hunting, "The Antlers of the Caribou" (1909), the hunter's call attracts two cows and two bulls before a rather melodramatic plot unfolds. The caribou bulls begin to fight and the cows depart; the bulls' antlers become inseparably interlocked and they collapse exhausted to the ground after a

[6] The commodity value of Cervidae antlers is ultimately quite arbitrary since it is so closely linked to an individual's own experience of hunting and sense of achievement. This point is supported by "The Calling of the Lop-horned Bull" (1916), where the rack of antlers of an enormous, "prehistoric monster" moose are counter-intuitively assigned value precisely for their asymmetry (*Thirteen* 17). Usually lop-sided racks are undesirable as trophies, as explicated in "The Antlers of the Caribou" (1909).

prolonged struggle; a black bear arrives and kills one of the prone bulls and begins to attack the second; and finally, the hunter shoots the bear dead and slits the throat of the wounded second bull. Since the hunter is allowed to kill only one bull because of the game laws he is subject to, the events that have transpired should represent a great windfall for him since he can now legally possess two sets of antlers—and a bear. Instead he perceives, "How strange the silence [. . .] the madness and tumult and rage which had just been so abruptly stilled!" (Roberts "Antlers" 65). This silence is precipitated by the noise of his caribou call, however, and the story ends with him perceiving and reflecting upon his own culpability: "A curious revulsion of feeling all at once blotted out his triumph, and there came over him the repugnance to the bulk of so much death. Stepping around it, he sat [. . .] and proceeded to fill his pipe" (65). Unlike his childish fellow trophy hunters in "A Treason of Nature," he is able to discern the relative worthlessness of the commodities he has just won, because their value is far outweighed by the visceral impact of the senseless slaughter he has witnessed. His sense of kinship with these wild animals thus stands in opposition to an invading economic logic that assigns material value to the body parts of living beings.

The inextricability of commerce and woodcraft in Roberts's wild animal stories is possibly best illustrated in "With His Back to the Wall" (1911). This particular story involves Job Thatch,[7] a backwoods trapper largely immobilized by a broken leg and

[7] This character appears in a number of Roberts's stories and his name is highly suggestive. Job would be a straightforward biblical allusion to the eponymous character of the Book of Job, who lived righteously and enjoyed God's grace. As well, his surname Thatch might possibly be a humorous reference to his unkempt appearance, the word serving as a metaphor for matted hair. Thatch could also serve as a reference to the roofs of English houses (thatch being one common type of roofing material traditionally used there), in which case the character becomes a metonym of British colonialism. This latter

struggling to survive the winter alone, and who gets caught in a fight between a bear and a pack of wolves. Thatch joins forces with the bear (with his rifle) because the wolves present a greater immediate threat to him. Once he and the bear are victorious, he allows the bear to escape out of a sense of solidarity, despite his preference for bear meat and feeling "a little ashamed of his weakness in having let the bear go free" ("With" 163). The story ends with Thatch reassuring himself of the palatability of the three wolf carcasses he will take back with him to his cabin. This sentimental lapse in his judgment aside, Thatch is a very successful woodsman: "none of the furred four-footed hunters could compare with him in efficiency at their own craft. In all but the sense of smell, he was a better hunting animal than the best of them" (147). The narrator then enumerates,

> He could hear as well as the listening moose. He could see as far as the lynx, and with a more discriminating vision. On his snowshoes he could run lightly and tirelessly when they floundered in the drifts, and with his rifle he could kill at such a distance that the wariest quarry whose trail he followed had no warning of his pursuit [. . .]. (147-48)

Self and Other are both incorporated and rejected by this Darwinian description: although Thatch is described as one "hunting animal" among many, he nevertheless is superior because of his human knowledge of woodcraft. Not only does it allow him "a more discriminating vision" than even the indigenous lynx, his woodcraft is unequivocally

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interpretation is augmented by McClintock's observation that *domesticate* is rooted in the Latin "dominus, lord of the domum, the home" and until the mid twentieth century "also carried as one of its meaning the action 'to civilize'"(35), a word that still describes the taming of animals and plants. In either case, however, his name connotes a lower social status since neither matted hair nor thatched roofing is traditionally associated with wealth.

endorsed by "many of the lesser prowlers" he inhabits the woods with, who are described as "Recognizing this supremacy" (148).

In a similar vein, the romantic elements of the story both incorporate and reject the Other. The text absolutely minimizes Thatch's work as a trapper, offering instead an account of his desperate need to hunt for food during a period in which he is specifically unable to perform work due to his debilitating injury. Despite that he lives in idyllic seclusion from "the settlements," the text nevertheless also makes reference to the fur trade he must be engaged in: "he killed for fresh meat only as the need arose, and only such game as came his way while making the daily round of his wide-lying traps" (148). Although this description generally adheres to the commonplace romanticization of trappers as rugged individuals living off the land, Thatch's "wide-lying traps" and his trapping on a "daily" basis indicates that his occupation is motivated by profit—even a marginal one—rather than his own sustenance. Illustrating the western American fur trade in terms of an expanding frontier, Carlos Schwantes explains, "The typical American trapper, though often romanticized as a free-spirited individual who enjoyed the freedom of the hills, was in fact a person who lived a tenuous life of privation. He endured often unprofitable hunts and occasional harassment by Indians" (32). Inasmuch as it may have been a lifestyle, trapping was difficult in the nineteenth century. Further, the animals that were trapped were commodities, and trappers like Thatch were workers. The true nature of his occupation is again implied when he is first caught in the fight: "He saw what a hopeless venture he had let himself into; and grimly resolving that the price of his life, in wolves, should be a stiff one, he hoisted himself into a niche where he could

brace himself upright and have free play, at the last, for his axe" (157). By describing his error as a business mistake, we can infer that Thatch's interaction with animals is pecuniary when not culinary. Furthermore, his view of his own life in terms of price clearly indicates to what degree trade and the commodity play in his worldview. Far from what he first might appear—as an instinctively masculine figure living in harmony with the natural world and free from the taint of (over)civilization—Thatch instead is the very agent of the "invading techno-human, the white" (Goldie 25).

For their part, the animals who surround Thatch's cabin and survive his hunting and trapping harbour a "fear and hate of him" (148). Even the bear who Thatch aids in his fight against the wolves does not trust him. Just after Thatch tells the bear that he will not shoot him, "The bear, as if uneasy at the sound of the human voice, moved off slowly, dragging one of the dead wolves, and looking for a retreat in the rocks where he could be out of range of the man's disquieting eye" (163). Although it might have something to do with Thatch's "post of vantage" (163), the precise reason why his gaze is "disquieting" is not explicitly described. Rather, the meaning of this lacuna in the text is perhaps sub-textually related to the etymology of *disquieting*, which concerns his "vantage" in colonial forms of commerce and knowledge. The verbal form that *disquieting* refers to, *disquiet*, means "To deprive of quietness, peace, or rest, bodily or mental; to trouble, disturb, alarm; to make uneasy or restless" ("disquiet"), a meaning readily applicable to Thatch's work as a trapper. However, the verbal root *quiet* includes a legal meaning: "To settle or establish the fact of ownership of (a title, etc.); to settle or establish (a person, company, etc.) in quiet enjoyment or possession of land or property" ("quiet"). Thatch's

gaze is "disquieting," then, because his very presence threatens to un-settle the animals and to dispossess them of their habitat. More straightforwardly, his hunting and trapping activities disturb the natural dispensations of the wilderness; on a more symbolic level, these woodcraft-based activities entail a rampant commodification of both animals and land that severs the two and subordinates each as property in relation to humans.

Roberts perhaps makes his most potent critique of "the invading techno-human" in "The Aigrette" (1916), a story in which the commodification of animal body parts lacks any antimodern redemption conventionally found in hunting. "The Aigrette" was published in *The Secret Trails* in the same year the United States and Great Britain, on behalf of Canada, negotiated the Convention for the Protection of Migratory Birds. The Convention was implemented in Canada the following year by the Migratory Birds Convention Act (1917) and in the United States the year after that by the Migratory Bird Treaty Act (1918). This inter-state conservation measure was the political response to a public outcry over the collapse of bird populations, including egrets, throughout North America, and to the death of Martha, considered the last surviving passenger pigeon, at the Cincinnati Zoo in 1914. The astonishing disappearance of birds in North America was the direct result of European colonization, specifically a handful of highly destructive activities: unrestricted hunting, the "mania for collecting birds, nests and eggs" (Doughty 46), market killing, and the feather trade of the millinery industry.

This last item triggered what has been referred to as the Plume Wars, a "campaign [which] lasted nearly fifty years" (154). The stakeholders involved, both human and avian, represented a number of European imperial powers, their colonial possessions, the

United States, and a number of independent southern nations due to "The globalizing world economy of the late nineteenth century, the rise of international technical organizations linking countries in the solving of common problems, attention to the international bird trade and increasing awareness of the migratory habits of many bird species [. . .]" (Boardman 38). While groups such as the Textile Section of the London Chamber of Commerce, the New York Millinery Merchants' Protective Association, the Chambres Syndicales, and the Association of Feather Merchants and Manufacturers of Paris vigorously defended the feather trade (Doughty 55), numerous bird protection organizations formed to oppose it, such as the British Ornithologists' Union (1858), the Selborne Society for the Protection of Birds, Plants and Pleasant Places (1855), the Society for the Protection of Birds (1891), the American Ornithologists' Union (1883), the Audubon Society (1886), the Cooper Ornithological Club (1893), the Wilson Ornithological Chapter of the Agassiz Association (1886), and the Ottawa Field-Naturalists' Club (1879).

The feather trade itself grew to unsustainable levels alongside the development of the industrialized middle class in the West. As Robin Doughty explains in *Feather Fashions and Bird Preservation: A Study in Nature Protection* (1975), although feathers had been long used to adorn the clothing of the wealthy in Europe and America, "As the Victorian century progressed, [. . .] women of more moderate means, following the suggestions of *modistes*, who had customarily catered to a clientele of aristocrats and courtesans, adopted avian trim" (14). Particularly after 1850, he continues,

> every hat worn on the street could almost be counted upon to boast a pair of wings. Inspired by Roman mythology, these "Mercury wings," of doves, blackbirds, swallows and seabirds were regarded as coquettish and attractive when placed jauntily on the side of the head. Ostrich feathers, heron and bird of paradise sprays were commonly used. In the 1880's and 1890's, women's hats bore owls' heads with blank staring eyes, small birds in attitudes of "earnest incubation," and hummingbirds perched on artificial flowers. (16)

The number of birds required to manufacture these elaborate—and by today's standards morbid—headpieces can only be roughly estimated as "scores of millions" for species like egrets and ostriches (25) and "countless" for others like hummingbirds and rheas (74). By the end of the century, once these bird populations were jeopardized, "The cavalier manner in which birds were sacrificed on the altar of vanity began to arouse feelings of disgust and outrage, not admiration" (15), so the public began supporting protection laws for birds. Doughty summarizes that "Well-known ornithologists, church dignitaries, scientists, writers and others campaigned to end what they considered a profligate waste of creatures ecologically important to human welfare, and traditionally part of the matrix of myth and folklore in Western society" (31). In addition to utilitarian arguments for the usefulness of some bird species to farmers, a prominent humanitarian line of reasoning was directed at women: "The methods used to secure plumes, it was believed, should offend the sensibilities of city ladies accustomed to the Victorian norms of love, thoughtfulness and refinement, which were especially characteristic of the

gentler sex. Dead birds on hats were vulgar and barbaric" (63-64). Because the violence and waste behind the feather trade did not accord with Victorian codes of gender, the garments produced by the millinery industry were assigned a value one could easily associate with cultural and even racial degeneration. While this rhetorical tactic certainly proved effective, the feather trade nevertheless elicited an ever-deeper apprehension. As Robert Boardman notes in *The International Politics of Bird Conservation: Biodiversity, Regionalism and Global Governance* (2006), "Birds were an aspect of many social, scientific and cultural activities in the late nineteenth century. In Europe, liberal and left-leaning reformers took note, albeit occasionally, of the fate of birds as elements in their critiques of the flaws of modern industrial society" (34). Despite its complexity and prosperity, the feather trade came to represent modern alienation from and exploitation of the natural world. Rather than serving as a shining example of the social progress promised by international trade and industrialized capitalism, the bird-population collapses instigated by the feather trade "helped to finally explode the myth of super-abundance of natural resources" (87). In effect, this clipped modernity's wings: human progress is fettered by ecological constraints, and there are limits to growth.

The immediate historical context for Roberts's "The Aigrette" can be distinguished even further by his choice of detailing the killing of egrets. Doughty sets the scene: "The Ardeidae, consisting of 15 genera and 64 species (particularly 8 species belonging to the genus *Egretta*) became the focal point around which people rallied to end the use of wild birds' plumage by the millinery industry" (10). By the end of the nineteenth century, he adds, "Ornithologists, travelers and nature writers stepped forward

to recount tales of heron slaughter in breeding colonies on all continents" (64). One such tale, that of T. Gilbert Pearson, a founder of the National Audubon Society, recounted an episode from his youth in 1891, which he read at the World's Congress on Ornithology in Chicago in 1897. Pearson recalls,

> A few miles north of Waldo, in the flat pine region, our party came one day upon a little swamp where we had been told Herons bred in numbers. Upon approaching the place the screams of young birds reached our ears. The cause of this soon became apparent by the buzzing of green-flies and the heaps of dead Herons festering in the sun, with the back of each bird raw and bleeding. . . . Young Herons had been left by scores in the nests to perish from exposure and starvation. (qtd. in Doughty 64-65).

Pearson's tale serves as an uncanny intertext to the middle section of Roberts's "The Aigrette." The gruesome and largely sentimental description of a man snaring great white egrets (alternatively known as white herons) for their plumes is framed in this story by an account of a wealthy young woman going to the theatre with these same plumes arranged in her hair.

In the first half of the framing narrative, the "Girl" is initially pleased about her appearance as she prepares for her evening out: "sitting before her dressing table, [she] looked at the fair reflection in her great mirror and smiled happily" (Gold *King* 76). Her mood quickly changes, however, when her date fails to unequivocally compliment her "ethereal white plume," instead observing, "But nothing could heighten your beauty. You did not need it, and I'm rather afraid the bird did" (77). She responds by "pout[ing] a

little, being very tender-hearted, and loth [*sic*] to be reminded of unpleasant things" (77), and she chastises the "Man" by reasoning, "But the poor bird is dead, anyway; and if I didn't buy the thing, some other woman would. And it's horrid of you to speak of it now!" (77-78). She forgives him only once he appeals to her vanity, when he tells her, "It can't make you more beautiful, but if it makes you happier, that's quite enough for me [. . .]. I'm afraid that a very little pleasure for you is of more consequence in my eyes than a thousand million birds" (78). What is unclear at this point, however, is whether the Man indulges in frivolity for her sake or for his own.

Following a break in the text, but with "thousand million birds" still resonating, the story details the extermination of an entire egret colony by the "plume-hunter" (83). In order to skirt the game laws that forbid "the shooting of egrets in the nesting season, when alone they wore the plumes which women crave," this poacher resorts to "hack[ing] the prize from the living bird and releas[ing] it while still alive and able to fly. If the bird died agonizingly afterwards, who was going to swear that he was the slayer?" (83). Crouched in the bottom of a boat "worming its way" through the lagoon (82), the poacher successfully wipes out the adult population of the egret colony with the "implacable wire noose" of his foot snare before he departs "with the bleeding *trophies*" (84 emphasis added). The surviving nestlings, who represent any form of continuance for the colony, are then killed by predators, thirst, and hunger until, by the next evening, "there was not a nestling left alive on the whole lagoon" (85). This detailed and realistic account of how the Girl's plumes were obtained from the wild ironizes her purported innocence since, despite her diminutive, she knows the birds had to die for her to wear their plumes.

Moreover, it ironizes her justification for purchasing the plumes since their triviality is indicated by their description as "trophies."

The irony of "The Aigrette" is further complicated, however, in the final half of the framing narrative by the Girl's concern for the treatment of horses. While waiting for a taxi to return them home from the theatre, she and the Man witness the driver of a passing dogcart striking his "sleek and spirited and spoilt" horse (85). In her final lines of dialogue, she reasons, "What brutes men are! [. . .] Perhaps they can't help being cruel! They have no intuition, so how can they understand?" (86). On a more straightforwardly self-conscious level, her statement is ironic in that it is she who fails—"especially" as a woman—to have the intuition to understand her own brutishness in being a slave to fashion. This irony is made clear by the last lines of the story, in which the Man gazes at the plumes in her hair but only "smiled discreetly, and said nothing" (86). But her statement is additionally, though more obscurely, ironic since it is indeed a pointed reply to the Man's explanation that "the horse is behaving very badly, and must be made to mind. It's endangering the whole traffic" (86). In her identification with the horse, the text cleverly positions the Girl, the horse, and the egrets together as commodities within a patriarchal, capitalist economy. The description of the horse, whom the dogcart driver has "cut [. . .] smartly with his light whip" (86), is itself reminiscent of the description of the egrets, from whom the poacher, with "a keen hunting-knife, deftly sliced the snowy plumes" (82). The Girl dresses in these same plumes of course to appear sexually attractive, just as the egrets only "wore the plumes" during their nesting season (83). So while the text impugns women who "crave" egret plumes, it also indicates that the Girl's

stylishness is the result of her own ensnarement, of being "made to mind."[8] Otherwise, as the pun suggests, would amount to "endangering the whole traffic"—in animals and their body parts on an open market, and women in the marriage and reproductive trades. So although the meaning is clear when the Man "smiled discreetly, and said nothing" in response to the Girl's hypocrisy or ignorance, what is easier to miss is that before she responds to him with her ironic statement, "The Girl flushed, bit her lip, and withdrew her hand from the Man's arm" (86). Thus, while it remains indeterminable whether the Girl will continue to wear plumes or not, it does seem quite unlikely that she will wear them again for the Man. Far more apparent, however, is the way in which "The Aigrette" advocates for the de-commodification of plumes as fashion accessories and the liberation of the egret from the ultimate arbitrariness and triviality of this economy, if not for the liberation of women from it as well. In doing so, moreover, the story aligns the reader with a settler subject-position by eliciting sympathy for the wild animal while critiquing the modern trades in feathers and women as oppressive.

The Dynamism of the Image of the Wild Animal

Turning away from exogenous modernity requires settler subjectivity to focus itself on the indigeneity of the wild animal. It therefore seems inevitable that Roberts's wild animal stories are obsessed with observation, watching, and gazing, as suggested by such titles as "The Watchers of the Campfire" (1902), "The Watchers of the Trails"

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[8] Lutts observes that this was a popular viewpoint of Roberts's day: "Women may have been the enemy of birds, as ornithologist Frank Chapman maintained, because they wore decorative feathers, but women were also their salvation. Women were the strength and, often, the leaders of the Audubon societies. Most of those who taught and wrote about birds were also women" (*Nature* 23).

(1904), "The Eyes in the Bush" (1914) and the eponymous "The Eyes of the Wilderness" of his 1933 collection. Animals in the wild no doubt rely on their vision for hunting and/or to remain alert for the dangers of predators, so descriptions of animals looking upon other animals in the stories are common enough: "Whether by instinct, experience, or observation, the bear knew something about porcupines" ("In Panoply" 120); "The lynx had been watching from her high crevice when the moose made her mad charge upon the bear" ("In the Year" 63); etc. Other descriptions of watchful animals highlight their differences from humans in their abilities of perception. The superior vision of a caged eagle, the title character of "The Lord of the Air" (1902) and otherwise referred to in the story as "the king," is emphasized formally by Roberts's use of anaphora:

> Across the river, across the cultivated valley with its roofs, and farther across the forest hills than any human eye could see, his eye could see a dim summit, as it were faint blue cloud on the horizon, his own lost realm of Sugar Loaf. Hour after hour, he would sit upon his rude perch, unstirring, unwinking, and gaze upon this faint blue cloud of his desire. (59-60)

The effect of this literary device is to telescope the reader's perspective beyond his/her physical capabilities. It is an example of what Allan Burns refers to as an "extension of vision" in his analysis of the ethics of animal writing. By using limited third-person narrators in most of his stories, Roberts allows for "a looser point of view that ranges freely from the central figure to take in the bustling activities of entire ecosystems—a context that enriches a reader's understanding of the individual life at the center of each

narrative" (Burns). So while the point of view of the narrator of "The Lord of the Air" does represent an obscured and privileged vantage point, the resulting narrative nevertheless remains ethically committed to the character it describes: even if the object of the eagle's unwavering gaze remains imperceptible to the humans confining him, his gaze itself signifies his incontestable, even sovereign, claim to the habitat from which he has been unrightfully abducted.[9]

Such human-animal interactions presented as confrontations also rely upon the gaze shared between humans and animals. As the Native man Gabe in "The Lord of the Air" prepares to capture the eagle, for instance, he relies on the bird's observations of him to set his trap.[10] On his "watch-tower on old Sugar Loaf" mountain (51), the eagle ("the king") surveys his surroundings: "No living creatures were visible save a pair of loons chasing each other off the point of Sugar Loaf Island, and an Indian in his canoe just paddling down to the outlet to spear suckers" (52). Both the loons and the Indian serve as natural features within this landscape scene, the narrator noting, "The Indian also he [the eagle] knew, and from long experience had learned to regard him as inoffensive" (52). But this Indian in particular also happens to be "the most cunning trapper in all the wilderness of Northern New Brunswick, [and] though he seemed so intent upon his fishing, was in reality watching the great eagle" (53). The gaze in this instance, and in

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[9] As I will elaborate on below, the wrongness of the eagle's entrapment is underscored in "The Lord of the Air" by the motivation behind it: he is captured by a Native man who has been promised fifty dollars for a live trophy by a visiting "rich American" (53).

[10] In order to trap the eagle, Gabe takes to spearing fish regularly over an entire summer so that "sick or disabled fish" will wash ashore at a particular spot (52). The eagle not only becomes accustomed to the man's presence, but to the regular "spoil of the shallows" at precisely the place where the trap is eventually set (52).

many of Roberts's stories, is metonymical of the woodcraft that both the eagle and the Indian possess. As such, the Darwinian notion of the survival of the best fitted is complicated by Roberts since both humans and animals in his stories have an ability to learn. Not only is Gabe described as "the most cunning trapper," for instance, but "he knew that a wise and experienced bird like the king of Sugar Loaf was not to be snared by any ordinary methods" (53). Gabe's work of outsmarting the eagle is suitably only undone by the bird's human "jailers" (60), who both lack his expertise in woodcraft and fail to keep abreast of the eagle's intelligence.

Animal learning is even more explicitly undertaken in "The Gauntlet of Fire" (1902), a story of a settler and a bear cooperating during the crisis presented by a forest fire. The story begins, "In a way they knew each other pretty well these two, the man and the bear. For nearly two years they had been acknowledged adversaries" (1). Over this time, as the man's presence on the land has grown as his farm has expanded, "The man had actually seen the bear but once, and then for a swift glimpse only—a flash of shrewd, fierce, inquisitive eyes from a spruce thicket [. . .]" (1). "The bear, on the other hand, knew the man much better than the man knew him. From the man's first arrival [. . .] the great black beast had shadowed him—with some hostility, of course, as a stranger, and a disturber of the solitudes, but more with a keen curiosity" (2). The narrator explains that, motionless, "he had watched the flash and the swing of the man's axe, the crashing fall of birch and fir and ash, as the clearing widened and let in the sunlight upon the tangled forest floor" (3). This scene of land settlement, complete with an image of the light of civilization breaking into the disorder ("tangled") of the wilderness, has provided the bear

with a sense of "wonder" (3), and "he has grown to appreciate an inexplicable mastery in the man's voice, in his unconscious indifference to whatever eyes might be watching him from the dark, surrounding coverts" (3). And numerous eyes do indeed study the man, but "Of all the unseen, inquisitive spectators whose shy, wild eyes watched [his] work—squirrels, partridge, hares, raccoons, rain-birds, wood-mice, deer, foxes, and owls—the bear was by far the most interested and the most comprehending" (5). Indeed, from his observations of the man's "mastery," the bear deduces that "It was plain that the man had no fear" before drawing the conclusion that "Then, of a certainty he must be very strong" (3). In contrast to the "unconscious indifference" that the man maintains to his surroundings, the bear is able to work out that "all the man's possessions seemed to [him] to partake of the nature of traps—to be studied with dreadful interest, but on no account to be touched" (7).

Of particular importance here, beyond the text's position in the historical debate surrounding the intelligence of animals,[11] is the necessity that the image of the wild animal include a dynamic consciousness. Much has been written on the power of the colonial gaze as exercised by explorers, settlers, and tourists, but the animals in many of Roberts's stories also gaze, often more so than humans do. While the discourse of woodcraft domesticates the image of the wild animal for the reader, at the same time it

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[11] As Allan Burns explains, "The basic difficulty of the animal story genre [. . .] is to navigate between the Scylla and Charybdis of anthropomorphism—which uncritically imputes a human-like consciousness to animals—and anthropocentrism—which presumptuously denies consciousness to animals" (Burns). However, he observes that scientific research conducted since the late 1960s would position animal and human intelligence on the same spectrum, thereby effectively deconstructing the anthropomorphism/anthropocentricism binary he outlines. He states quite rightly, "The rational case for the validity of the animal story rests on the Darwinian knowledge that the difference between human and animal psychology is one of degree rather than kind. Current research into animal consciousness and current understanding of brain structure corroborates this knowledge" (Burns).

also affords the image enough reasoning to keep it from becoming a static, purely instinctual automaton subject to full commodification. As New observes in a different context, representations of places under continuing control may have a literary appeal because "stability implied property; property meant stability" (87). That is, in order to remain uncommodifiable and thus relevant to the antimodernism of indigenizing narratives, the idea of animality itself must remain radically Other and ultimately untamable and dangerous.

In "Little Bull of the Barrens" (1911), for instance, a professional trapper is trailed, hunted, and eaten by a ravenous pack of wolves on the Coppermine barrens. As the narrator explains, the trapper is well versed in woodcraft, knowing the best place to set up his camp to wait out a snowstorm before hunting his next meal: "He knew how to wait, like an Indian, when there was anything to be gained by it, and his heart, weary of pemmican, was set on fresh meat" (201). Despite his knowledge, his trapping venture has not been a success because the caribou have failed "to come his way according to their custom" (196). This lack of caribou has also had a deleterious effect on the local wolves who have compensated by "craftily pick[ing] off his dogs" (196), so the trapper makes his way back to a Hudson Bay Company post.[12] After expertly setting up his camp in the storm, however, he makes a critical error in judgment, believing that the wolves have "ranged off on the trail of the vanished caribou" (201-02). The narrator continues, "Now, as it chanced, the trapper was wrong in his assumption as to the wolves. The truth—

[12] Once again Roberts depicts labour being left unobserved; with his trapping project brought to an unexpected end by the failure of the caribou to return from their migration, the trapper is simply departing from the barrens.

which would have made a great difference in his calculations had he known it—was that they had been cautiously trailing him ever since he left his hut" (202). The wolves are motivated by desperate hunger: "Had they any choice, they would far rather have been running down the caribou than trailing this solitary trapper" (203). Indeed, he terrifies them: "They dreaded his eye, they dreaded his sharp, authoritative voice. They dreaded the strange, menacing smell of him. They dreaded his mysterious power of striking invisibly from very far off" (203). Ironically, the fear that keeps them at a distance is precisely what lulls the trapper into thinking he is alone on the barrens. Waiting out the storm, "He drew his furs well about him and dozed off to sleep, knowing that the moment the fire began to get dangerously low an unfailing instinct would bid him awake to tend it" (202). Not having the chance to use this instinct, he is instead awakened by a wolf attack:

> It seemed to him that a wave of furred, fighting bodies, enormous and irresistible, went over him, blotting out everything, even to the desire of life. He was but half conscious of the fangs that sank into his flesh, strangely without pain. He was but half conscious of struggling—the mere instinctive struggle of his strong muscles, and already condemned as futile by his aloof and scornful spirit. Then nothing but a knot of great gray wolves, tussling and snarling over something on the snow. (206)

As this passage illustrates in starkly Darwinian terms, despite his own set of instincts, his superior knowledge and technology, and his "aloof and scornful spirit," the trapper's

miscalculation leaves him at a fatal disadvantage to the hungry wolves.[13] First, his error indicates that the woodman's belonging in the wilderness is limited because his woodcraft is tainted by commodity exchange. Moreover, although the wolves' need to hunt him is understandable—"the craving belly is a hard master" for both animals and humans (203)—the consequences of his death underscore the radical Otherness inherent to the image of the wild animal: "It was a victory which would make that pack for the future tenfold more dangerous. They had dared and vanquished man" (206). Instead of mindless Cartesian automata, these wolves are learning and thinking beings who represent ungovernable animality and indigenous Otherness.

The ungovernability of animality is also evident in Roberts's stories that feature tame animals who become, if even temporarily, feral. In "How a Cat Played Robinson Crusoe" (1911), a family's pet cat is inadvertently left behind at their summerhouse on a small offshore island and consequently experiences "a natural reversion to the instincts of her ancestors" (183). Whereas "two months of the companionship of wind and sun and waves and waving grass-tops" offers "a wise city dweller" a restorative therapy (175, 176)—where "the tonic airs might bring back the rose to the pale cheeks of his children" (175-76)—the hardships presented by living outdoors over the winter without being "coddled and pampered by the children" triggers within the housecat dormant instincts that force her to learn the woodcraft skills of hunting and survival (179). Her first brush

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[13] The animality and indigeneity of the wolves in "Little Bull of the Barrens" also plays on the commonplace colonial discourse of cannibalism. "As in many imperial scenes, the fear of engulfment expresses itself most acutely in the cannibal trope. In this familiar trope, the fear of being engulfed by the unknown is projected onto colonized peoples as *their* determination to devour the intruder whole" (McClintock 27 emphasis in original). The symbolic danger of such an encounter with the Other is that of becoming the Other entirely. In this story that is precisely what happens to the trapper: he becomes an object in the landscape, "something on the snow."

with real danger occurs when she encounters one of a number of rats who have washed ashore on a wreck in a storm:

> When she pounced and alighted upon an immense old ship's rat, many-voyaged and many-battled, she got badly bitten. Such an experience had never before fallen to her lot. At first she felt so injured that she was on the point of backing out and running away. Then her latent pugnacity awoke, and the fire of far-off ancestors. She flung herself into the fight with a rage that took no accounting of the wounds she got, and the struggle was soon over. (182)

Once again, the idea of heredity and latent instincts are presented in terms of Darwinian evolution, and the text valorizes these traits to avoid rendering them as aspects of atavistic degeneration. The cat's encounter with the rat is thus presented as a "struggle," one that suggests a struggle for existence, in a rehearsal of the survival of the best fitted. She is the product of natural selection and contains within her being a "latent pugnacity" and "the fire of far-off ancestors" of the wild, an ungovernable animality as ever-present supplement to her human domestication. Her superiority to the rat in evolutionary terms includes both her physical prowess and her intellect, the latter of which allows her to be domesticated in the first place: although the rat is "many-voyaged and many-battled" she learns quickly from this single encounter, so that, "having learned how to handle such big game, she no more got bitten" (183).

Similarly, her encounters with other animals and her environment present her with new opportunities to develop her woodcraft. As the narrator relates about her discovery

of the insulating properties of snow, "And though she was probably unconscious of having learned it, she instinctively put the new lore into practice a little while later" (189). That is, her exile from the modern world forces her "back upon latent instincts" and in doing so she "learn[s] the heedless vagrancy of the wild" with a heightened acquisition and employment of woodcraft (191). But the narrator is also careful to explicate that, rather than being reduced to a state of savagery, she is improved by her knowledge: "Nevertheless, with all her capacity for learning and adapting herself, she had not forgotten anything" (191). Accordingly, she regularly attempts to present her quarry as gifts to her absent human masters and she stays close to their summerhouse despite being completely locked out of it. As well, at the end of the story when the family returns to the island the following summer, the narrator relates, she "sprang up out of her sleep" (191) and "went racing across to the landing-place, to be snatched up into the arms of four happy children at once [. . .]" (192). Like the early novel it references in its title, "How a Cat Played Robinson Crusoe" is a colonial progress narrative of the modern individual evading through knowledge a descent into barbarism, and "Having thus conquered her environment" (190).

Conclusion: The Boy

Removed from the metropolis and the degenerative effects of its modernity, the Canadian wilderness in Roberts's wild animal stories is a proving ground for a hybridized postcolonial subjectivity that embodies progress. Of the six figures that constitute the bulk of the representation of humans in Roberts's texts, "the boy" possesses the most

significant form of woodcraft. Although as a child he remains in the process of learning the ways of the land, his approach to woodcraft is self-conscious and methodologically scientific. Often he learns things from "the woodsman," one of the other human figures that repeatedly appears in the stories, but his understanding of the wilderness is largely experiential and consciously limited, so in this way he resembles the indigene. Descriptions of "Indian" or "half-breed" figures, however, tend to position them as aspects of the landscape, and they include their subjection by white men—namely, their use of woodcraft in exchange for money from "the trophy hunter," often an American entirely lacking woodcraft and tainted by the crass materialism of urban living. The remaining two figures, "the settler" and "the squatter," are whites with competing claims upon the land and, as their descriptors suggest, the authenticity of the former claim and the illegitimacy of the latter are reflected in these characters' unequal comprehension of woodcraft. These six figures, when taken as a whole, function in a corresponding fashion to the various classes and social groups in the West of the late nineteenth century. McClintock offers this insight:

> The degenerate classes, defined as departures from the normal human type, were as necessary to the self-definition of the middle class as the idea of degeneration was to the idea of progress, for the distance along the path of progress traveled by some portions of humanity could be measured only by the distance others lagged behind. (46)

As colonial narratives of social progress, Roberts's wild animal stories accordingly depict woodcraft as being conditional upon racial, regional, and class-based differences amongst their human figures.

One of the very few characters who does not fit into the general schema outlined above—and one of the few women to appear in the stories in general—is the eccentric Mrs. Gammit of "Mrs. Gammit and the Porcupines" (1911). The text does not identify her as either a settler or a squatter, implying only that she has not lived in the region her whole life and referring to "her little clearing in the heart of the great wilderness" (127). This ambiguity is less important, however, than that she fulfills the role of foil against Joe Barron, the woodsman from whom she seeks advice about animals.[14] While the degree of her ignorance of woodcraft might suggest she is a squatter, this story stands out as perhaps Roberts's most overtly humorous and relies on her buffoonery for comic effect. By the same token, however, much of the story's wit is derived rather misogynistically from the fact that Mrs. Gammit is a single woman living in the woods. Her peculiarity as an unmarried woman elicits from the reader a condescension that also applies to her inherent ineptness at woodcraft. The narrator's initial description of her plays on this: "Mrs. Gammit's rugged features were modeled to fit an expression of vigorous, if not belligerent, self-confidence. She knew her capabilities, well-tried in some sixty odd years of unprotected spinsterhood" (127). Her unladylike manner and physical unattractiveness are further emphasized in the next sentence: "Merit alone, not matrimony, it was, that had

[14] Here is another example of Roberts's creative use of surnames. *Gammit* suggests *gamut*, as in "running the gamut," which she does when she catalogues all of the possible animals stealing her hens' eggs; it also humourously suggests *dammit*, a dialect variation of "damn it." Likewise, *Barron* more straightforwardly suggests the title of *baron*, appropriately in the case of Roberts's woodsmen the lowest rank of nobility.

crowned this unsullied spinsterhood with the honorary title of 'Mrs.'" (127). The narrator seems to suggest that, despite what she might otherwise desire, the local men consider her as unavailable as any other married woman because she lacks the seductiveness to arouse any temptation. In his dealings with her, Joe Barron thinks she is typically emotional for a woman but remains polite, "being always patient with the sex" (129).

Like their counterparts in a great number of Roberts's wild animal stories, both of these characters speak in dialect. The immediate effect of this device in the case of "Mrs. Gammit and the Porcupines" is comedic and comes at the expense of Mrs. Gammit herself (she refers to them as 'porkypines' and is foolishly convinced they are stealing her chicken eggs). But this humour is derived from the class difference that dialect marks between rustics like Mrs. Gammit and others who speak Standard English, such as the narrator, the boy, and presumably the reader. As for the woodsman, because he is not the object of ridicule in the story, his dialect seems to function in a different register. At the same time that it indicates his distance from an urban centre and thus his lack of the taint of modernity, it also suggests his proximity from an indigenized settler subjectivity. When Mrs. Gammit asks his advice, she prefaces her line of questioning by speculating that he would know more about "woods critters" than she (128). He responds, "Well, now, if I don't I'd *oughter*, [. . .] seein' as how I've kinder lived round amongst 'em all my life. If I know *anything*, it's the backwoods an' all what pertains to that same!" (128 emphasis in original). Joe's knowledge of woodcraft is never cast into doubt by the text, but what is indicated in this passage is that his understanding of his environment is purely experiential, that he "oughter" know about the animals around him simply because he has

"lived round amongst 'em all [his] life." His woodcraft is limited because it does not represent the full *potential* of woodcraft as progress.

This potential is instead focalized through the figure of the boy, who, unlike Joe, Natives, and wild animals, possesses a woodcraft that is self-conscious and scientifically methodological. Whereas the potential of these other figures is expended symbolically in various ways—by age, by race, by species—the boy's is as eternal as his youth, which never culminates into maturity in the stories. "Whenever Canadian literature is summed up in the early twentieth century," Glenn Willmott observes in *Unreal Country: Modernity in the Canadian Novel in English* (2002), "one of the central metaphors is youth: the youth of a literature (primitive, naïve, but free, open to invention and development) is correlated with the youth of its nation" (19). Such a correlation between the boy and modern Canada, open-ended and full of promise, also symbolizes a kind of proleptic indigenization: the representation of a future consolidation of self and Other as if it already existed.

Quite fittingly, then, the boy oddly enough speaks Standard English despite having lived all his life, like the woodsman, in the Canadian wilderness. Although Dunlap reads the boy as "an autobiographical figure" of Roberts (107), I hesitate to draw the same conclusion since to do so would not only unfairly constrain the text, but also because such a simple correlation is further complicated by the differences between the historical Roberts and the persona he cultivated—a persona which has been further

perpetuated by a number of his readers and critics.[15] That is, despite the parallels between Roberts and this persona, I am less willing to accept the boy as a clear-cut autobiographical figure of the writer than as a strategically idealized version of Roberts's persona. Whatever the case may be, I do not think the boy speaks Standard English because Roberts needed to insist upon his own cultivation or social status. Indeed, the complexity of this figure seems rather to lie at the crux of this chapter. Specifically, the boy's interactions with the animals he studies speak to each of the various points I have raised—and presumably to Roberts's contemporary readers, both children and adults.

The encounters between the boy and wild animals described in several stories are mediated by both a discourse of landscape and the colonial gaze. While on the one hand these animals are images of the wild animal in possession of a dynamic consciousness *hors* commodification, on the other hand the boy's developing woodcraft and articulate speech position him at the apogee of progress in an antimodern and indigenizing narrative. "The Boy and Hushwing" (1902) clearly renders the eponymous owl as the landscape itself: "The great horned owl—'Hushwing', the boy had christened him, for the ghostly silence of his flight—had returned to his favourite post of observation, whereon he stood so erect and motionless that he seemed a portion of the pine trunk itself" (56). Moreover, Hushwing's active engagement in a mutual act of observation with the boy signals his consciousness, a point which is further emphasized in the story when the narrator explains, "The daunting mastery of the human gaze, which could prevail over the

[15] As Fred Cogswell notes in "Charles G. D. Roberts: The Critical Years" (1984), such a distinction between Roberts and his persona is also observed by James Cappon in *Roberts and the Influences of His Time* (1905), Desmond Pacey in *Ten Canadian Poets* (1958), and W.J. Keith in *Charles G. D. Roberts* (1969) and *Selected Poetry and Critical Prose* (1974). Cogswell states, "all three failed to see a coherent pattern linking Roberts, the man, and Roberts, the writer [. . .]" (118).

gaze of the panther or wolf, was lost upon the tameless spirit of Hushwing" (62). This human gaze, undeniably a colonial one in the context of a story in which the boy rehearses the Adamic authority to name animals, must nevertheless be refused full access to Hushwing's interiority lest he be reduced to the status of the commodified Self. Not surprisingly, then, once the boy captures the owl, Hushwing is not described in the proprietary terms of pet ownership, despite the boy's intentions, but rather as "his prisoner" (62). But at the same time, the story indicates that such a circumstance for the owl serves a greater good:

> The Boy's purpose now in planning the capture of Hushwing was, first of all, to test his own woodcraft; and, second, to get the bird under his close observation. He had a theory that the big horned owl might be tamed so as to become an interesting and highly instructive pet. In any case, he was sure that Hushwing in captivity might be made to contribute much to his knowledge,—and knowledge, first-hand knowledge, of all the furtive kindred of the wild, knowledge such as the text-books on natural history which his father's library contained could not give him, was what he continually craved. (59)

The Boy's bourgeois education, represented by "his father's library," positions him ahead of the curve, especially since "the text-books on natural history" have exposed him to more of this discourse than one would expect for the average boy his age. Nevertheless, despite its remove from the taint of modern commodity exchange, such knowledge on its own is inadequate to his indigenizing quest, as it has originated from the European

Enlightenment. Accordingly for this budding natural scientist, with his theories and observations, the knowledge he desires is not limited to owling or ornithology but encompasses "all the furtive kindred of the wild."

These "kindred" beings promise a biological connection to nature, but additionally a comprehensive knowledge of them represents a kind of discursive mapping of the Otherness nature represents. The aptness of such a comparison is underscored by McClintock's account that

> The map is a technology of knowledge that professes to capture the truth about a place in pure, scientific form, operating under the guise of scientific exactitude and promising to retrieve and reproduce nature exactly as it is. As such, it is also a technology of possession, promising that those with the capacity to make such perfect representations must also have the right of territorial control. (27-28)

United by their possession and use of woodcraft, both the boy and the "chief writers of animal stories," as Roberts describes, "may be regarded as explorers of this unknown world, absorbed in charting its topography" ("Animal" 24). Their right to the territorial control such work promotes is further manifested in the consistency of the indigenized descriptions of the boy himself. When he reappears in "A Tree-top Aeronaut" (1909), for example, he moves quietly through the forest, unlike his woodsman companion, Jabe Smith. The narrator tells us, "The boy, in moccasins, stepped lightly as an Indian, his eager blue eyes searching every nook and stump and branch as he went, hoping at every step to surprise some secret of the furtive wood-folk" (Roberts "A Tree-top" 88). This

sentence does two remarkable things simultaneously, in that it appropriates for the boy the indigeneity of the Indian while at the same time maintaining a clear differentiation between them. Like the Indian, the boy can operate within this landscape on *its* terms since "Every one of the wild kindred, from the bear down to the wood-mouse, would move with a furtive wariness, desiring always to see without being seen, either intent upon some hunting or solicitous to avoid some hunter" (88). And unlike Jabe, "who made all the noise" (88), the boy is significantly "in moccasins," which when combined in the sentence with the racialized detail of "his eager blue eyes" specifies a compelling image of cultural hybridity that balances the instincts of the atavistic indigene with the reason of the settler European. That is, while the boy's woodcraft is attributable to Jabe's tutelage, his full entitlement to both knowing and possessing this landscape is authorized ultimately by his appropriative hybrid status.[16] As with the properness of his speech, this is what sets the boy apart from the knowledgeable woodsman.

The forest, however, must remain enigmatic in the end in order for it to serve as an antimodern space in which this postcolonial subjectivity can function.[17] The story literally provides such an ending in its final sentence: the boy is "puzzled" by the blood he finds on the door of his cage-trap, "but, finding no clew to the events of the night, he

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[16] Tellingly, before stating that the boy moves silently because "he stepped lightly as an Indian" (88), the narrator establishes that the heavy footsteps that break the silence of the forest "were plainly human footsteps, for no other creature but man would move so crudely and heedlessly through the forest quiet" (88). One may deduce quite straightforwardly here that the narrator's use of "man" does not necessarily apply to the Indian so much as to the disquieting settler.

[17] In his reading of mysticism as it pertains to the image of the indigene, Goldie speculates on the psychology behind the white culture's need for indigenous mysticism. His view accords with my interpretation of the effects of land commodification in the modern colony: "Whether because lost in an age of unfulfilling scientific determinism or because in a state of desire for indigenization which no material reality can fulfill, the white culture [. . .] attempts a restoration of the soul, that holistic concept of power which has no position in the levels of contemporary technology" (146).

was obliged to lay the matter away among the many insoluble enigmas wherewith the ancient wood so continually and so mockingly provokes the invader of its intimacies" (102). Despite having such "expert eyes" (90), neither Jabe's nor the boy's woodcraft will suffice to lift the veil from the mystery of the wilderness. This same mystery burns in the eyes of the weasel in the story, "glowing like points of live flame" (100); in those of the flying-squirrel it pursues into the boy's cage-trap, described as having "a vagueness of depth which made them seem all pupil" (91); and in those as well of the hypnotic black snake, "shallow, opaque, venomous" (93). The "forest kindred" are as indeterminable and un-disquieted as the quiet forest, an otherworldly space from the outset of the story. The narrator states in the first sentence, "Although in the open clearings it was full noon—the noon of early September, hot and blue and golden—here in the lofty aisles of the forest it was all cold twilight" (87). The liminality of the Quah-Davic wood's "cold twilight" suggests its proximity from Enlightenment epistemology while distinguishing it from a Heart of Darkness. The "confusing vistas of the forest" (91), this suggests, will maintain their integrity just as the boy's "appetite for knowledge of all the wild creatures of the woods" will remain "insatiable" (98).

The means by which the boy acquires this knowledge is a key didactic moment in "A Tree-top Aeronaut." As rehearsals of woodcraft, Roberts's wild animal stories are generally replete with information on aspects of wildlife, but this story also weighs in on the topic of obtaining research specimens.[18] At the turn of the century, as Lutts explains,

[18] This story in particular features as its protagonist "the flying-squirrel of Eastern Canada" (92), which it presents as an improbable or exotic creature. Observing that "the daring little shape was plainly that of a quadruped, not of a bird" (89), the narrator describes the animal's physical features: "They sailed

"Nature lovers often condemned the more traditional approaches to natural history based on collecting specimens, measuring and naming them, and describing their variations" (*Nature* 148). Specifically, their "complaint was that the traditional methods of natural history research killed animals" (149). There was a particular urgency to the political agendas of those concerned with the population collapses of numerous species at the end of the nineteenth century in North America because much of the crisis was brought about by "the vast, wasteful destruction of wildlife caused by countless nature hobbyists trying to build private collections" (149). In the story, Jabe Smith advises the boy to trap a live squirrel, "if ye want to git to know somethin' of his manners an' customs" (Roberts "Tree-top" 91). "When ye've *killed* one of these wild critters, after all," he explains, "to my mind he ain't no more interestin' than a lady's fur boa" (91 emphasis in original). As a character, Jabe can be granted considerable ethos by the audience because of his woodcraft and his presumable background. However, since his dialect also indicates social status, the middle-class reader might also be compelled to agree with an unsophisticated character making a logical and refined argument. Interestingly, by comparing a research cadaver to "a lady's fur boa," Jabe also devalues the insights possibly gained by traditional methods of natural history by equating them with a commodity—one that is as seemingly frivolous and trivial as the feathers used in the hat in "The Aigrette" and in the once popular feather boa. The conclusion that can be drawn here is that scientific inquiry is valid when it approaches nature on nature's terms.

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on long downward slants, with legs spread wide apart and connected on each side by furry membrane [*sic*], so that they looked like some kind of grotesque, oblong toy umbrellas broken loose in a breeze" (89).

At any rate, the works of Roberts and his fellow wild animal story writers, according to Lutts, "convinced thousands of amateur naturalists to set aside their shotguns, butterfly nets, and egg collections and to study, instead, living animals. In the process, they popularized an emerging new science based on this study that is now known as ethology" (148). The emergence of ethology and the subtextual environmentalism of the "The Tree-top Aeronaut" signify a political unconscious that Roberts's wild animal stories are engaged in: despite widespread sentiments about imperialism and expanding settlement of the day and the official optimism of modernity,[19] there nevertheless existed some understanding that the colonization of North America on the part of Europeans had an unjustifiably deleterious effect on its wildlife. Moreover, the social relations amongst humans and between humans and animals that have resulted from the colonial project out of necessity prefigure animality as Otherness, discursively manage the image of the wild animal as landmark, and subjugate animals as colonial subjects in a continuing interspecific class struggle.

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[19] Of official optimism in Canada at the turn of the century, Frye observes,

> In Carman, Roberts, and D. C. Scott there is a rhetorical strain that speaks in a confident, radio-announcer's voice about the destiny of Canada, the call of the open road, or the onward and upward march of progress. As none of their memorable poetry was written in this voice, we may suspect that they turned to it partly for reassurance. ("Conclusion" 243)

CHAPTER 3

THE WILD ANIMAL NARRATIVES OF ERNEST THOMPSON SETON

Introduction

The wild animal story became widely popular with the publication of Ernest Thompson Seton's *Wild Animals I Have Known* in 1898. The collection of eight stories "was an instantaneous success; within three weeks, 2,000 copies of the first edition were sold, and the book went through ten editions within the first year" (Morris 120). Ralph Lutts similarly observes that the wild animal story "burst upon the scene and achieved wide public attention" with the publication of this collection, "which went through sixteen printings in its first four years alone" (*Wild* 3). Since then, it "has been translated into fifteen languages and ranks among the all-time best-selling books by a Canadian" (Francis *Imaginary* 64), and it has remained continuously in print.[1] Seton's fiction was much more popular than that of Charles G.D. Roberts. According to Thomas Dunlap, Seton's greater success signals "the kind of nature turn of the century Americans wanted" ("Realistic" 58).[2] The way in which each writer orders nature and positions the human within it differs markedly, however, as does the way in which the image of the wild animal functions in these two oeuvres to appropriate the indigeneity of North American wildlife. As Dunlap observes, whereas Roberts "wrote about a less human and less moral

[1] The most recent printing of The New Canadian Library series paperback edition was in 2009, which is also available in a Kindle edition, along with another by MobileReference on amazon.com. Forgotten Books has a print-on-demand reprint edition from 2010, one of a number of reprints available on amazon.com. As well, Apple offers a free podiobook, copyright 2004-2005, at its online iTunes store.

[2] Although both Roberts and Seton published the majority of their stories in American magazines, these texts were available in Canada, and their audiences were consistent despite the border.

nature" (59), "Seton was the more popular because he was more comfortable. He softened harsh nature and cruel fate to a much greater extent than Roberts. His was a 'realistic' nature, but one that mirrored human moral values" (59). That is, despite Seton's realistic depiction of animal characters, the stories themselves are more anthropocentric than Roberts's. As I discussed in the previous chapter, Roberts's works rely on a concept of animality as radical Otherness in both Romantic and Darwinian terms as a means of imagining the wilderness and indigeneity as falling outside the reach of a corrupting modernity. While Seton's view of industrial capitalism is similar to that of Roberts, his focus on a bridging morality shared between animals and humans attempts to position animality within a transcendental moral order. In this sense his wild animal stories more straightforwardly appropriate the indigeneity of animals, just as other works by him appropriate the indigeneity of Natives.

Although Seton was the more financially successful of the two, it is generally conceded that he was not as talented a writer as Roberts.[3] Dunlap puts it concisely: "As a writer, Roberts was much superior to Seton, whose prose was, at best, serviceable" (58-59).[4] The weaknesses of his texts relative to those of Roberts's, however, surpass issues of form; indeed, his writing lacks the nuances and ambiguities of Roberts and does not convey the compelling "irony and [. . .] moral nihilism" often found in the work of the

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[3] Roberts struggled with finances throughout his career, especially once he gave up his professorship at the University of King's College in 1897 and left his family to move to New York City. The knighthood he received later in life came with a modest stipend, which he very much needed.

[4] To his credit, however, Seton was an accomplished artist and naturalist before he found success as a writer: he declined a full seven-year scholarship to the Royal Academy in London in 1880, had a painting, *Sleeping Wolf,* accepted to the 1891 Grand Salon in Paris, and had another controversial painting, *Awaited in Vain* (originally, *The Triumph of the Wolves*), selected for the Canadian Exhibit at the 1893 World's Columbian Exhibition in Chicago.

latter (60). On the contrary, as Dunlap notes elsewhere, "Seton rejected, on an emotional level, the bleaker implications of Darwinism and celebrated an anthropomorphic nature that reflected and ratified human ideas of virtue and morality [. . .]" ("Old" 106). Janice Fiamengo states that they wrote "from strikingly different perspectives": whereas Roberts's works depict an animality in which "we discern a consciousness at once undeniable and not fully knowable—an engrossing alien self" that prompts our speculation about nature and our role in it, "For [. . .] Seton, the mere sight of an unknown bird caused 'a curious pricking in [his] scalp' [. . .] and a throat-clutching eagerness and desire to know that possessed him like a religious fervour" (Fiamengo "Looking" 37). As a result, Seton tends to depict humans interacting closely with wild animals with greater frequency while Roberts's works often convey a more modernist sensibility.

As indigenizing narratives, too, Seton's stories are far less subtle, a factor that is perhaps addressed in some part by his biography. Not only might his need to become indigenous have been particularly acute as a young immigrant to Canada, but the wilderness also offered him on a quite literal level an escape from an unhappy home life.[5] By various accounts his father, Joseph Logan Thompson, was stony and autocratic, and the family's arrival in Canada was "a terrible comedown" in society (Keller 45).[6] But

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[5] After the family's shipping firm suffered a series of disasters, the Thompson family emigrated from South Shields, England, to Canada in 1866, when Seton was six years old. When he was ten, in 1870, the family relocated to Toronto from Lindsay, Ontario.

[6] Unlike Roberts, who regarded his father as a dear friend, Seton maintained a lifelong disdain for his, to whom he stopped speaking in 1893. Convinced by family lore of ties to ancient Scots nobility and a dubious claim of kinship to George Seton, Fifth Earl of Winton, "and in reaction against his apathetic father" (Morris 24), Seton (born Ernest Evan Thompson) first changed his name to Ernest Thompson Seton

Seton's boyhood was ameliorated while living on a backwoods farm in Lindsay, Ontario, by listening to wilderness tales from a neighbour and making "independent expeditions into the forest and surrounding countryside, sometimes alone, but most often with brothers Arthur and Walter" (36). When the Thompson family's farming venture proved unsuccessful five years after arriving in Canada, Seton's father prudently secured a position as an accountant in Toronto and the Thompsons moved to the outskirts of "a slum area that would become notorious as The Ward a decade later" (40). There, Seton spent two formative years, where he was "compelled," by his own account, "to get [his] education in an overcrowded school filled with 'thieves' and 'latent murderers'" (45). Combined with his own hotheadedness, the endemic violence of the neighbourhood and of the Elizabeth Street School led to fighting, which the biographer Betty Keller describes as "an almost daily affair [. . .] and eventually resulted in damaged nose cartilage and innumerable facial and body scars, but [Seton] was enormously proud of having fought them" (42). It is little surprise, as another biographer, Brian Morris, writes, "that his early schooldays are characterised by [. . .] a tendency for Seton to retreat into a world of his own" (25). Morris continues, "Neither fitting into school nor into his own family (who, he felt, at times, really wanted to disown him), and given his intense natural feelings towards nature, Seton sought his happiness in the outdoors" (25). Since the family lived in the middle of the city, Seton had to make do with exploring remnant natural spaces

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in 1883. But he relented to his mother's wish not to have "the family divided into two surnames" and changed it back, but reserved Ernest Seton-Thompson as a nom de plume; he changed it a third time, back to Ernest Thompson Seton, in 1901, four years after her death (Morris 24).

surrounded by varying degrees of development, such as Queen's Park (at the time a woodland), the Toronto marsh and island, and the Don River watershed.

As a young teenager at this time, Seton closely resembled the figure of "the boy," a sensitive and inquisitive figure often repulsed by animal slaughter. Moreover, just as Seton did in his youth, this figure consistently exhibits a scientific interest in the animals he traps. Seton was greatly influenced by Bill Loane, who made his living as a professional gunner in the Toronto marsh, "providing game birds for restaurants and institutions" like hospitals, and coordinating trap-shooting for groups of men (Keller 52). Seton found this latter activity, which involves "shooting birds as they were released from 'traps', small cages which collapsed when a string was pulled" (52), particularly abhorrent, and he refused to witness any trap shoot after his first. As Keller then relates, Seton tried to domesticate a shorelark he rescued from one of Loane's trap shoots. When the bird died, "Seton learned the lesson that wild birds are not intended for cages. [. . .] This was his last attempt to domesticate a bird or animal of any kind; from this time on he observed them carefully, sometimes by keeping them in captivity, but never by making pets of them" (55). The scientific curiosity behind his observations was further encouraged by a friend's father, Dr. William Brodie, an amateur naturalist who studied "the birds and animals of Ontario" and whose specimens "would become the basis of a collection eventually housed in the Ontario Provincial Museum" (55). Seton's relationship with Brodie was fortuitous, and the naturalist's scientific guidance must have been significant, especially when we consider Brodie's later accreditation as the first

president of the Toronto Naturalists Society in 1879 and his appointment as the biologist for the Provincial Museum (now the Royal Ontario Museum) in 1899.

During this period Seton's forays into the wilderness also involved the cultivation of his woodcraft and repeated instances of "playing Indian." In the Don River Valley north of the city (just north of the present-day Bloor Street viaduct), Seton constructed "a secret hideout—a crude hut of logs, brush, and scrap lumber" that he named "Glenyan" and often visited "to get away from his problems and to imagine himself an Indian living in harmony with the wild" (Anderson 14). This type of indigenizing activity that Seton played at has since become a commonplace in Canadian and American culture, the basic logic of which is that "it is only by going native that the European arrivant can become native" (Goldie 16).[7] But Seton's imaginative recourse to playing Indian in the Don Valley wilds also runs parallel with the semblance of Romanticism signified in the name "Glenyan": both function in antimodern terms to render his physical hiding-out an epistemic one as well. Put another way, his hideout was a retreat from the pressures Seton felt at home and in the city, but Glenyan also functioned on some level as an attempt to remove Seton symbolically from modernity.[8] Of course, this removal is a fantasy, especially when one considers that *Glenyan* is a possessive—the glen belonging to

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[7] In Seton's youth, playing Indian was not as popular as it later became. In his autobiography *Trail of an Artist-Naturalist* (1940), he recalls the difficulty of convincing his childhood friends to play Indian: "The next move was to organize an Indian tribe. Yes, I thought so, but my friends did not. Most of them wanted to organize a band of robbers or pirates, so we compromised on a Robin Hood Band" (100).

[8] Seton's antimodern desires also seem evident in his lifelong "baronial aspirations" (Anderson 251). Like wilderness and Indianness, an ancient aristocracy represents a symbolic location that falls outside the alienating reach of modern capitalism.

Seton's autobiographical alter ego, "Yan"—and symbolizes the colonial transformation of wilderness into property.

Moreover, the Indian role Seton mimicked relied exclusively on a fictional image, a point underscored by the fact that, as Keller observes of Seton's boyhood, "He had never met an Indian, nor had even seen one, but he had just read James Fenimore Cooper's *The Last of the Mohicans* and had recognized the adventure potential of the Indian as a make-believe character for himself" (57). This biographical detail of Seton's early life, of enacting a textual representation as a form of childhood play, is one clear example of how "The image of the indigene has been textually defined and, through an extended intertextuality, [. . .] it constantly reproduces itself, a pervasive autogenesis" (Goldie 6). Because such a signifying process "does not lead back to the implied signified, the racial group usually termed Indian or Amerindian, but rather to other images" (3-4), any textual representation of "[the] implied signified [. . .] is unreachable (4). Even if Seton did not intend later "to deny the referent" in his works, this was nevertheless "the effect of [his] creations" (4). Indeed, the image of the indigene, in quite flagrantly stereotypical forms, consistently served him throughout his career, particularly as the basis of the League of Woodcraft Indians, a famous youth group he established in 1902.[9] More troubling, his dedication to preserving the wilderness, according to Misao Dean, necessarily entailed "strategies for regulating and policing First Nations

[9] Much has been written on the Woodcraft Indians, both in works on Seton and on the early Boy Scout Movement, which supplanted his youth movement. As well, a number of Seton's written works can be viewed as narrative support for the Woodcraft Indians, such as *Two Little Savages: Being the Adventures of Two Boys Who Lived as Indians and What They Learned* (1903), *How to Play Indian: Directions for Organizing a Tribe of Indians and Making Their Teepees in True Indian Style* (1903), *The Birch Bark Roll of the Woodcraft Indians* (1906), and *The Book of Woodcraft and Indian Lore* (1921).

communities" (Dean "Mania" 292). Consequently, for instance, his scientific account of a trip to the far north, *The Arctic Prairies* (1911), represents "the mixed race and First Nations men he meets as constitutionally unable to restrain themselves from firing their guns. [. . .] Seton interprets this behaviour as evidence of their lower position on the evolutionary ladder" (293). So even though Seton would become an outspoken advocate of Native rights and critic of oppressive government policies, he nevertheless subscribed to the scientific racism of his day.

Seton's Wild Animal Stories

In much the same way, Seton's wild animal stories are discursively limited to representations of the image of the wild animal. As in Roberts, the wild animals in Seton's stories represent a Darwinian kinship to the settler subject-position while at the same time insisting upon the radical Otherness of animality. Accordingly, Seton's representation of humans in his wild animal stories follows very closely the same pattern as Roberts, in which woodcraft as an indigenizing form of expert knowledge forms the basis of a progress narrative. Variations of the same six basic figures I identify in Roberts's stories in the previous chapter are also evident in Seton's works: the boy, the woodsman, the indigene, the trophy hunter, the settler, and the squatter. Each figure's knowledge of woodcraft is similarly conditional upon his racial, regional, and class-based differences. While Seton's entire oeuvre of animal stories generally involve more human-animal interactions, and are often set on the western frontier with western animal species, they also have fewer representations of the indigene. Indeed, in the three collections

considered by this study, not a single Native is represented and only passing references are made to "Indian" skills.[10] As in Roberts, the overarching absent-presence of the indigene in Seton's stories implies the trope of the dying Indian. The same can be said of the only substantial reference made to Natives, which occurs in "Bingo, The Story of My Dog" (1898), when the narrator briefly alludes to "an Indian tribe, in the Far North which was all but exterminated by an internecine feud over a dog [. . .]" (Seton *Wild* 117). Following the conventions of the trope, not only is this tribe described as "all but exterminated," but the reader is assured that it is a flaw internal to the tribe, rather than a colonial outcome, that is responsible for its demise.

In a similar vein, "The Winnipeg Wolf" (1905) provides the only extensive representation of Métis characters, but Ninette and Paul des Roches are described in terms of the standard commodities of the image of the indigene. As "a desert-born beauty like her Indian mother" (Seton *Animal* 310), Ninette "is no more and no less sexual than her full-blooded sisters" and thus represents the stereotypical "indigene maiden" (Goldie 70). As Goldie observes, the "male counterpart" of such a "mixed-race version of the indigene maiden" (105)—in this case Ninette's paramour Fiddler Paul—"is usually violent" (105). Paul's first appearance in the text as "the handsome ne'er-do-well of the half-breed world, readier to hunt than to work," depicts him "us[ing] a stick vigorously" to kill a brood of wolf pups to secure a bounty of ten dollars for each of their "scalps"

[10] For the purposes of this study, I have limited myself to an analysis of Seton's wild animal stories contained within three collections published nearest the turn of the century: *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898), *Lives of the Hunted* (1901), and *Animal Heroes* (1905). This allows me to consider his finer works produced before "public debate and interest declined" in the wild animal story and Seton's general departure from the genre circa 1910 (Dunlap "Realistic" 36). Moreover, I agree with Patricia Morley's evaluation that "Some of Seton's later work is marred by sentimentality [. . .]" (13).

(Seton *Animal* 295). As with the scarcity of representations of the indigene in Roberts, Paul's use of woodcraft suggests the indigene's subjection by white men since he hunts for money rather than work, and he uses that money to purchase alcohol. Although he is again described as "A handsome fellow," as well as "a good dancer and a fair violinist," the text also repeats that he is a "ne'er-do-well" because he is "a shiftless drunkard" and possible bigamist (311). His mixed-race status suggests a degeneration of his white ancestry,[11] an internal weakness like his cowardice (295, 311) or the "internecine feud" of the northern tribe in "Bingo." In the racialized economy of Seton's works, racial hybridity is not to be confused with the cultural hybridity promised by indigenization. Quite the opposite of social progress, the "half-breed" potentially embodies the worst traits of both indigene and exogene; as Goldie observes, "Within the standard commodity of violence, mixed race is represented as intensifying the evil [. . .]" (70). Thus representing both the invading technology of the colonizer and the perceived moribundity of the indigene, Fiddler Paul's racial hybridity must be defined as a remnant of a colonial past so that the settler subject-position may signify the progress of the future. Not surprisingly, then, he is neutralized by death and exits the story as violently as he enters it: he is "relentlessly cruel" while driving his sled-dog team to Fort Alexander "after the several necessary drinks of whiskey" (313), and it is soon discovered that the Winnipeg Wolf attacked him on the trail, his sled crashed, and his dogs "gathered at the body of

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[11] The value of Fiddler Paul's white ancestry is complicated by the consistent bias Seton maintains against Roman Catholics, be they the French Métis of this story, a superstitious "French Canadian [. . .] with certain spells and charms" in "Lobo, The King of the Currumpaw" (1898) (*Wild* 26), or Irish Catholics in "The Boy and the Lynx" (1905) and *Two Little Savages* (1903).

their late tyrant and devoured him at a meal" (316).[12] As a brutal, degenerate throwback, Fiddler Paul has no place in a modern world: quite fittingly, then, the text presents him as being literally consumed by the exogenous forces represented by the domesticated dog team. His eviction from the text thus emphasizes that the path to indigenization lies in the image of the wild animal, the Winnipeg Wolf who outlives him, rather than in the miscegenation he embodies.

While the three huskies who eat Fiddler Paul's body display a form of dynamic consciousness of their own—the narrator informs us that they are "fierce and lawless as pirates" (312)—it pales in comparison to that of their wild counterparts. The Winnipeg Wolf, as the narrator discovers upon his arrival in the city, remains an enigmatic figure for many "citizens of the town" due to his unusual behaviour (292). The narrator relates, he "preferred the city to the country, [. . .] passed by the Sheep to kill the Dogs, and [. . .] always hunted alone" (292).[13] As I have discussed, the image of the wild animal requires a dynamic consciousness to convey within indigenizing narratives the un-commodifiability of nature as an antimodern space. Thus when the narrator first spots the Winnipeg Wolf being pursued by a pack of domestic hunting dogs, his description is tentative:

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[12] The Factor chooses Ninette's father Renaud to help him investigate Fiddler Paul's disappearance because of his skills in woodcraft. As a woodsman, Renaud is quickly able to determine the sequence of events leading to Paul's death by reading tracks in the snow left by the Winnipeg Wolf, the sled, Paul, and the dog team. But like the woodsman figure in Roberts's wild animal stories, Renaud's woodcraft is not that of the settler subject, and his exogeneity is indicated in the text by his French accent and by an explicit reference to his ethnicity originating from Normandy, France (310).

[13] Perhaps in an effort to assign them subject status, Seton consistently presents animal species as proper nouns in his works.

> Wolf? He looked like a Lion. There he stood, all alone—resolute—calm—with bristling mane, and legs braced firmly, glancing this way and that, to be ready for an attack in any direction. There was a curl on his lips—it looked like scorn, but I suppose it was really the fighting snarl of tooth display. [. . .] But the great gray form leaped here and there, and chop, chop, chop went those fearful jaws, no other sound from the lonely warrior; but a death yelp from more than one of his foes, as those that were able again sprang back, and left him statuesque as before, untamed, unmaimed, and contemptuous of them all. (291)

The wild animality represented here refuses to succumb to the power of the colonizer, both in the form of the "great rabble of Dogs" and a concrete literary portrayal (290). Not only is his physical description made indistinct by impressionistic description and a comparison to a heavily symbolic old world species, but the narrator can only "suppose" that his behaviour means one thing over another. Similarly, the wolf's final scene in the text demonstrates his unwavering recalcitrance at the hands of a group of hunters: right up to his death "his square-built chest showed never a sign of weakness" (319).

But even as the wild animal must avoid becoming a purely instinctual automaton, it must also be discursively contained so that it may be appropriated by settler subjectivity. For instance, the Winnipeg Wolf's dynamic consciousness, as the narrator discovers while tracing his "strange history" (292), is paired by his sentimental attachment to Little Jim. Little Jim's father, a saloonkeeper, keeps the wolf while he is a pup "for the amusement of the customers, and this amusement usually took the form of

baiting the captive with Dogs" (296). Despite the horrendous abuses faced by the wolf, he and the boy form an attachment so that, "as he developed his splendid natural powers, [he] gave daily evidence also of the mortal hatred he bore to men that smelt of whiskey and to all Dogs [. . .] coupled with his love for the child [. . .]" (299). Seton's full-page illustration of Little Jim and the wolf (see Fig. 1), one of nineteen such illustrations included in the collection, depicts the boy embracing the animal. The caption below it, "His dear Wolfie," seeks its pathos by combining Little Jim's sugary diminutive with a possessive form symbolic of the indigenizing relation between subject and image.[14] Little Jim's prospective indigenization, however, is tragically cut short by a fever that kills the boy "three days before Christmas" (307), and this maudlin history serves to explain the wolf's subsequent determination to reside within the city. The "shadowy Dog-killer, the disembodied voice of St. Boniface woods, the wonderful Winnipeg Wolf" (318), the narrator explains at the end of the story, maintains a territory centered around the churchyard where Little Jim is buried because the boy was "the only being on earth that ever met him with a touch of love" (320). So despite the Winnipeg Wolf's animality, the text suggests he is able to return Little Jim's affection.

But this full disclosure of the wolf's story also enables the reader to supplant Little Jim's vacated role in this indigenizing narrative. This substitution seems determined, as it in many of Seton's works, in part by Little Jim's ethnic background.

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[14] In "Wildlifewriting? Animal Stories and Indigenous Claims in Ernest Thompson Seton's *Wild Animals I Have Known*" (2008), Manina Jones considers that the illustrations in Seton's first collection "produce moments when the authority of Seton's first-person narration (his own autobiographical narrative) is momentarily disrupted by the prospect of extra-narratorial—and nonhuman—authorship" (Jones). On the contrary, the unmistakably human point of view of the illustrations and the way they subordinate their objects to a colonial gaze emphasizes the indigenizing function of the image of the wild animal.



" His dear Wolfie."

Fig. 1. Little Jim and his pet wolf, illustration from Ernest Thompson Seton, *Animal Heroes* (305).

We are told he is the son of a saloonkeeper named Hogan, a surname of Irish origin that marks these characters as permanently exogenous in relation to Anglo-Saxons. Irish settlers similarly precluded from indigenization also appear in "Redruff, The Story of the Don Valley Partridge" (1898), "The Boy and the Lynx" (1905), "Little Warhorse" (1905), and "Johnny Bear" (1901). As well, Ireland is discussed in terms of old world superstition in "The Kangaroo Rat" (1901) and Chink the dog is pejoratively described as possessing "a streak of Irish in his make-up" (214) in "Chink: The Development of a Pup" (1901). The exclusiveness of the readerly subject-position over the exogene is further highlighted by the way in which the narrator prefaces his tale: "In telling the story of *le Garou*, as he was called by some, although I speak of these things as locally familiar, it is very sure that to many citizens of the town they were quite unknown" (292). That is, the reader is granted special access to the emotional bond shared by the wolf and the boy—and to an exclusive knowledge that such a bond is possible between wild animals and humans—of which not even "many citizens" of Winnipeg were aware.

Seton also relies on the discourse of woodcraft, like Roberts, to produce an indigenizing subject position for the reader. As manuals of woodcraft, the wild animal stories of both writers, as Misao Dean observes of Roberts's stories, offer the reader "a subject position of competence and mastery directly linked to his biological heritage as white male human being, crown and end product of evolution" (4). While on the one hand the reader's "identification with the animal subject [. . .] literally 'naturalise[s]' the position of the reader as the result of this supposed primal return to the essence of being-in-nature," on the other the woodcraft disseminated by both "the knowledgeable

backwoodsman" and the writer-naturalist narrator rehearses for the reader the indigenizing function of woodcraft within the text (4).

In just under half of the stories from the three collections examined by this dissertation, this figure of the writer-naturalist is candidly represented as a first-person narrator. Kathleen Marie Connor accounts for the autobiographical parallels between this figure and Seton as part of his discursive strategy "to teach lessons of conservation and responsibility to young colonial children [. . .]" (493). While the result may be that "His narrative is narcissistic" (494), it also signals a transformation of the figure of the boy from Seton's first collection, *Wild Animals I Have Known* (1898), into an adult scientist exemplified in "Johnny Bear" and "The Kangaroo Rat" in *Lives of the Hunted* (1901).[15] Moreover, even in the stories that eschew this writer-naturalist figure in favour of a depersonalized third-person narrator, the descriptions of animals, their behaviours, and their habitats conform to a far more scientific style than the works of Roberts. Lorne Pierce makes a similar assessment:

> Seton [. . .] is more concerned with scientific observation. Roberts simply aims to show that beasts and birds have an existence which is in many respects kindred to our own, and that we should sympathetically understand them. This he does with verbal artistry. Seton began as an artist and a scientist, and these elements are mixed in his work [. . .]. Seton is a closely observing scientist, Roberts writes from recollection; the former is

[15] It might also be possible that Seton's focus on the adult writer-naturalist, rather than the Canadian-born boy of Roberts's works, seeks to de-emphasize his own exogenous origins.

> an artist among animals, the latter a poet in the forest spaces. Seton's work belongs to science, Roberts's to imaginative literature. (Pierce).

While the distinction Pierce draws is useful as a guiding principle, Seton's natural science is an effect of the realism of his texts as literary artifacts. Indeed, several formal aspects of Seton's work may be seen as detracting from his science and realism, such as his occasional divergence into symbolic and allegorical representations of animals, his self-confessed "archaic method" of having animals talk in a number of early stories ("Note" 1901 10), and his regular use of biblical allusion.

To return to the means by which Seton's wild animal stories transmit woodcraft to the reader, the development of the figure of the boy into an adult writer-naturalist is matched by an alteration of the figure of the woodsman. As I discussed in the previous chapter, this figure possesses extensive woodcraft, but he is precluded from indigenization because his knowledge is limited to experience rather than the result of the scientific methods of a modern settler subjectivity. His transformation in Seton's wild animal stories perhaps arises from the maturation of the boy into an adult since the woodsman's role as the boy's guide has accordingly disappeared. Instead, the woodsman seems either to progress into the figure of the professional Park Ranger, as in "Chink: The Development of a Pup" (1901) and "Johnny Bear" (1901), or more often he degenerates into the unreliable and antagonistic figure of the ranch hand, as in "Lobo, The King of the Currumpaw" (1898), "The Pacing Mustang" (1898), "Tito: The Story of the Coyote that Learned How" (1901), "Badlands Billy: The Wolf that Won" (1905), and "Snap: The Story of a Bull-terrier" (1905). As such, the ranch hand becomes more

closely aligned with the figure of the squatter, who remains a comparably antagonistic character in "Redruff, The Story of the Don Valley Partridge" (1898) and "Krag, The Kootenay Ram" (1901). In each story featuring the ranch hand, this figure's antagonism is motivated by his desire to profit financially from his contact with the wild animal. In "The Pacing Mustang" (1901), Jo Calone, Bill Smith, and Thomas Bates each in turn attempt to corral a wild stallion whose growing fame as a pacer eventually earns him a bounty of five thousand dollars. In the remaining stories featuring the ranch hand, this figure gets a much-needed supplemental income from wolf bounties offered by government extermination programs. In all of these works, the ranch hand's woodcraft is implicated in the commodification of the wild animal because it has been exchanged for financial remuneration and is therefore tainted by modernity. Rather than functioning as an antimodern ideal that positions the settler subject in opposition to the exogenous origins of the colonial economy, this corrupted form of woodcraft has been co-opted as a tool that serves in the expansion of that very economy.

The degraded status of the woodsman figure, as an antagonist to both the wild animal and the readerly subject-position, thus registers within Seton's work a settler anxiety about colonial expansion that despoils the wilderness. However, such an anxiety is ambiguously expressed due to Seton's loyalty to settler subjectivity and the dream of indigenization. That is, the loss of wilderness, though lamentable, is ultimately of less importance than the image of the wild animal, which as a colonial inscription of indigenous authority and authenticity maintains a primacy over its putative referent in indigenizing narratives such as Seton's wild animal stories. Accordingly, although Seton

maintains, "The life of a wild animal *always has a tragic end*" ("Note" 1898 14), the same cannot always be said for the end of his stories. Of the seventeen stories in the three collections examined here that feature wild animals, only seven might be described as "tragic" in the sense that the lives of their title characters are cut short or end violently. More often than not, it seems the image of the wild animal must survive textual closure—regardless of the fate of any referent—because of its importance to the process of indigenization. As we learn for instance at the end of "Tito: The Story of the Coyote that Learned How" (1901), the title character survives her prolonged encounter with a wolver to raise her offspring "in peace" and successfully instruct them "in the ancient learning of the plains" and in "the later wisdom that the ranchers' war has forced upon them, and not only they, but their children's children, too" (Seton *Lives* 350). Despite the severity of the clash between western settlers and the coyote, the text attempts to efface any anxiety over the colonial despoiling of nature by insisting that this conflict's continuing effect on wildlife assures "peace."

Indeed, unlike the image of the indigene, which is conventionally represented as doomed by its own savagery to extinction, the image of the wild animal in "Tito" actually gains in "wisdom" from its contact with the settler, a kind of modernization of its primal instinct. That is, while the endangerment that wild animals face in Seton's stories might "evoke the indigenizing proleptic allegories of 'doomed races,'" as Brian Johnson observes of the wild animal story, such a threat nevertheless "is intended as neither an evolutionary inevitability nor a 'self-fulfilling prophecy', but as a dire warning and an impetus to humanitarian intervention" (339). Such intervention, of course, represents a

further consolidation of colonial power over the land and the fate of its nonhuman inhabitants. Thus, even though many of the "ancient dwellers of the Badlands" in "Tito," like the buffalo, antelope, and black-tailed deer, "have faded like snow under the new conditions," the settler is absolved of any colonial guilt by the way in which the narrator presents their decimation as a natural process. Moreover, the future of the image of the wild animal is secured by the narrator's guarantee that the coyote has "learned to prosper in a land of man-made plenty, in spite of the worst that man can do" (Seton *Lives* 351).[16] That is, while the threat settlers pose to wild animals can confirm the superiority of humans, and thus a "natural" claim to the land, the continuance of wild animals can ensure they remain as components of the indigenizing process.

Further, what constitutes that "worst that man can do" in Seton's stories appears to be not the widespread settlement or extirpation programs that comprise many of their immediate narrative contexts, but the dangers presented by criminal forms of hunting. While the deleterious effects of poaching on wild animal populations is explicated in stories like "Redruff, The Story of the Don Valley Partridge" (1898), "The Springfield Fox" (1898), "Krag, The Kootenay Ram" (1901), "Chink: The Development of a Pup" (1901), and "Arnaux: The Chronicle of a Homing Pigeon" (1905), the figure of the squatter focalizes the more symbolic dangers poaching poses to the settler subject. The antagonist squatters in "Redruff" and "Krag," for instance, each maintain a marginal

[16] Such an optimistic description of the land once again brings to mind Northrop Frye's observation of the poetry of Seton's contemporaries: "In Carman, Roberts, and D.C. Scott there is a rhetorical strain that speaks in a confident, radio-announcer's voice about the destiny of Canada, the call of the open road, or the onward and upward march of progress. [. . .] we may suspect that they turned to it partly for reassurance" ("Conclusion" 243).

existence outside the bounds of human settlements and game laws. While Cuddy pursues the partridge cock Redruff from his "wretched shanty near the Don, north of Toronto" (Seton *Wild* 220), the residents of the city around him "called him a squatter, and looked on him merely as an anchored tramp" (222). The narrator also remarks,

> He shot and trapped the year round [. . .] but had been heard to remark he could tell the month by the "taste o' the patridges," if he didn't know by the almanac. This, no doubt, showed keen observation, but was also unfortunate proof of something not so creditable. The lawful season for murdering partridges began September 15th, but there was nothing surprising in Cuddy's being out a fortnight ahead of time. Yet he managed to escape punishment year after year [. . .]. (222)

The non-standard English of Cuddy's dialogue indicates his exogeneity and thus his preclusion from an indigenizable settler subject-position, such as that assumed by the story's narrator or presumed reader. The woodcraft skills that allow Cuddy to subsist in the wilderness of the Don Valley are not those of the settler subject, who is bound to the laws of the colonial order he represents—in this case resource management laws based on scientific and moral reasoning. The narrator opines, "Have the wild things no moral or legal rights? What right has man to inflict such long and fearful agony on a fellow-creature, simply because that creature does not speak his language?" (245). Unlike the indigene and the wild animal, which are discursively managed by their respective images, Cuddy cannot be so easily contained, except it would seem by sarcastic dismissal: "His was what Greek philosophy would have demonstrated to be an ideal existence. He had no

wealth, no taxes, no social pretensions, and no property to speak of" (220). Having none of the responsibilities or trappings of the settler subject, he is written off as a cultural throwback.

In a very similar manner, the mountaineer Scotty MacDougall obsessively stalks the bighorn ram Krag from "his shanty on Tobacco Creek" (*Lives* 19), and the narrator elsewhere notes, "Like all mountaineers, he was a wanderer" (68). What is more, on these wanderings he has "his rifle ready, for game was always in season for him" (29). Once Scotty sights Krag's magnificent horns, exclaiming, "Heavens, what horns! [. . .] Them's mine!" (68), he endeavors to possess them as a trophy and endures a grueling three-month long backwoods hunt for Krag. The narrator's disapproving view of such an activity is expressed by comparing "the head-hunting sportsman" to the infamous historical figure of Herostatus, "a wretch who, despairing of other claims to notice, thought to achieve a name by destroying the most beautiful building on earth," the ancient Temple of Artemis at Ephesus (82). In the end, "Krag" accordingly serves as a warning tale since Scotty's successful hunt proves to be his final undoing. Just after successfully bagging the ram, Scotty at once resembles the hunter from Roberts's "The Antlers of the Caribou" (1909) because of his ability to perceive the worthlessness of the trophy he has just won:

> He sat down twenty yards away, with his back to the horns. He put a quid of tobacco in his mouth. But his mouth was dry; he spat it out again. He did not know what he himself felt. Words played but little part in his life,

> and his lips uttered only a torrent of horrid blasphemies, his one emotional outburst.
>
> A long silence; then, "I'd give it back to him if I could." (97-98)

This passage marks a key moment of realization for Scotty, and he spends the remainder of the story haunted by his profound remorse. Not only does he twice refuse to sell the taxidermic mount he has made of Krag's head, he keeps the trophy covered with a sheet and refuses to hunt ever again. In a particularly gothic scene near the end of the story, Scotty explains his torment to "an old partner":

> He's sucking my life out now. But he ain't through with me yet. Thar's more o' him round than that head. I tell ye, when that old Chinook comes a-blowin' up the Ter-bak-ker Crik, I've heard noises that the wind don't make. I've heard him just the same as I done that day when he blowed his life out through his nose, an' me a-layin' on my face afore him. I'm up ag'in' it, an' I'm a-goin' to face it out—right—here—on—Ter-bak-ker—Crick. (101)

Marked by both the exogeneity of his dialogue and the demonym signified by his nickname, Scotty fails to progress into a character filling an indigenized subject settler-position before his inevitable death at the end of the story. Indeed, while Krag's head goes on to be "enshrined on a palace wall to-day, a treasure among kingly treasures," "Old Scotty is forgotten" (104). Although Scotty comes to realize the error of his ways, the symbolic threat he poses as a squatter to settler subjectivity must nevertheless be

discursively contained by his death and the paradoxical narrative insistence that he remains unremembered.

However, Scotty's remorse also represents a significant difference between him and Cuddy, who not only continues poaching to the end of "Redruff" but also proves too lazy to check his traps frequently enough to spare Redruff from being tortured for two days. This distinction between these squatter figures relates to the preclusion of Irish characters from indigenization in Seton's works. Whereas Scotty MacDougall is clearly a Scots character, and is described as having "the Saxon understreak of brutish grit" (*Lives* 88) and a "dogged persistency that has made his race the masters of the world" (83), the surname *Cuddy* is prominently Irish. In short, Seton's racial politics served to privilege himself, as they are based on the assumption that British Britishness can be de-exogenized due to its similarity to Canadian Britishness.

As in Roberts, the illegitimacy of any claim the squatter may have to the land is contrasted by the figure of the settler and his penetrative and appropriative colonial gaze. While Scotty's moment of anagnorisis comes too late, after he has killed Krag, several of the settler figures from Seton's wild animal stories have a comparable moment of realization that saves them from the downfall Scotty faces. For instance, before Scotty sets out on his epic final hunt, his stalking companion Lee, "a cattle-man" and "sportsman by instinct" (69), has the opportunity to shoot Krag: "He was an easy mark—fifty yards, standing; he was a splendid mark, all far beyond old Scotty's wildest talk" (81). Moreover, Lee feels particularly justified in making the kill since Krag is responsible for the deaths of his three hunting dogs. But after witnessing the ram

spectacularly hurl four pursuing wolves from a cliff ledge, the narrator explains, "Lee had seen a deed that day that stirred his blood. He felt no wish to end that life, but sat with brightened eyes, and said with fervor: 'You grand old warrior! I do not care if you did kill my Dogs. You did it fair. I'll never harm you. For me, you may go in safety'" (81-82). In this transformative moment, Lee comes to understand that Krag's magnificence as a being far eclipses any value that could be assigned to him as a hunting trophy. Further, his realization comes in time precisely because he is a legitimate landowner and, as suggested by his Christian name's reference to the English surname, he is Anglo-Saxon.

Because this figure of the settler regularly occupies the same position as that of the autobiographical writer-naturalist narrator in Seton's stories, moments of anagnorisis are regularly described from a first-person point of view. The settler-narrator figure's potential for indigeneity is emphasized, for instance, in both "Bingo, The Story of My Dog" (1898) and "Badlands Billy: The Wolf that Won" (1905) by his sudden empathetic recognition of the cruelty posed by leg traps. By contrast, the same potential of the settler-narrator is portrayed as an immediate response to the extirpation efforts of local landowners in "The Pacing Mustang" (1898) and "The Springfield Fox" (1898). In "The Pacing Mustang," this moment occurs when the narrator first spots the stallion, despite that local ranchmen want the wild horse dead: "There he stood with head and tail erect, and nostrils wide, an image of horse perfection and beauty, as noble an animal as ever ranged the plains, and the mere notion of turning that magnificent creature into a mass of carrion was horrible" (164). The settler-narrator steadfastly refuses to participate in the

killing of the mustang and thus preserves his hunting woodcraft from the market economy in which the ranchers participate.

Similarly, the narrator of "The Springfield Fox" sympathizes with the title character and her family, even while the "wrathy" uncle he stays with for the summer seeks to exterminate them (145). Although the narrator is tasked to discover and put an end to the cause of his uncle's disappearing hens when he first arrives on the farm, he instead studies the foxes. His woodcraft thus remains untainted by the exogeneity implied by the market economy that motivates his uncle to extirpate the wild animals costing him money. Indeed, while observing the pups tear apart one of the stolen chickens, the narrator considers the scene "charming, but which my uncle would not have enjoyed at all" (136). Fitting Seton's pattern of representing Irish characters, his uncle has his hired man Paddy kill all but one of the fox pups in their den before the narrator "could interfere" (147). Alternatively referred to as Pat, his exogeneity is conveyed chiefly by his use of non-standard English—saying "onaisy" for "uneasy," for example (119). Once the two men have the surviving fox pup back to the house, they undergo a change of heart: "No one knew just why he was kept alive, but in all a change of feeling had set in, and the idea of killing him was without a supporter" (147). Their about-face proves far more limited than the narrator's unfailing compassion, however, since they attempt to use the captive pup to lure his mother to her death. The text thus maintains the narrator's greater potential for indigenization, especially since this act is so profoundly cruel.

Because of their commitment to such a process of indigenization, Seton's wild animal stories also serve as colonial narratives of social progress. As such, in addition to

the radical Otherness it signifies, the image of the wild animal must represent kinship with the settler subject-position by using the contemporary scientific discourse of Darwinism. So while indigenization becomes imaginatively possible because of biological and evolutionary connections between humans and animals, in a countervailing manner the settler subject-position is liable, as in the case of Seton's work, to pseudo-Darwinian ideologies that attempt to naturalize social differences amongst humans. That is to say, while for some humans their proximity to animality plays a progressive role in their indigenization and de-exogenization, for others natural law determines that such progress is impossible due to their inborn weakness. For Seton, social differences and the institutions that perpetuate them are a reflection of a natural order to which all life is subject. In "Krag," for instance, the narrator observes,

> It is quite common to hear conventionality and social rules derided as though they were silly man-made tyrannies. They are really important laws that, like gravitation, were here before human society began, and shaped it when it came. In all wild animals we see them grown with the mental growth of the species. (35)

His attempt to imagine such a transcendental, trans-specific order, the access of which is based on intelligence, implies that social differences among humans are based on determinism. Robert MacDonald, however, views the wild animal story "as part of a popular revolt against Darwinian determinism," arguing that "The works of Seton and Roberts are thus celebrations of rational, ethical animals, who, as they rise above instinct, reach towards the spiritual" (18). While in some sense this interpretation is accurate, it is

by no means comprehensive: Seton's works are also replete with weak animals that, "by inexorable law," perish (Seton *Wild* 218).[17] More disturbing, however, are the implications Seton's Darwinism has for human characters, which operate within a colonial social order rather than an ecosystem. Whereas Roberts tends to present wanton human actions as antithetical to the indigenizing potential of woodcraft, Seton's works devote much of their attention to congenital features of humans in order to naturalize social differences and the settler subject-position. As a result, settler subjectivity is presented as an inherent fitness in relation to other humans who are permanently marked as exogenous and lack woodcraft.

Two Little Savages: Atavistic Degeneration and the Exogene

Both the image of the indigene and the image of the wild animal are deployed as indigenizing techniques in Seton's fictionalized autobiographical account of his boyhood, *Two Little Savages: Being the Adventures of Two Boys Who Lived as Indians and What They Learned* (1903). The bildungsroman focuses on the fourteen-year-old Yan, who is sent from the city to live with the Raften family on a farm for a year. There, he befriends two other boys, Sam Raften and Guy Burns, and under the guidance of the trapper Caleb Clark they camp out, play Indian, and learn valuable lessons in woodcraft.[18] Set for the

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[17] Thomas Dunlap disputes MacDonald's claim that Roberts's works constitute a revolt against Darwinian determinism in "'The old kinship of Earth': Science, Man and Nature in the Animal Stories of Charles G.D. Roberts" (1987). Dunlap writes, "Roberts was not revolting against Darwinian determinism; far from it. He used the new biology, fusing it with older Romantic conceptions to make an emotionally satisfying and scientifically correct vision of nature and of man's place in it" (105).

[18] Caleb's name is highly suggestive here as a biblical allusion to Caleb, who reports to Moses that Canaan could be claimed by the Israelites. After they ignore his guidance, God forces the Israelites to

most part in the woods, the text outlines the ways in which the acquisition of woodcraft knowledge in proximity to the wilderness constitutes an antimodern bildung by which an enfeebled urban boy can mature into a vigorous, indigenized settler subjectivity. As "a practical handbook of woodlore for kids," the novel is quite lengthy and, as Daniel Francis wryly remarks, "crammed with diagrams and instructions" (*Imaginary* 146).[19]

The distinction between the Indian and indigeneity is made early on in the narrative, even before the protagonist Yan is sent from the city at the behest of the family physician.[20] Like Seton, Yan builds a shanty in an urban river valley which he names Glenyan and where, according to the narrator, "he would lead his ideal life—the life of an Indian with all that is bad and cruel left out" (Seton *Two* 56). The unsavory aspects of Indian life are suggested later in the text by Caleb, whose authority is grounded in having once been married to a "squaw" and living among a tribe of Plains Natives: in contrast to the "romantic splendour" Yan assumes of Indian life, Caleb describes it as "forever shooting and killing, never at peace, never more than three meals ahead of starvation and just as often three meals behind" (304). Natives in *Two Little Savages* represent remnant populations in cultural and racial decline, so the "ideal that [Yan] hankered after was the pre-Columbian Indian, the one who had no White-man's help or tools" (180). The authenticity and authority of the indigene that Yan and, to a lesser extent, his friends

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wander for forty years in the desert and rewards Caleb by allowing him to survive the ordeal to settle in Canaan.

[19] Francis humorously notes of the work's comprehensiveness and pretense toward factuality, "It is the only work of fiction I know that includes an index" (*Imaginary* 146).

[20] Yan represents Seton, who was sent back to Lindsay, Ontario, from Toronto to convalesce from tuberculosis as a young adolescent.

desire are thus discursively relocated in an imaginary past, free of both the taint of civilization and any contemporary Natives who might have a competing claim to the land.

By and large *Two Little Savages* suppresses the representation of the indigene in favor of rehearsing the possibility of the indigenization of settler children. The sole appearance of Natives comes very late in the text in a single paragraph, after Yan successfully locates the camp of an unidentified group of Natives on an overnight expedition to discover "a tract of Pine bush" inhabited by deer (513). Because it is "the *old-time* Indians that Seton wants to imitate," Margaret Atwood observes of the novel, "When the boys come upon some modern Indians, the encounter is short and not very productive" ("Grey" 46). The barring of the indigene from the text, however, is presented as the result of their own doing since, as the narrator reports, "The Indians proved shy, as usual, to White visitors" (Seton *Two* 520). Yan's encounter with them consists of his correct use of two hand signals from a fanciful Indian sign language that at some point "he had learned from Caleb," and the brief scene ends once "The Chief Indian offered him a Deer-tongue, but did not take any further interest" (520). In this sense *Two Little Savages* is an example of what Alan Lawson terms a Second World narrative, with Yan occupying a settler subject-position. As such, the text "has a double teleology: the suppression or effacement of the Indigene, and the concomitant indigenization of the settler, who, in becoming more like the Indigene whom he mimics, becomes less like the atavistic inhabitant of the cultural homeland whom he is also reduced to mimicking" (Lawson par. 21). By an uncanny coincidence that seems more than apt, each of Yan's

two hand signals signifies his own doubleness: the first indicates that he is traveling with a friend, "Pointing to himself, he held up two fingers—meaning that he was two"; the second indicates his hunger "by pressing in his stomach with the edges of the hands, meaning 'I am cut in two here'" (Seton *Two* 520). Indeed, as a settler subject "suspended between 'mother' and 'other'" Yan is epistemically doubled, since as neither indigene nor exogene he is forced to mimic both (Lawson par. 16). Thus his indigenization is effected in the text by playing Indian and learning woodcraft on the one hand, and by the text's repudiation of modernity and exogeneity on the other.

In addition to the clear antimodernism behind Yan's doctor's medical advice—that city living results in the physical wasting of young males—*Two Little Savages* presents, in its sustained engagement with the discourse of degeneration, exogeneity as the condition of the "atavistic inhabitant of the cultural homeland" (par. 21). Caleb, for example, extols the virtues of hunting before relating to Yan a story about "a feller from Europe, some kind o' swell" he once guided on a hunting trip "out West" (Seton *Two* 375): "'Pears to me men as hunt is humaner than them as is above it" (374). As it turns out, this European novice hunter had shot and "crippled a Deer so it couldn't get away. Then he sat down to eat lunch right by, and every few moments he'd fire a shot into some part or another, experimentin' an' aimin' not to kill it for awhile" (375). The man's lack of empathy is underscored by his ability to eat a meal while being so cruel, but both his lunch and his study are cut short, as Caleb continues, when "I heard the shootin' an' blattin', an' when I came up I tell ye it set my blood a-boilin'. I called him some names men don't like, an' put that Deer out o' pain quick as I could pull trigger. That bu'st up

our party—I didn't want no more o' him. He come pretty near lyin' by the Deer that day" (375). The severity of Caleb's reaction to the man's cruelty indicates that this episode was perhaps more than a case of wantonness or ignorance: while describing him as a "swell" (meaning of a higher social status) suggests an underlying class tension, Caleb's description of him is more explicitly one of moral degeneration inherent to European overcivilization, which for Caleb nearly justifies the putting to death of a criminal.

Although Caleb and the other white inhabitants of the novel's rural setting of Sanger benefit morally from living in such close proximity to the Canadian wilderness, they are nevertheless marked by exogeneity in a number of ways. Like many of their rural counterparts in both Seton's and Roberts's wild animal stories, these characters either have European accents or speak in a local dialect. As I argued in chapter two about the woodsman Joe Barren's dialect in Roberts's "Mrs. Gammit and the Porcupines" (1911), Caleb's dialect here similarly precludes him from considerations of proleptic indigenization. Young Yan, like the boy in Roberts's stories, speaks neither with an accent nor in dialect because he represents the potential of a progressive, studied form of woodcraft to realize an indigenized, modern, and postcolonial subjectivity within the political context of a maturing nation. The same cannot be said, however, for his fellow woodcrafters from the countryside.

The development of the dialect spoken by Yan's peers in Sanger follows a general pattern of settlement of the region outlined by the text: "The recognized steps are, first, the frontier or woods where all is unbroken forest and Deer abound; next the backwoods where small clearing appear; then a settlement where the forest and clearings are about

equal and the Deer gone; last an agricultural district, with mere shreds of forest remaining" (103). In this narrative of colonial progress, however, even the children of the original settlers of Sanger are prohibited from developing an indigenized subjectivity because they retain the traces of exogeneity in the way they speak. This schema is further complicated by the narrator's account that "Thirty years before, Sanger had been 'taken up' by a population chiefly from Ireland, sturdy peasantry for the most part, who brought with them the ancient feud that has so long divided Ireland—the bitter quarrel between Catholics [. . .] and Protestants, more usually styled 'Prattisons'" (103). Not only is Sanger populated by migrants who are limited by the text in terms of their class and their inability to liberate themselves from an "ancient" conflict, they originate from a region traditionally marginalized within Europe by colonial and racial discourses. Thus, rather than something indigenous to Sanger, the local dialect is a derivative of an Irish original: "The accent of the Sangerite was mixed. First, there was a rich Irish brogue with many Irish words; this belonged chiefly to the old folks. [. . .] The young generation had almost no Irish accent, but all had sifted down to the peculiar burring nasal whine of the backwoods Canadian" (106).[21] Although there is much to be gained for any boy to learn "Natural Science and Indian craft" (20), the promise that indigenization holds for cultural hybridity is not available to Yan's "Irish-Canadian"—or even "backwoods Canadian"—

[21] To clarify, the "Irish brogue with many Irish words" spoken in Sanger is a dialect of English, since the Irish language historically witnessed a rapid decline during the nineteenth century in Ireland. As Tom Paulin notes, "Particularly after the famine, parents encouraged their children to learn English as this would help them make new lives in America" (10).

friends because they have never been as civilized as he (71).[22] Simply put, indigenization is a proposed remedy for the effects of overcivilization, so it has less applicability to those who are under- or uncivilized.

The text consistently registers this difference between Yan and his comrades in racial terms by repeatedly alluding to the discourse of degeneration.[23] As I set out in the first chapter, by the mid-nineteenth century the notion of degeneration was widely being applied in a number of scientific fields and narratives of social progress. Moreover, since woodcraft functions as a constituent to one such form of social-progress narrative, it relies on degeneration as a foil against which to imagine the possibility of individual and social development. The Irish were among the numerous classes and social groups who were epistemically re-categorized as atavistic threats to civilization, not coincidentally at the same time as the popularization of woodcraft. As Clair Wills observes, the Irish presented a unique challenge to imperialist racism due to "the absence of the visual marker of skin colour difference which was used to legitimate domination in other colonized societies" (21). She continues,

> Despite some pseudo-Darwinian attempts to match Irish with black physiognomy, in general stereotypes of the 'wild Irish' have tended to concentrate on their habits and lifestyle (poverty, laziness, dirt and

[22] The narrator is careful to identify Canadians of Irish heritage and uses this hyphenate to describe Biddy, the granddaughter of the Sanger Witch and briefly Yan's family's "servant girl" in the city before she is fired for becoming intoxicated and "abusive to the lady of the house" (77).

[23] I use the looser term "racial" here because, as McClintock points out, "In the last decades of the nineteenth century, the term 'race' was used in shifting and unstable ways, sometimes as synonymous with 'species', sometimes with 'culture', sometimes with 'nation', sometimes to denote biological ethnicity or sub-groups within national groupings: the English 'race' compared, say, with the Irish 'race'" (52). Arguably, the same can be said of modern usage of the term, however, since "race" remains as imprecise as it is unscientific.

> drunkenness), and most importantly [. . .], on their *language*. Whether it is a patronizing approval of lyrical celticism, or horrified revulsion from the degenerate Irish accent, Irish men and women are marked by their voices, their (mis)use of the English language. (21 emphasis in original)

Not only do the "rich Irish brogue" and "burring nasal whine" of the residents of Sanger signify a degenerate form of Yan's spoken English, this use of dialect marks them as exogenous to Canada (Seton *Two* 106). Not surprisingly, the Otherness of their speech is reinforced by their presentation in *Two Little Savages* as the Irish stereotypes Wills enumerates above. The Sanger Witch, like her granddaughter, has a weakness for alcohol and lives in a squalid shanty;[24] Guy Burns is from a poor family and "won first prize for being the dirtiest boy in school" (276); and even Yan's adored best friend Sam is prone to indolence, to the point where Yan calls him a "lazy freak" (188).

The threat of degeneration presented by these characters, however, runs much deeper than behavior and language to include their heredity.[25] Since the two other boys are in direct competition with Yan in the games they play and, eventually, in assuming

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[24] Although the Sanger Witch, also referred to as Granny de Neuville, possesses a great deal of knowledge in the forms of herbal medicine and folk botany, her experiential woodcraft is as limited as that of the woodsman figure in this story, Caleb Clark. Furthermore, the story would suggest that her lifestyle, which includes religious superstition, alcohol use, domestic filthiness, impoverishment, etc., is attributable to her Irishness.

[25] Seton maintained a view of race informed by Social Darwinism. In "The White Man's Last Opportunity," a 1908 article for *Canada-West* magazine, he champions the Canadian Prairies as the perfect region for European settlement in pseudo-Darwinian terms:

> And what is the ultimate race of the region to be. There is a zoological maxium [*sic*] that suggests the answer—An animal finds its highest development in the coldest part of its range when its food is abundant. How true this is of mankind. The giant races of America *were* from the Northwest Buffalo Plains and from the Patagonias. The giant race of Africa is the Zulu of the Cape, and the dwarf races the world over are from the tropics where they are overhot or from the poles where they are underfed. The highest product of civilization we believe to have been the white man of northern Europe—a product indeed of the snow. This should help us to forecast the future of the North. (532)

the title of Head Chief, Sam and Guy are assiduously depicted with atavistic traits. This is particularly the case with Guy Burns, who makes up the third member of the boys' "tribe"; it is not an oversight that he is excluded from the title's reference to Yan and Sam playing Indian. When he is first introduced in a chapter titled "The Hostile Spy," the neighbouring boy is described as a "little rat" since Yan and Sam consider him a pest (Seton *Two* 220). After a short while, however, Guy is reluctantly accepted into their playgroup, but he is given the "Indian" name "Sapwood"—due to his skin's inability to burn because he is already so deeply tanned—instead of the animal-based ones taken by Yan and Sam, respectively "Little Beaver" and "Great Woodpecker." Not only is Guy excluded from any indigenizing effect of being renamed as an "Indian," he is also excluded from the indigenization these purportedly Native names achieve with their reference to indigenous North American animals.

Indeed, the animality of the descriptions applied to Guy rather indicates his atavism and refers to species introduced to North America, like the rat and, especially, the pig.[26] Guy's physical features in the text thus specify that he is precluded from indigenization: "Sappy's eyes were *not* the sinister black beads of the wily Red-man, but a washed-out blue. His ragged tow-coloured locks he could hide under wisps of horsehair, the paint itself redeemed his freckled skin, but there was no remedy for the white eyelashes and the pale, piggy, blue eyes" (230-31 emphasis in original). While the

[26] Both the "true rats" of the genus *rattus* and the "old world pigs" of the genus *sus* were introduced to the Americas by colonizing Europeans and should not be confused with the New World species they resemble. Although peccaries and pigs are both of the same order, *artiodactyla*, they are members of genetically distinct families—*tayassuidae* and *suidae*, respectively. Similarly, rats and New World pack rats (or wood rats) are both *rodentia*, but they are genetically distinct as members of the *muridae* and the *cricetidae*.

racialized description of Guy's eye colour marks him as exogenous, especially in direct comparison to the indigene, his animalization does the same while also signifying his atavism. The text is insistent on this latter point: "Sappy was not an athlete nor an intellectual giant, but his little piggy eyes were wonderfully sharp and clear" (292); "His little piglike eyes took in everything" (295); "It looked as though little pig-eyed Guy was really cut out for a hunter" (295). Although his eyesight eventually earns him the "Indian" name of "Hawkeye" later in the story, the subtle metonymy of the name modifies the indigeneity of the animal as an atavistic trait Guy merely *shares* with the hawk. Indeed, Guy's renaming ceremony in the chapter entitled "The Triumph of Guy" is highly ironic, in order to reaffirm his idiocy even as it demonstrates the improving qualities of woodcraft. That is, although the other two boys undoubtedly serve as a better influence than his atavistic family,[27] woodcraft can at best only modify degenerate behaviours rather than progressively develop the subjectivities of the degenerate classes. Accordingly, Guy's experience in the wilderness is not a transformative one: he is portrayed as being just as unintelligent, mendacious, and irritating at the end of the novel as when he first appears.

The intrinsic quality of degeneracy is echoed throughout the text, particularly in a scene where Sam physically confronts Guy for excessively boasting. Trying to impress the other boys and Caleb, Guy excitedly explains that he has two calfskins which they

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[27] Guy's parents are described in stereotypical terms, as impoverished Irish Catholics who reproduce immoderately. His father is violent, obtuse, and stoop-shouldered, and he refuses to encourage his son's participation in woodcraft. His mother coddles him, which the text implies only encourages his irritating behaviour and dishonesty while hindering the development of his masculinity. His younger siblings, all younger sisters, are described as "four brown-limbed, nearly naked, dirty, happy towsle-tops" (438).

can use to make Indian drums. As the narrator describes, "Guy was going off into one of his autopanegyrics when Sam, who was now being rubbed on a sore place, gave a 'Whoop!' and grabbed the tow-tuft with a jerk that sent [Guy] sprawling and ended the panegyric in the usual volley of 'you-let-me-'lones'" (320-21). Yan intervenes, however, and tells Sam to stop, saying, "You can't stop a Dog barking. It's his nature" (121). Not only is Guy described in terms of atavism—the idea here being that one cannot domesticate the animality out of a dog—but both his and Sam's behaviour is attributed to an essential makeup as well. Although Sam reacts in an "appropriately" masculine way by asserting his authority over Guy, his reaction is nevertheless immoderate, which suggests he lacks some degree of temperance and judiciousness. Moreover, Yan's peacemaking further emphasizes the inherent virtuousness, patience, and kindness of the indigenizing settler subject.[28]

How the three boys physically rate on a scale of degeneracy is also suggested by one of Seton's over two hundred marginal illustrations in the novel (see Fig. 2). This particular illustration is a representation of Yan's notebook sketches of the three boys' footprints, each of which includes an accompanying letter to indicate which belongs to whom: "the three [are] wholly different" (276). Yan's foot is ideal: it is long and narrow, with elegantly shaped and positioned toes and a high arch. Guy's foot by contrast is short and wide, and the absence of an arch indicates his flat-footedness. As well, his toes are stubby and their relative lengths more closely correspond to those of fingers (with the middle digits being the longest), which suggests the prehensility of human hands or

[28] This scene is also an example of another of the text's ironies: Yan's consistent representation as a goody two-shoes gives the impression that Seton is engaged in his own kind of "autopanegyrics."



Fig. 2. Yan's comparative sketches of footprints, with letters as labels for Sam, Yan, and Guy, illustration from Ernest Thompson Seton, *Two Little Savages* (276).

simian feet. Sam's footprint is the largest, since he is the eldest boy, and it blends the characteristics of the two other footprints, implying that the degree of his racial degeneration is greater than Yan's but less than Guy's. The scene to which this illustration refers begins after Guy arrives at their campsite "barefoot, as usual" (270). After the boys prepare the ground, he is the first to leave his mark: "Then planting his broad feet down in the dust, with many snickers, he left some very interesting tracks" (275). Making a pun on Guy's unshod feet, Sam says, "I call that a bare track" (275), and he then tells Yan, "Guess I'll peel off and show you a human track" (276). While Sam implies that Guy is not human, his pun's use of a homonym—*bare* for *bear*—also denies Guy access to the indigenization presented by the image of the animal. Instead, "bare" signifies Guy's atavism because, unlike Sam who is also Irish, he is very poor and his family cannot afford shoes.[29] In this way, atavistic degeneration distinguishes the two boys in terms of social ranking, part of a larger "iconography," according to McClintock,

> of *domestic degeneracy* [. . .] widely used to mediate the manifold contradictions in imperial hierarchy—not only with respect to the Irish but also to the other 'white negroes': Jews, prostitutes, the working-class, domestic workers, and so on, where skin color as a marker of power was imprecise and inadequate. (53)

In keeping with this iconography, then, we are told later in the novel and within brackets that Sam "went barefooted half the time" (Seton *Two* 472): although the Raftens are not

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[29] Sam's use of irony, as an example of abstract thought and sophisticated control of language, might also indicate his intellectual superiority over Guy, whose use of language is comparably basic.

so degraded as to lack shoes, the frequency of Sam actually wearing them corresponds to the relative degeneracy of his atavistic body.[30]

In this sense, the discourse of atavism pervasive in the late nineteenth century was an aspect of the self-definition of an emergent modern bourgeoisie anxious about "the fragile boundaries of race, sexuality, and class" (Seitler 21). These boundaries were thrown into relief by the "broad economic transition and technological advance characteristic of the urban-centric process of modernization" (135) and its attendant "increasing hybridization of culture" (137). Rather than "a sublimation of the collective psyche," atavism can be best grasped as "a specific discourse that participated in and enabled an understanding of [. . .] modernity" (10): the regressive, hybridized body of the atavistic degenerate represents a modern subject-position that stands in contradistinction to the progressive hybridity of the indigenized settler subject. Rather than being aesthetically addressed by a poetics of extinction, as with late nineteenth-century representations of the indigene, the atavistic degenerate is the criminalized object of social scrutiny and control. As Seitler remarks of the "fin de siècle United States," "Thus, former notions of human being tied to divinity in religious doctrine, or of the autonomous individual envisioned by liberalism, increasingly came to be replaced by (socio)biological concepts garnered from Darwinian thought" (5).

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[30] As it does with Guy, the novel also indicates Sam's physical degeneracy in its descriptions of his eyes. At Sam's first appearance in the text, the narrator states, "Over behind the stove was a tall, awkward boy with carroty hair and small, dark eyes set much *aslant* in the saddest of faces" (106 emphasis added). Likewise, while Sam demonstrates his superior axemanship the narrator reiterates, "Sam's little Japanese eyes twinkled" (397). By racializing Sam's features, the text seems to suggest that his degeneracy is somehow mitigated in comparison to Guy's animality.

The theme of degenerate criminality is taken up in *Two Little Savages* in subtly various ways in relation to class and race. As previously discussed, the European man that Caleb almost murders for his cruelty to a deer is subtextually figured as a criminal by virtue of Caleb's extreme response to his actions. The fact that this man was a member of a party on a trophy hunt "out west," had hired Caleb as a guide, and is described by Caleb as a "swell" all suggest he was of some financial means (Seton *Two* 375). His degeneration is the result of European overcivilization rather than racial atavism, and his criminality is limited to subtextuality because he is not poor.

Guy Burns, on the other hand, is explicitly identified as a criminal by his fellow "tribe" members. In the first instance, he is once again boasting about his superior hunting abilities within the "tribe," this time to Sam's father, William Raften: "Sam looked at Yan and Yan looked at Sam, then glanced at Guy, made some perfectly diabolical signs, seized each a long knife and sprung toward [him], but he dodged behind Raften and commenced his usual 'Now you let me 'lone—'" (382). As the narrator continues, "Raften's eye twinkled. 'Shure, I though ye was all wan Tribe an' paceable.' 'We've got to suppress crime,' retorted his son" (382). Larger than the crime of boasting in this peaceable kingdom, however, are Guy's superior hunting skills themselves. Although they result from his atavistic "little piggy eyes" being "wonderfully sharp and clear" (292), they are also a competitive advantage in woodcraft that could make a claim upon the land if otherwise left unsuppressed. This precise danger is later foreclosed in the text, however, when Guy's obvious lack of woodcraft leads him to break Raften's rule about killing songbirds. His inherent intellectual shortcomings will not allow him to

master most elements of woodcraft, so he mistakes a robin for a partridge and is disciplined by his friends after excitedly showing them his quarry. "'So that's your Partridge. I call that a young Robin,' said [Sam] with slow emphasis. 'Rules is broke. Killed a Song-bird. Little Beaver, arrest the criminal'" (476). Rather than reporting Guy to Raften or kicking him out of the "tribe," the two boys quite adeptly coerce him into accepting a series of punishments by threatening to strip him of his "Indian name" Hawkeye and return to calling him Sapwood. Thus, forms of criminality that cannot be expunged from the social order without lawful physical violence—like poverty, sexual diversity, ethnicity, and race—can be discursively contained and controlled by a middle-class hegemony.

In its depiction of the villain Bill Hennard, the novel furthermore stresses that this class has the authority to exercise hard power over degenerate criminality as well. Hennard is physically marked with atavistic traits, but his degeneracy is not a rehearsal of the imperialist sentiment of the white man's burden as it is with Guy Burns. Rather, as his name suggests, Hennard is of English heritage, the "son of a prosperous settler" and "had inherited a fine farm" (478). His degeneracy stems from a privileged idleness resulting from overcivilization. Hennard is described as "Broad-shouldered, beetle-browed, brutal and lazy;" "as lazy as he was strong;" and as having "followed the usual course from laziness to crime" (478). He drinks to excess, at times enough to be "much fuddled" (478), and he arrives in the boys' camp "savage with hunger and annoyance, and reckless with bottle assistance, for he carried a flask" (481). His attempted murder of William Raften has led to the deterioration of community relations in Sanger and the ongoing

animosity between Caleb and Raften, who were formerly close friends. These two men are therefore personally affected by Hennard's criminality and are morally justified in bringing him to justice, even if this involves physical coercion.

However, Hennard's profligate criminality also represents a betrayal of his class, discernible in his effect on the homosocial relations within the boys' camp.[31] Hennard seems a sexual threat. Yan's physical vulnerability as a child assaulted by "a big, rough-looking tramp" is compared to a damsel in distress in a melodramatic tableau (481).[32] After being thrown down and having his feet tied, Yan is further terrorized when Hennard pulls out "an ugly-looking knife" and threatens to kill him (482). The symbolic phallus that imperils Yan connotes an atavistic sexual deviancy. The profligacy of Hennard's degeneration is again emphasized when the narrator describes him "whetting his long knife" (484), an action made particularly menacing by its similarity to the phrase "whetting an appetite," in this case a sexual one. The danger he thus presents to the (homo)social order warrants a physically violent response, and although he escapes after being incapacitated by Raften, the text reveals his violent death in the subsequent chapter. Three years later, after having fled to the United States—a location safely removed from Sanger, falling outside the political boundaries of Canada, and representing exogenous

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[31] The homosocial nature of camping and woodcraft is evident in all-male groups like the Woodcraft Indians and the Boy Scouts and is reiterated throughout the novel. In a particularly flamboyant passage that underlines the potential for social regeneration through such groups, the narrator exclaims, "Oh, the magic of the campfire! No unkind feeling long withstands its glow. For men to meet at the same campfire is to come closer, to have better understanding of each other, and to lay the foundations of lasting friendship. [. . .] To sit at the same camp fireside has always been a sacred bond [. . .]" (489).

[32] My interpretation of this scene as the threat of same-sex rape is informed by both the overtly homophobic aspects of the late nineteenth-century "crisis of masculinity," and an understanding that the pseudo-scientific application of the discourse of degeneration to homosexuality focused on its alleged non-productivity. In this sense, Hennard's degeneracy in this scene is doubled, as both the spectre of homosexuality and as the non-productivity of rape as a sex crime.

overcivilization—Hennard is "shot while escaping from an American penitentiary" and is thus finally sanctioned by the state to die for his degenerate criminality (495). Interestingly, this detail is the only part of the novel to fall outside its timeframe, and undoubtedly it serves as a lesson for the young reader on the consequences of taking up a life of crime. But in naturalizing Hennard's criminality in terms of atavistic degeneracy, *Two Little Savages* also attempts to naturalize the social order such criminality threatens and the position of the settler subjects who dominate it. By insisting on the degeneracy of the overcivilized exogene and the disappearance of the uncivilized indigene, *Two Little Savages* exemplifies how the settler subject is thus able to neutralize competing human claims to the land while also achieving some degree of self-definition.

The neutralization of nonhuman land claims, however, requires the deployment of the image of the wild animal, which conveniently offers the authority of indigeneity without the difficulties of autonomous human subjectivity. Because wild animals are necessarily affiliated with the land due to their status as commodities and indices of land productivity, they cannot be as readily effaced as moribund or extinct like the indigene. Instead, the antimodern authenticity of their indigeneity lies in the radical Otherness of animality presented by the species boundary, so the image of the wild animal, as I have previously discussed, evinces a characteristic dynamic consciousness to mediate its anthropomorphization. At the same time, however, by affirming the species boundary in Darwinian terms the wild animal narrative discursively contains the image of the wild animal as an object of scientific knowledge in order to confirm the "natural" superiority of humans. In so doing, these narratives are based on ideologies of woodcraft and

progress in order to efface the authority of wild animals as indigenous subjects and to displace the rights of wild animals to the land and to liberty from human domination.

Yan's approach to natural science accordingly develops from an insatiable boyhood curiosity about his surroundings into a desire to survey and read the land. At the very outset of the novel, Yan's interest in Natives and wildlife is presented as a phase he fails to grow out of that causes his father a degree of alarm since it might "interfere with the boy's education" (19). Rather than representing a form of knowledge, Yan's father assumes that his "wildwood pursuits" are antithetical to learning, so he therefore forbids them (19). Yan's response suggests that his closeness to nature is both inherent and unshared by his colonial parents, whom the narrator marks as exogenous by metaphorically dubbing "the Home Government" (62). "Each year," the narrator explains, "the ancient springtime madness came more strongly on Yan. Each year he was less inclined to resist it [. . .]" (38). This "madness," which his schoolmates do not share or understand, "blazed in Yan's eyes when springtime really came—the flush of cheek—the shortening breath—the restless craving for action—the chafing with flashes of rebellion at school restraints—the overflow of nervous energy—the bloodthirst in his blood—the hankering to run—to run to the north, when the springtime tokens bugled to his every sense" (26-27). More than just a reaction to the weariness resulting from months of winter, Yan's "spring fever" is atavistic due to being a "bloodthirst" and having "ancient" origins. At the same time, however, it does not represent a form of degeneracy because it serves as a biologized bridge to the freedom of nature. Thus this boundary between the Otherness represented by nature and Yan's civilized self is

transgressed—provocatively so—by a sexualized description of his physical response to his "madness": "He longed only to get away. 'If only I could get away. If—if—Oh, God!' he stammered in [a] torment of inexpression, and then would gasp and fling himself down on some bank, and bite the twigs that chanced within reach and tremble and wonder at himself" (27). As the novel demonstrates with his acquisition of woodcraft, Yan's intellectual faculties ultimately prove more resolute than his carnal potential.[33] His early forbidden forays into the wild areas around the city, in addition to his superb artistic and scholastic skills, are therefore able to progress into an indigenizing bildung.

Once he relocates to the wilderness of Sanger, Yan quickly establishes a number of vantage points from which he can observe and sketch wildlife. In the chapter "How to See the Woodfolk," the narrator informs us, "One of the important lessons that Yan learned was this: In the woods *the silent watcher sees the most*" (345 emphasis in original). His technique allows him to observe a number of animals interacting with one another and to formulate theories of animal behaviour. It also allows him time for the self-reflection necessary for his personal development, which eventually culminates in choosing a career path. Staked out on the side of the brook near the camp, Yan observes that

> [t]he herbage on the bank was very rank and full of noisy Grasshoppers and Crickets. Great masses of orange Jewelweed on one side were variegated with some wonderful Cardinal flowers. Yan viewed all this

[33] Yan's carnal potential is also formally contained by the way the bildungsroman ends before Yan reaches adulthood.

> with placid content. He knew their names now, and thus they were transferred from the list of tantalizing mysteries to that of engaging and wonderful friends. As he lay there on his breast his thought wandered back to the days when he did not know the names of any flowers or birds—when all was strange and he alone in his hunger to know them [. . .]. (328)

This passage clearly marks Yan's maturation into the settler subject-position. Unlike his two friends, who do not show scientific interest in the flora and fauna surrounding them, Yan's natural intelligence affords him the woodcraft knowledge that constitutes both an indigenizing strategy and a form of colonial control over the land.

Such control is mediated by his colonial gaze, which is rehearsed in the text in a number of scenes in which Yan is able to read the land like a map or a book as a "monarch-of-all-I-survey." As I explained in the first chapter, Mary Louise Pratt identifies this particular vantage point as a trope "found widely in nineteenth-century poetry and narrative alike" as a means for Victorian explorers "to render moments of discovery of geographically important phenomena [. . .]" ("Conventions" 22). In these scenes, "a speaker-protagonist stands up on a high place of some kind and describes the panorama below, producing a simultaneously verbal and visual 'picture in words'" (22). Pratt elsewhere describes this figure as "the seeing man"—"he whose imperial eyes look out and possess"—who is the main protagonist of "anti-conquest" narratives, such as *Two Little Savages*, in which "European bourgeois subjects seek to secure their innocence in

the same moment as they assert European hegemony" (*Imperial* 9).[34] Near the end of the novel, in the boys' last competition to use their woodcraft skills, Yan climbs a tree to survey his surroundings: "A vast extent of country lay all about him—open flat bogs and timber islands, and on far ahead was a long, dark mass of solid evergreen—surely the forest he sought" (Seton *Two* 516). Like an open book or unfolded map, the land lies exposed for Yan to "look out and possess" (Pratt *Imperial* 9). His role as an explorer in this monarch-of-all-I-survey scene is then confirmed moments later, when he spots the forest from the ground. With his sidekick Pete, a minor character who appears later in the novel, "the boys gave a little cheer, and felt, no doubt, as Mungo Park did when first he sighted the Niger" (Seton *Two* 518). Whether it is the exploration of the dark heart of Africa or the "dark mass of solid evergreen," each of these moments of discovery is heavily symbolic of the mapping of undiscovered places and the legitimization of their conquest.

The comparison made between the boys and Mungo Park, however, is limited only to the reaction they share in discovery. Unlike this early nineteenth-century European traveler, Yan embodies a settler subjectivity seeking its own indigenization (see Fig. 3). Whereas the professional explorer gains authority and "money and prestige" from his discovery only after he "returns home, and brings it into being through texts" (Pratt *Imperial* 200), Yan's authority lies in woodcraft's promise of indigenization. Put another way, early explorers like Park remained distanced from the organisms they

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[34] One example of the ways in which *Two Little Savages* functions as an anti-conquest narrative has been described just above. The narrator's emphasis on the importance of silence for successful wildlife observation casts the settler subject as passive, even while he/she is affirming European conceptualizations of nature and wild animals.

encountered on their voyages because their intention was always to return home; by contrast, settlers relied on the same organisms to adapt to and survive in their new environment. Yan's maturation into an indigenized subjectivity is therefore attributable to his woodcraft knowledge and the information he has collected about "the Birds and the Beasts" (Seton *Two* 536). His final marginal illustration in the novel (Fig. 3) depicts him after his election as the Head Chief of the boys' playgroup because of his merits as a "Woodcrafter" (452). In the drawing he wears ostensible traditional Native dress, comprising a "war-shirt of buff leather, a pair of leggings and moccasins" as well as a "war bonnet, splendid with the plumes of his recent exploits" (541). Whereas the final image of Sam in a similar war bonnet (see Fig. 4) indicates his atavistic degeneracy, by depicting him in war paint with unkempt hair, a blunt nose, and small eyes, Yan embodies an ideal of cultural hybridity. By playing Indian, Yan's natural intelligence and character have developed so that this mature young man is now ready to take on the authority and leadership role of the settler subject. With his eyes on his future, Yan decides at the end of the novel to become a professional naturalist—even if to do so means he has to "strive and struggle" in his spare time—because he comes to realize in some sense that his woodcraft knowledge constitutes an indigenized authority over the land (536). The narrator explains, "every event in the woodland life had shown him—had shown them all, that *his* was the kingdom of the Birds and the Beasts and the power to comprehend them" (536 emphasis added). More than just "the seeing man" who relies on local guides, represented by Mungo Park, Yan is also "the knowing man," whose





Fig. 3. Left, Yan as the new Head Chief, illustration from Ernest Thompson Seton, *Two Little Savages* (541).

Fig. 4. Right, Sam dressed as The Great Woodpecker (539).

indigenized subject-position attempts to legitimize its possession of the land by claiming a firsthand, scientific knowledge of it.

This difference between authority and identity-formation accords with the anthropologist James Clifford's thoughts on the act of collecting. In *The Predicament of Culture: Twentieth-Century Ethnography, Literature, and Art* (1988), he states, "Some sort of 'gathering' around the self and the group—the assemblage of a material 'world', the marking-off of a subjective domain that is not 'other'—is probably universal. All such collections embody hierarchies of value, exclusions, rule-governed territories of the self" (218). Citing a number of seminal anthropological works, Clifford goes on to discuss how collecting and display are "crucial processes" of Western identity formation: "Gathered artifacts—whether they find their way into curio cabinets, private living rooms, museums of ethnography, folklore, or fine art—function within a developing capitalist 'system of objects'" (220). According to this Baudrillardian concept, "By virtue of this system a world of *value* is created and a meaningful deployment and circulation of artifacts maintained" (220). But "Western identity" is not singular, and differences in values and meanings of objects in local contexts are particularly salient to an understanding of the settler subject and "the Second World" of North America (Lawson par. 5). Clifford continues his discussion of collecting by looking at how objects increasingly became "the concern of scientific naturalists" in the nineteenth century, and "evolutionism had come to dominate arrangements of exotic artifacts" by 1900. "The object," he observes, "had ceased to be primarily an exotic 'curiosity' and was now a source of information entirely integrated in the universe of Western Man [. . .]. The value

of exotic objects was their ability to testify to the concrete reality of an earlier stage of human Culture, a common past confirming Europe's triumphant present" (Clifford 227). In the "double teleology" of the Second World narrative, however, the appropriation of indigenous objects—the indigene, the wild animal—confirms not only the supremacy of the white subject over that indigenous Other, as would be the case in a European context, but also the supremacy of that settler subject-position over the exogenous (white, European) Other as well.

Conclusion: The Taxidermy of the Image of the Wild Animal

The transformation of wild animals into material artifacts within a Western system of objects, whether as private collections or museum exhibits, has traditionally relied on taxidermy for their physical preservation. As Melissa Milgrom explains in *Still Life: Adventures in Taxidermy* (2010), "Taxidermy is the art of taking an animal's treated skin and stretching it over an artificial form such as a manikin, then carefully modeling its features in a lifelike attitude" (5). The French naturalist Louis Dufresne coined the term *taxidermie* in his *Nouveau Dictionnaire d'histoire naturelle* (1803) as an etymological derivation of "the Greek words *taxis*, meaning 'arrangement' or 'preparation', and *derma*, meaning 'skin'" (Wakeham 9). Many historians note that taxidermy witnessed its "heyday in the nineteenth century" alongside the founding of natural history museums and the development of the disciplines of anthropology and scientific ecology (Poliquin 123). As "a vital technology," Pauline Wakeham remarks in *Taxidermic Signs: Reconstructing Aboriginality* (2008), taxidermy was "linked to the rise

of colonial exploration and the related desire to collect and study specimens from distant lands," as well as "the systematization of nature as part of Western society's project to master the unknown and to impose a colonial order of things upon the world" (10). As such, there is a marked historical difference between European and North American taxidermic practices, in which the former "became challenged by the development of new innovations in specimen preparation in the United States" (10). North Americans developed realist techniques "that reconstructed dead animals in more fluid, lifelike, and ostensibly natural poses" and habitat diorama "which sought to provide an environmental context for specimens" by "return[ing] violently extracted and reconstructed animal corpses to a phantasmatic scene of wildlife's origins" (11). Rather than being trophies marking an imperial triumph over "exotic" species from distant lands, by the end of the nineteenth century North America displays tended to present the (natural) superiority of the human species over both exotic and indigenous animals.[35] North American taxidermy "hinged upon an elite sport hunting culture" and was thus informed by "eugenics-based health and fitness discourses invested in maintaining Euro-North American racial mastery for perpetuity" (12). That is, North American taxidermy came to reflect turn of the century antimodernism, in which "many white elites feared the devolution of their ruling class" because of the "increased industrialization, urbanization, and immigration" necessitated by modernity itself (13).

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[35] For more on North American taxidermy, see Donna Haraway's "Teddy Bear Patriachy: Taxidermy in the Garden of Eden, New York City, 1908-1936" (1989), Mark Simpson's "Immaculate Trophies" (1999) and "Powers of Liveness: Reading Hornaday's *Camp-fires*" (2006), and George Colpitts's *Game in the Garden: A Human History of Wildlife in Western Canada to 1940* (2002).

Quite fittingly, taxidermy takes a prominent role in *Two Little Savages*, both as an antimodern remedy to effete urbanism and as an indigenizing bildung for the maturing woodcrafter. In a detailed account that includes citations of a full-page set of diagrams, the narrator describes the taxidermic preparation and mounting of a pair of (Great) Horned Owls that Yan has shot with his bow and arrow. The boys convince one of William Raften's farmhands to teach them how to stuff the birds, a process which could test anyone's dedication and fortitude.[36] In addition to describing "work[ing] the skin from the body chiefly by the use of [. . .] finger nails" (Seton *Two* 403), the powdering of exposed flesh with corn-meal to prevent "the feathers from soiling" (403), and "Every part of the bones and flesh [needing] to be painted with the creamy arsenical soap" (404), the narrator relates, "The eyes were cut clean out and the brains and flesh carefully scraped away from the skull" (404). Despite such grisliness, Yan of course is unwaveringly interested in learning taxidermy because he possesses the resolute "fascination the naturalist always finds in a fine Bird" (401). Moreover, in keeping with the racial differentiation the novel maintains between the boys, their relative interest in taxidermy indicates their potential for indigenization: "Guy was interested, though scornful; Sam was much interested; Yan was simply rapt [. . .]" (402). Like the hunting that supplied them with the owls, taxidermy represents for Yan a masculinized conquering of the landscape because, as part of a modern and practical woodcraft, it

[36] In *Still Life* Milgrom quotes Lillian Schwendeman, a member of a famous taxidermist family of Milltown, New Jersey, and the wife of the last chief taxidermist of the American Museum of Natural History: "What you need for this kind of work is a strong stomach and lots of patience, and I have both" (3).

demonstrates the settler's ability to adapt to and control the North American environment.

The symbolic value of taxidermy to the settler subject is further emphasized in the text in the pivotal chapter in which Yan and Sam become close friends. Once Yan arrives at the Raften's farm and overcomes his homesickness, Sam takes him on "a real investigation" after his "formal showing of the house under Mr. Raften" (111). When they reach the parlour, described as "a thing apart from the rest of house—a sort of family ghost-room; a chamber of horrors, seen but once a week," Sam shows Yan "a collection of a score of birds' eggs," which the narrator affirms "at once brought Sam and Yan together" (112). This is a decidedly sanctified space, "dusty and religious" (112), in which the Raftens exhibit the various objects that, as Clifford says, constitute "the marking-off of a subjective domain that is not 'other'" (218). The Raftens' prized possessions, stored deep within the house and locked out of view in "a sort of dark cellar aboveground" (Seton *Two* 111), symbolically reflect their core values: whereas their formal furniture, large books, melodeon, and tintype album might point toward their cultural and material aspirations, their Bible and mounted coffin plates are symbolic of their creed. Hidden within this room, however, are another set of objects: "Sam opened up the lower door of the sideboard and got out some flint arrow-heads picked up in the ploughing, the teeth of a Beaver dating from the early days of the settlement, and an Owl very badly stuffed" (112). Held together within the liminal space of the family parlour, these indigenous items and the Raftens' objects that symbolize the modern and the sacred

represent the "negotiation between the contending authorities of Empire and Native" that mark settler culture (Lawson par. 10).

In a similar fashion, institutional collection practices in Canada have traditionally reflected this negotiation by housing both natural science specimens and ethnographic artifacts within single museums. Such has been the case with the Nova Scotia Museum (1868), The Royal BC Museum (1886), the Museum of Vancouver (1894), The Royal Saskatchewan Museum (1906), and the Royal Ontario Museum (1912), Canada's largest, which originated from the Ontario Provincial Museum (1855). Similarly, at the national level, both the Canadian Museum of Nature (1990) and the Canadian Museum of Civilization (1986) originally comprised the National Museum of Canada (1927), which itself began as the museum maintained by the Geological Survey of Canada since 1856.[37] As the historian Samuel Alberti notes of museology during "the crucial decades around 1900" (76), "Natural history and ethnology were linked by common methods (and practitioners): human life could be understood by museum scholars through things brought back from other places (or times); likewise the natural world could be understood by gathering rocks, plants and animals" (81). But in order to maintain a conceit of

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[37] A Second World double teleology is perhaps reflected in the architecture of the Victoria Memorial Museum Building in Ottawa, which housed the National Gallery of Canada and the National Museum of Canada from its construction in 1910 until 1959. The Canadian Museum of Nature is currently housed in the building and its website states:

> Despite the influence of European styles, the building designed by David Ewart is firmly footed in Canadian reality. The Victoria Memorial Museum Building is one of the first public buildings to incorporate into its design animals and plants that are found in Canada. Many native species figure in windows, exterior walls and interior embellishments, in addition to the two carved moose heads that guard the main entrance. ("European Influence")

The National Museum was divided into the National Museum of Natural Science and the National Museum of Man in 1959. The former was renamed the Canadian Museum of Nature in 1990, and the latter became the Canadian Museum of Civilization in 1986, three years before relocating to its current site in Hull.

scientific objectivity within the museum, taxidermic mounts were classified as specimens of natural science rather than human artifacts, even though taxidermy is, as Alberti terms it, an "art-science" (80). This distinction is more than a semantic one,[38] since in order for taxidermic mounts to "act as data, they need to be impartial—their constructedness needs to be hidden by those whose credibility depends upon them" (81). The result is the "meticulous verisimilitude" of taxidermic displays, "especially in the context of the habitat diorama, which is intended to immerse the viewer entirely in [. . .] illusion" (81). So to fulfill its mandate to disseminate elite knowledge, the museum constructs ideas about nature and the settler subject's relation to it.

The diorama in this sense is readily comparable to narratives presenting the image of the wild animal, since both media straddle the boundary between art and science in their construction of nature and narrative. Of the wild animal story, Allan Burns claims, "The desire to reconcile science and artistry remained the genre's central goal throughout its development [. . .]" (Burns). His argument is substantiated by Seton's contention in his introduction to *Wild Animals I Have Known* that "These stories are true" ("Note" 1898 13), followed by his modified statement in his introduction to *Lives of the Hunted* that "The material of the accounts is true. The chief liberty taken, is in ascribing to one animal the adventures of several" ("Note" 1901 9). As one of "Our chief writers" of the wild animal story, whom Roberts discusses in his introduction to *The Kindred of the Wild* (1902) as "minutely scrupulous to their natural history, and are assiduous contributors to

[38] As Alberti explains, the difference between a specimen and an artifact hinges upon notions of authenticity and originality. *Specimen* refers to "a single thing or part taken as an example of a class or representative of the whole" and is thus antithetical to *artifact*, which is "a product of human workmanship" because it is "something observed in a scientific investigation [. . .] that is not naturally present" (*OED* qtd. in Alberti 74).

that science" ("Animal" 28), Seton takes such artistic liberty in order to insist upon the scientism of the genre by crafting his wild animal characters as representative specimens. This technique is consistent with Roberts's observation that "The animal story at its highest point of development is a psychological romance constructed on a framework of natural science" ("Animal" 28), and with Seton's claim of abiding by a "more scientific method" in his later works ("Note" 1901 11). Moreover, it is consistent with turn of the century taxidermic practice and reception: "Art and science, the taxidermists and dioramists argued, went hand in hand [. . .]. But this brought accusations of illusionism, of sleight of hand, of betrayal of objective fact [. . .]" (Alberti 81). Thus wild animal narratives populated with images of the wild animal, like habitat dioramas exhibiting taxidermic mounts, are generally interpreted with regard to the veracity of their scientific claims.

However, the comparison between wild animal narratives and habitat dioramas can be taken further, as Pauline Wakeham theorizes, if we consider taxidermy as "both a material practice and a complex semiotic system" (39). By analyzing taxidermic displays at Banff Park Museum, the photography and film documentary of Edward Sheriff Curtis, the ethnographic work of Marius Barbeau, and the repatriation processes surrounding the Native bodily remains of the Kennewick Man and Kwädāy Dän Ts'ínchi, Wakeham demonstrates that the semiotics of taxidermy is a transmedial and "active colonial logic [. . .] that condenses a matrix of colonial, racial, and ecological discourses as it is reinscribed and embedded in a variety of cultural texts" (14). She sets out her argument:

> If taxidermy denotes a material practice—the dissection, hollowing out, and restuffing of a corpse's epidermal shell—its connotative specters revive fantasies of white male supremacy in "the sporting crucible," of colonial mastery over nature, and of the conquest of time and mortality through the preservation of the semblance of life in death. In this context, taxidermy functions as a powerful nodal point in a matrix of racial and species discourses, narratives of disappearance and extinction, and tropes of aboriginality that have been crucial to the maintenance of colonial power in Canada and the United States from the beginning of the twentieth century to the present. (5-6)

Taxidermic images, like those of the indigene and the wild animal, are divorced from their referents—"skinned"—to be restuffed and repackaged as "a signifier for which the signified is the Image" (Goldie 4).[39] Further, the image must seem to be the referent in order to affirm the settler subject's proprietary relation to the land, by constructing indigenous bodies as "proximate" within "colonialist hierarchies of race and species that position native peoples as evolutionarily inferior to the fitness of white supremacy and, hence, much closer to the categories of lesser mammalians" (Wakeham 4). The "strategic conflation of the categories of animality and aboriginality" that the semiotics of taxidermy effects (4), which I have discussed in terms of the "indigene-animal analogy," serves an indigenizing narrative of "evolution that fetishizes the supposed lost objects of

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[39] In *Fear and Temptation* Goldie discusses his choice of "image" over "representation" in his analysis, which I think equally applies to the image of the wild animal: "For the indigene, 'image', with its implication of hard-edge packaging, has the right aura" (4).

primitive wilderness" (5).[40] In short, the image of the wild animal and the wild animal narrative are not *like* taxidermy: instead, sign and medium are taxidermy, as they constitute a taxidermic mode of representation.

A recognition of the ways in which the taxidermic image perpetuates an illusion of its own factuality—by understanding that gap between sign and referent is inevitable—does not necessarily assume, however, "that there is no connection between text and 'reality'" (Goldie 5). Such a recognition, as Wakeham suggests, "is crucial for destabilizing the power of western discourses [. . .]," which in turn necessitates that the critic to "interrogate how the production of such images hinges upon the material exploitation and oppression of real subjects" (7). I would further add that such an interrogation is made possible by the way in which the history of British imperialism is textually mediated, in which the "exploitation and oppression" of nonhuman colonial subjects constitutes a political unconscious of texts that employ the image of the wild animal. That is to say, despite that both projects of colonialism and modernity were fundamentally ambivalent, the ideological horizon of such texts is a settler nationalism that the image of the wild animal serves, and that which lies behind it, "a history of invasion and oppression" (Goldie 5). And although this ideological horizon cannot be transcended even by a knowing reader—who nevertheless remains limited by his or her episteme, which itself is both "culturally determined and the sponsor of many shifts of centre" (8)—the acknowledgement of the role of the image of the wild animal "reveals a

[40] Such a view affirms Brian Johnson's observation, which I note in the introduction, that both indigenization and conservation discourses have a "common grounding [. . .] in a poetics of extinction and transgression" (339), though the material status of wild animals precludes their complete disappearance from the land.

great deal" about North American settler cultures and the wildlife with which they inhabit the continent (12). The image of the wild animal is thus a textualization of the dialectical relationship between these subjects, colonizer and colonized.

CHAPTER 4

THE POSTWAR WILD ANIMAL NARRATIVE: FRED BODSWORTH'S *LAST OF THE CURLEWS*, FARLEY MOWAT'S *NEVER CRY WOLF*, AND MARIAN ENGEL'S *BEAR*

Introduction

Although it is often claimed that the wild animal story "seemed to die out in the early twentieth century," Ralph Lutts rightly contends that it "did not completely disappear" (Lutts *Wild* 9). Certainly the popularity of Roberts's and Seton's works waned during their careers: as George Woodcock observes, "the vogue tended to die away about the time of the Great War" (79). Lutts speculates that the "Nature Fakers controversy may have contributed" to this decline in popularity, but he also considers "additional factors" like Alec Lucas's suggestion that perhaps later generations of urban dwellers became too far removed from nature, and William Magee's argument that these writers "simply ran out of plots and ways to introduce variety into their stories" (9). Closer to the mark, however, I think is Lucas's further comment that "Perhaps people tired of learning that animals and men are alike and learned from two world wars that they are too much alike" (qtd. in Lutts *Wild* 9). Although speciesist in its implication that modern warfare and genocide are signs of animality rather than the work of humans, Lucas's somber observation nevertheless suggests the degree to which the wars had affected the genre. The turbulent period surrounding these cataclysms was a major disruption to human social orders, particularly in the West, and undoubtedly affected the development of human-animal relations in North America. These relations were first beginning to

modernize by the end of the nineteenth century when the wild animal story appeared, a time Lutts describes as marked by "an explosion of public interest in nature" (268), when conservation policies were first drafted and animal advocacy groups first formed in both Canada and the United States.[1] The rise of "an ecological worldview" that Lutts further sees as leading to the "transformation and rebirth of the genre in the 1940s" can therefore be contextualized as a resumption of North American public interest in nature once the crisis of human conflict had passed (10). Indeed, along with this "transformation and rebirth" of the animal story in the late 1940s (10), a number of influential advocacy groups formed after the Second World War expressly to protect wild animals and ecosystems, like the Audubon Society of Canada (1948), the Nature Conservancy (1951), the Canadian Wildlife Federation (1962), the Canadian Parks and Wilderness Association (1963), Sierra Club Canada (1963), the Environmental Defense Fund (1967), and Greenpeace (1969).[2]

A number of literary critics have similarly noted such a "shift in world-view"—the emergence of a popular ecological consciousness in postwar North America—evidenced in later wild animal narratives (Scholtmeijer 120). In *Animal Victims in Modern Fiction: From Sanctity to Sacrifice* (1993), for example, Marian Scholtmeijer observes, "Writers who take up the wild animal's story after its first flourishing in the

[1] This period witnessed the creation of land preserves such as Yellowstone National Park (1872), Banff National Park (1885), Adirondack State Park (1892), and Algonquin Provincial Park (1893), and land-management programs like the Canadian Forest Service (1899) and the U.S. Forest Service (1905). As well, the Sierra Club (1892), the Societies for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (c. 1866-1896), the Toronto Humane Society (1887), and the National Audubon Society (1905) were also established at this time.

[2] In addition, shortly before the United States joined the Second World War, it established the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (1940); Canada followed suit two years after the end of the war, establishing the Dominion Wildlife Service (1947), renamed the Canadian Wildlife Service in 1950.

decades around the turn of the century find an enemy on which to focus hostility and distress over animal victims, and that enemy is humankind" (119). Although Scholtmeijer accurately describes the antagonists of such later works as human, in trying to draw a distinction between earlier and later wild animal narratives she seems to overlook the conventional aspects of the earlier works that "emphasize the evil powers of the invading techno-human, the white" (Goldie 25). That is, the problems presented by invading human populations, such as poaching, cruelty, and trophy hunting, are merely stressed more in later wild animal narratives, rather than being a new innovation of the genre. Graeme Gibson makes a somewhat more accurate observation along these lines in his afterword to the 1991 New Canadian Library edition of Fred Bodsworth's *Last of the Curlews* (1954):

> It is a commonplace that we live in an "Age of Extinctions"—with technical man as The Exterminator. It therefore seems both appropriate and necessary that the individual tragedies found in earlier animal stories, those by Ernest Thompson Seton and Charles G.D. Roberts for example, be now "upgraded" to the death of a species. (131)

This "upgrading" echoes Margaret Atwood's earlier evaluation of wild animal narratives in her chapter on "Animal Victims" in *Survival* (1972). Refuting Alec Lucas's estimation that nature writing in Canada had "long passed" since the decline of the wild animal story, Atwood cites Bodsworth's novel and Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf* (1963), elucidating,

> The difference between the earlier Seton and Roberts stories and the later Bodsworth and Mowat ones is that in the former it is the individual only who dies; the species remains. But *The Last of the Curlews* [*sic*] is, as its name implies, the story of the death of a species, and Mowat indicates that not just the wolves but also the caribou and with them the whole Arctic ecological balance is threatened by the white man's short-sighted and destructive policies. Man is again the villain, but on a much larger scale. (76)

In short, later practitioners of the genre heighten the tensions between humans and wild animals by emphasizing the severity of the effects of the former upon the latter.

The endangerment of entire species and ecosystems in these works, however, also assumes that the power of the modern settler subject over the land has been finally consolidated. That is to say, while the earlier wild animal narratives mourn the loss of individual wild animals even as they celebrate that "the world of white civilization and progress [. . .] was emerging into the full light of day" (Brantlinger 46), postwar wild animal narratives mourn the loss of wildlife more comprehensively because they assume that "white civilization and progress" has long since established itself on the North American continent. Such an assumption must have been seemingly confirmed by the apparent failure of white civilization in wartime Europe, and the collapse of European imperialism in the decades thereafter. As Robert Young observes in *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race* (1995), "There is always something comforting about the doom and gloom that the threat of deterioration holds, providing a solace of

inevitability as it re-affirms the fall" (100). In postwar North America this solace was doubled: the deterioration of the North American wilderness affirmed the superiority of settler subjectivity over indigenous savagery, and the deterioration of European civilization affirmed that same superiority over exogenous overcivilization. In both cases the settler subject is absolved of a sense of complicity with the power structures that afford him or her such privilege.

So despite the "transformation and rebirth" of the genre (Lutts *Wild* 10), and the broader "cultural shift to animal-centred thinking" (Scholtmeijer 120), the image of the wild animal remains at play in postwar animal narratives in a triangulated relationship with settler subjectivity and exogeneity. Unlike the earlier wild animal story, which often features a boy protagonist exploring nature in pursuit of scientific knowledge, later works tend to feature protagonists who lack woodcraft or whose woodcraft fails. Since the land is perceived to have been settled and colonial violence is no longer required to subdue the indigene or wild animal, the penetrative mode of indigenization is generally limited to the gaze assumed by the narrator. Favouring the appropriative mode of indigenization within the stories themselves, these later works instead focus on problematizing the species boundary while insisting that the dispossession of Natives of their lands and wild animals of their habitats are all but *faits accomplis*. So even while foregrounding "the estrangement of humankind from the wild" and representing humans "as invaders and destroyers [of] the wild animal's domain," as Scholtmeijer describes (119), these narratives are also just as committed as their predecessors to present the image of the wild animal as "a potential bridge to the freedom of the non-man in nature" (Goldie 25).

As such, the image of the wild animal continues to serve settler subjectivity as an antimodern counterweight to the exogeneity represented by postcolonial modernity, and the Canadian postwar animal narrative continues a tradition of writing pioneered by Roberts and Seton.

Fred Bodsworth's *Last of the Curlews*

Fred Bodsworth's *Last of the Curlews* represents one of the first animal narratives to be published in Canada after the Second World War. Perplexingly, it has only been tentatively examined by a few scholarly works to date, despite being "a classic" (Merwin qtd. in Abley 86) and having an originating role, as Graeme Gibson remarks, in "the next great political movement [of] post-development environmentalism" (132). The novel depicts a year in the life of a male Eskimo curlew, a critically endangered bird species, which is now likely extinct.[3] For three years he has been "mysteriously alone" (11), but he continues to search for a female of his "dying race" (10). The novel "traces his extraordinary migration: down past Hudson Bay and the Gulf of St. Lawrence, across the western Atlantic to the coast of Venezuela, then south again to the coastal mudflats of Patagonia," where, against all odds, "he is joined by a solitary female" (Abley 86). Before they can complete their northern migration—"across the Andes, up the west coast of South America, over the Yucatán and the Gulf of Mexico, and on into the western interior of North America" (86)—and reproduce, however, the female is senselessly gunned down by a Canadian prairie farmer.

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[3] Since 1954 when the novel was published, there have been isolated sightings of the Eskimo curlew, most of which have been largely unsubstantiated.

As an eloquent cautionary tale and "a passionate and haunting indictment of man's destructive interference with the natural world" (Bodsworth back cover), the novel's political commitment to wildlife conservation is clear. Noting in a review of a 1996 reissue of *Last of the Curlews* that Bodsworth "was, unfortunately, ahead of his time," Mark Abley identifies that the novel's "broader topic is extinction in general: how human beings have so casually and cavalierly wiped out many of our fellow creatures" (86). Like the earlier wild animal stories of Roberts and Seton, *Last of the Curlews* must abide by a stringent realism that attempts to avoid anthropomorphism in order for its critique to be legitimate. The novel seems to have faced this challenge successfully: according to Gibson, "With marvelously few anthropomorphic lapses, Bodsworth makes the abstract and increasingly commonplace fact of extinction palpable" (131). Abley similarly observes, "for the most part Bodsworth succeeds triumphantly" (86).

Nevertheless, since the birds need to be represented as "living creatures, not just ornithological data," Bodsworth "had to imagine his way inside their brains and bodies" (86). As Abley continues, however, "Occasionally the strain shows, and the prose creaks" (86). Much of this strain I think can be attributed to the way in which the text contradicts itself in representing the interiority of the title character, a contradiction that is necessary for the indigenizing function of the narrative. As an example of the image of the wild animal, the curlew must represent a form of radical Otherness that cannot be commodified by exogenous forces, while also representing for the settler subject a bridge to the freedom of nature. Thus the curlew's emotional life, we are told, is "part instinctive reaction and part a shadowy form of reasoning" (36), or elsewhere that his knowledge is

determined "by an instinctive intuition" but is also comprised "partly from half-remembered experiences" (55). Indeed, the text repeatedly insists on the primacy of instinct: "His instinctive behavior code, planted deep in his brain by the genes of countless generations, told him only what to do, without telling him why. His behavior was controlled not by mental decisions but by instinctive responses to the stimuli around him" (30-31). Yet the curlew cannot remain a simple automaton reacting to environmental "stimuli" according to a predetermined "instinctive behavior code" if it is going to represent for the reader the necessary kinship of the image of the wild animal. We are therefore also told that "the curlew's simple brain sensed vaguely that the unmarked flyway ahead reaching down the length of two continents was a long, grim gantlet of storm, foe and death" (32), that he "had a shadowy, remote memory" of previous migrations (52), and that "even his slow-working brain could marvel at the endurance of his own wings" (96).

The physiological sophistication of these wings and the freedom they represent, moreover, encourages a readerly identification with the Curlew, a detail further specified by the text's explicit assertion that this bird is indigenous exclusively to Canada. "Of all the shorebirds' wings," the narrator explains, "the Eskimo curlew's—long, narrow and gracefully pointed—were *best* adapted for easy, high-speed flight" (32 emphasis added). Like Roberts's and Seton's wild animal stories that serve as the biographies of animal heroes, *Last of the Curlews* concerns itself with "not ordinary animals, but superior animals, distinguished by their size, skill, wisdom and moral sense" (MacDonald "Revolt" 19). Although the curlews depicted in the novel are among the last of their

species, this species is superior to the other birds they encounter on their separate journeys "from the very northernmost to the southernmost reaches of the mainland of the Americas" (Bodsworth 78). The "nostalgic yearning for home" the title character experiences once he completes his migration south suggests he is a model for the Canadian settler subject-position (80). Identifying the Canadian Arctic as his home serves to appeal to a specific settler nationalism, especially when we consider that the curlew spends three-quarters of his life migrating. As the narrator explains, "For nine months of migration each year the curlews were the pawns on a great two-continent chessboard and the players that decided the moves were the cosmic forces of nature and geography—the winds, tides and weather" (100). Despite the curlew's intercontinental and peripatetic (former) existence, one determined "for millenniums" by these "cosmic forces" (10), as an example of the image of the wild animal the narrator expressly identifies him as Canadian to "reproduce," as Misao Dean observes of Roberts's wild animals, "the selfhood of the reader as similarly autonomous, masculine and free from the taint of civilised life [. . .]" (Dean "Political" 4). Indeed, the role of the narrator is crucial to this process, by "creat[ing] the physical perspective and psychological motivation to substantiate the subjectivity of [the] animal characters and to structure the identification of reader with character" (5). Like Roberts, Bodsworth uses "conventional third-person narration" to achieve the penetrative gaze of a "realist 'point of view' [. . .]" (6). That is, by similarly "minimising the intrusion of the narrator" (3), *Last of the Curlews* is able to establish for the settler subject-reader an appropriable indigeneity of the image of the wild animal.

Moreover, the narrator's description of the curlews' flight through the Andes mountain range emphasizes the exogeneity of South America. The Andes are described as "a harsh barren world, a vertical landscape of grey rock across which wisps of foggy cloud scudded like white wings of the unending wind. [. . .] The peaks that they yet had to cross were hidden in a dense ceiling of boiling cloud" (Bodsworth 89). The birds are subjected to unrelenting winds that "lifted them off their feet and catapulted them twisting and helpless into dark and eerie space" (90), and the narrator describes them "entombed in a ghostly world of white mist [. . .]" (92). Somehow descriptively unlike the Arctic, "It was a weird, bizarre world of intense cold and dazzling light which seemed disconnected from all things of earth" (92). The narrator gives a biological explanation for why the curlews do not belong in such an exogenous landscape: "They were birds of the sea level regions and they didn't possess the huge lungs which made life possible here three miles above the sea for the shaggy-haired llamas and their Indian herders" (90). Despite their annual presence in this region, the curlews remain only tourists, like the reader, and their indigeneity to Canada is underscored in the text by two images of the exogene, the South American llama and Indian herder.

Last of the Curlews further structures the identification between reader and wild animal in the climactic scene when the Canadian prairie farmer shoots the female curlew. The subtextual antimodernism of the scene specifically appeals to a Canadian settler nationalism that would figure the farmer's pecuniary relationship to the land as exogenously modern. The narrator foreshadows the curlews' encounter with the farmer in order to associate him with his exogenous counterparts south of the border, on "the

Nebraska and Dakota prairies" (119). While in flight over the United States, the curlews observe below them "great steel monsters that roared like the ocean surf [. . .] crossing and recrossing the stubble fields leaving black furrows of fresh-turned soil in orderly ranks behind them" (119). This image of modern agribusiness, quite literally of "a civilization conquering the landscape and imposing an alien and abstract pattern on it" (Frye "Conclusion" 246), recurs once the birds cross the Canadian border. When they encounter the farmer, the narrator repeats the simile used earlier to describe the American tractors: "They followed closely behind the big machine with the roar like an ocean surf" (Bodsworth 124). The senselessness of the farmer's actions is emphasized by the narrator's refusal to explain his reasons for shooting at the birds. This critical moment is the sole human-animal interaction in the novel:

> The man on the tractor sat stiffly, his head thrown back, staring upward, his eyes shaded against the sun with one hand. The curlew dove earthward and the female called him stridently. He plucked a grub from the ground and dashed at her, his neck outstretched, wings fluttering vigorously. He saw the man leap down from the tractor seat and run toward a fence where his jacket hung. (124)

The farmer seems to be acting reflexively—perhaps even impulsively, given his coincidental proximity to his jacket (and gun)—which might suggest he mistakenly believes the curlews present a threat to his livelihood. As Anthony Penna explains, it was once common for "some hunting [to be] carried out for the purpose of removing flocks of birds that colonial farmers believed destroyed their crops and fields" (92). Moreover, as

the European settlement of North America expanded westward, "the abundance and eventual destruction" of western bird species "became symbolic of the nineteenth century carnage of wildlife [. . .]" (92).[4] That is, it was not uncommon for farmers to regard birds as agricultural pests even if they were beneficial insectivores like the curlew, who "pluck[s] a grub from the ground" immediately before being targeted.

The farmer's motives are further suggested in one of "The Gantlet" sections, a series of capitalized intertextual passages in *Last of the Curlews* that Gibson identifies as both "particularly shocking" and "remarkably effective" (131). In what appears to be an undated report of the Committee on Bird Protection of the American Ornithologists' Union, the authors state, "THE GREATEST KILLINGS OCCURRED AFTER THE BIRDS HAD CROSSED THE GULF OF MEXICO IN SPRING AND THE GREAT FLOCKS MOVED NORTHWARDS UP THE NORTH AMERICAN PLAINS" (Bodsworth 107). Although such flocks of curlews had not been observed since the 1880s, they

> REMINDED PRAIRIE SETTLERS OF THE FLIGHTS OF PASSENGER PIGEONS AND THE CURLEWS WERE GIVEN THE NAME OF "PRAIRIE PIGEONS". [. . .] SOMETIMES WHEN THE FLIGHT WAS UNUSUALLY HEAVY AND THE HUNTERS WERE WELL SUPPLIED WITH AMMUNITION THEIR WAGONS WERE TOO QUICKLY AND EASILY FILLED, SO WHOLE LOADS OF THE BIRDS WOULD BE DUMPED ON THE PRAIRIE, THEIR BODIES FORMING PILES AS LARGE AS A COUPLE OF TONS OF COAL, WHERE THEY WOULD BE

[4] Penna later discusses the fate of the Carolina parakeet, "the only member of the parrot species native to the United States" (96). "Millions [. . .] were wiped out because the bird was regarded by farmers and hunters alike as an agricultural pest" (96).

> ALLOWED TO ROT WHILE THE HUNTERS PROCEEDED TO REFILL THEIR WAGONS WITH FRESH VICTIMS. (107-08)

While this degree of wanton destruction might be unimaginable to present-day readers, largely because such prodigious bird flocks no longer exist as such in North America, the committee report describes a settler culture in which such arrogance and waste were acceptable. As such, the farmer could just as easily be motivated to shoot at the curlews "SIMPLY FOR THE LOVE OF KILLING" (108).

For all of the farmer's wrongdoing, however, the novel is careful to assign part of the blame for the female curlew's demise to the curlews themselves. When the farmer leaps off the tractor to fetch his gun, the narrator explains,

> Normally, at this, even the curlews would have taken wing in alarm, but now the female accepted the courtship feeding and her wings still quivered in a paroxysm of mating passion. She crouched submissively for the copulation and in the ecstasy of the mating they were blind to everything around them. (124-25)

It is possible to read this passage as part of the novel's strategy to heighten the reader's pathos since the curlews vainly attempt to maintain their species in spite of the will and ability of humans to destroy it. However, it also seems that the particularly anthropomorphic description of mating suggests a carnality and lack of self-control that is often applied to indigenous cultures by explorers, conquerors, and colonizers. While the phrase "quivered in a paroxysm of mating passion" is relatively neutral since it describes an observable flurry of physical activity involved in their mating, "the ecstasy of the

mating" instead suggests a value judgment because it anthropomorphically imagines an emotional or physical response to sexual pleasure. That is to say, had they not been so enraptured by the base gratification of their mating, they may have noticed the danger surrounding them. Such a representation of a human-animal interaction conforms to the conventions of extinction discourse traditionally applied to indigenous peoples, as described by Patrick Brantlinger.[5] "Savagery," he explains, "was frequently treated as self-extinguishing. The fantasy of auto-genocide or racial suicide is an extreme version of blaming the victim, which throughout the last three centuries has helped to rationalize or occlude the genocidal aspects of European conquest and colonization" (2). As Brian Johnson further explains,

> The nationalist-imperialist form of extinction discourse Brantlinger describes resonates powerfully with the proleptic elegies of conservation discourse, despite the fact that the representation of animal victims and the projected extinction of animal species in animal stories like *Never Cry Wolf* or *The Last of the Curlews* [*sic*] is intended as neither an evolutionary inevitability nor a 'self-fulfilling prophecy', but as a dire warning and an impetus to humanitarian intervention. (339).

Regardless of intention, however, *Last of the Curlews* is quite explicit in assigning blame to the genetic profile of the Eskimo curlew for its inability to adapt to modernity. Unlike the majority of the other shorebirds they accompany on their northern migration,

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[5] The ease with which extinction discourse moves between the image of the indigene and the image of the wild animal is also suggested by the species name, *Eskimo curlew*, which is inexplicably shortened in the novel's title.

the curlews are unwary of the dangers posed by humans and their "growling machines" (Bodsworth 119). As the narrator explains,

> But the Eskimo curlews had little fear. Far back in the species' evolutionary history they had learned that, for them, a highly developed fear was unnecessary. Their wings were strong and their flight so rapid that they could ignore danger until the last moment, escaping a fox or hawk easily in a last-second flight. (119)

The very trait that affords them such superior "strength of wing," and an identification with a settler-subject reader, is necessarily the one that dooms them to extinction (119). Rather than simply absolving settler guilt for the demise of the Eskimo curlew, this victim-blaming reaffirms the species boundary in order to stress the radical Otherness of the image of the wild animal. That is, the species boundary confirms for the reader that wild animality is forever impenetrable by the very modernity responsible for the curlews' extinction. This sleight of hand trick culminates into the proleptic elegy of the ironic final lines of the novel, in which the curlew has returned to the Arctic to nest and "The territory must be held in readiness for the female his instinct told him soon would come" (128): a female will not come, he is the last of his kind, and the territory is held in fact by a mournful and triumphant human settler society.

Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*

Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf* ends in a similar manner, the proleptic elegy of its epilogue being presented, as Karen Jones describes, "In starkly impersonal fashion"

(6). The narrator detachedly explains that Predator Control officers with the Canadian Wildlife Service had set out poison bait stations around Wolf House Bay, the home of the book's lupine characters, some time after his departure from the far north. Although the narrator maintains, "It is not known what results were obtained" (Mowat 247), the text's affective goal as a "consciously designed [. . .] piece of propaganda" in order to win over "his audience to an environmental cause" forecloses the possibility of the wolves' survival (K. Jones 9). However, like any proleptic elegy this one "is [. . .], whether explicitly or not, [a] nationalist celebration" (Brantlinger 189) because proleptic elegy is "simultaneously funereal and [the] epic's corollary—like epic, a nation-founding exercise" (3). Brian Johnson likewise surmises that the "strongly implied proleptic elegy" at the end of *Never Cry Wolf* "fulfills the settler fantasy of indigenization by symbolically eliminating those presences that would contest his claim to authenticity" (348-49). Understanding these presences, moreover, as the textual representation of the image of the wild animal in a dialectical relationship with the settler subject-position helps explain why the book remains so popular, why Mowat's critique of the Canadian government in the book is curiously so baseless, and why his authority has been so vociferously contested and defended.

Never Cry Wolf has enjoyed tremendous commercial success, both in Canada and abroad. It "earned international renown, sold over a million copies, and made it onto the big screen courtesy of Disney Pictures in 1983" (K. Jones 1). John Goddard states that the book has been one of Mowat's "all-time top sellers" and has significantly contributed to making him "a national icon" (48). In 1996, according to Goddard, Mowat's publishers

pegged the total copies of Mowat's printed works "at more than 14 million" (48). But *Never Cry Wolf* was immediately dismissed as fantasy by a number of scientists, hunters, and critics upon its publication in 1963. Nevertheless, it "steadily gained popular currency as a credible source on lupine conservation" (K. Jones 9). In 1991, the Council of Canadians bestowed upon Mowat the "Take Back the Nation" award "for his contribution to the cause of Canadian environmentalism" (15), and, even after Goddard's 1996 *Saturday Night* magazine exposé, "A Real Whopper," detailed Mowat's lack of scientific field experience, Mowat's "body of work nonetheless continued to receive plaudits" and he continued to be defended "as the common man of Canadian environmentalism" (15).[6] More recently, Margaret Atwood canonized him in her latest novel, *Year of the Flood* (2009), as "Saint Farley Mowat of Wolves" (311). While Mowat's early appeal involved, as Karen Jones observes, his readers' "distaste with the excesses of modern society [that] reflected a burgeoning environmental conscience as well as an interest in animal rights" (11), the continuing popularity of *Never Cry Wolf*, as Johnson argues, "cannot easily be separated from its uncanny ability to evoke the indigenizing fantasies of settler-invader postcolonialism in a displaced but still potent form" (337).

Although Johnson goes on to discuss this "displaced [. . .] form" in terms of "the symbolic substitution of wolf for indigene" (349), I would instead read it as the image of the wild animal, with the displacement being limited to the indigeneity shared by the indigene and the wild animal. Collapsing the image of the indigene into the image of the

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[6] Mowat is also a founding member of the Council of Canadians (1985), a social justice advocacy group.

wild animal in such a way rehearses the very indigene-animal analogy that Johnson critiques as "the wolf-indigene homology [...] ubiquitous in Canadian literature and inform[ing] even the ostensibly referential animal stories of the genre's earliest practitioners" (338). While both images do share a number of traits, such as proleptic elegy, the politics of representation nevertheless differs slightly in each case. For instance, while the disappearance of the Inuit is presented in the book as regrettable but inevitable, the threat faced by the wolves at Wolf House Bay does not extend to wildlife *in toto*. Moreover, the narrator explicitly bars Native land claims by assigning the possession of land specifically to wildlife:

> This country belonged to the deer, the wolves, the birds and the smaller beasts. We two [Mowat and Ootek] were no more than casual and insignificant intruders. Man had never dominated the Barrens. Even the Eskimos, whose territory it had once been, had lived in harmony with it. Now these inland Eskimos had all but vanished. The little group of forty souls to which Ootek belonged was the last of the inland people, and they were all but swallowed up in this immensity of wilderness. (188)

The narrator is thus able to mitigate settler guilt, not only by reiterating the myth of the vanishing Native, but also by alleging that the far north is the dominion of its nonhuman species. As Johnson observes, "the wolves of *Never Cry Wolf* seem ultimately to trump the indigeneity of the Eskimo to become ciphers for an indigeneity that is now truly a fantasy—an indigeneity that cannot answer back and contest the desires of settler-invader nationalism" (350). Both the dispossession of Native peoples and settler colonialism are

conveniently discounted by characterizing the Arctic as impossible for any human group to possess, even as the Barren Lands fall well within the political boundaries of the Canadian state. Just as crucially, the image of the wild animal and the conservationist discourse surrounding it consequently become sites for the indigenization of the settler subject and the means to claiming that territory.

As with *Last of the Curlews*, the narrator of *Never Cry Wolf* focalizes the reader's perspective "to substantiate the subjectivity of [the] animal characters and to structure the identification of reader with character" (Dean "Political" 5). While Dean draws a forceful comparison between Bodsworth and Charles G.D. Roberts, Mowat's narration more closely resembles a number of Ernest Thompson Seton's wild animal stories that feature the first-person narration of an adult writer-naturalist. The latter two share this autobiographical form of narration as part of a comparable discursive strategy, as Kathleen Marie Connor observes of Seton, "to teach lessons of conservation and responsibility [. . .]" (493). But the writer-naturalist narrator also rehearses for the reader the indigenizing function of the woodcraft he learns in the story. Moreover, by beginning with the writer-naturalist narrator reminiscing about his childhood, *Never Cry Wolf* emphasizes the wilderness as the site of his bildung, which has transformed him from the figure of "the boy" that I identify as one of the six basic human figures in Roberts's and Seton's works. This particular figure represents progress as an indigenizing cultural hybridity in possession of a self-conscious and scientifically methodological form of woodcraft. To wit, while the narrator develops his "lasting affinity for the lesser beasts of the animal kingdom" as a boy (Mowat 6), he is also sure to indicate the exogeneity of his

family to set himself apart. His parents have "abandoned [him] to the care of [his] grandparents while they went off on a holiday" (3), and while he stays in Oakville, Ontario, he informs us that an "unfeeling cousin" who is also staying there (6), "had already found his métier, which lay in the military field, and had amassed a formidable army of lead soldiers with which he was single-mindedly preparing himself to become a second *Wellington*" (4 emphasis added). Moreover, his grandparents' home has the British-sounding name of Greenhedges, his grandmother is "an aristocratic lady of *Welsh* descent," and his grandfather would "while away the days as calm and unruffled as *Buddha*" (4 emphasis added).

In the same vein, during his first forays into scientific study, the narrator encounters any number of exogenous characters against which to develop his conservationist ethos and the authenticity of his narrative voice. "My first mentor," he tells us, "was a middle-aged Scotsman who gained his livelihood delivering ice, but who was in fact an ardent amateur mammalogist" (7). In addition to being exogenous by birth, his first mentor's amateur knowledge is limited to the experiential, a characteristic he shares with the figure of the woodsman in Roberts and Seton. Evocative of the descriptions of the woodsman, "This man had become so intimate with gophers that he could charm them with sibilant whistles until they would emerge from their underground retreats and passively allow him to examine the hair on their backs" (7). The narrator's next mentor, by contrast, is a professional biologist "replete with degrees and whose towering stature in the world of science had been earned largely by an exhaustive study of uterine scars in shrews. This man, a revered professor at a large American university,

knew more about the uteri of shrews than any other man has ever known" (7). This humorous description not only works to satirize the specialized nature of academic study, it also undercuts the professor's ethos, first by marking him as exogenous and then by suggesting that his true vocation might lie in promiscuity if we understand *shrew* as a description of a particular sort of woman.

Still relying upon the notion of exogeneity and antimodern sentiment, Mowat's satirical treatment of other naturalists continues in the narrative as he reminisces about his time at university. The narrator explains, "For a time I debated whether or not to follow the lead of a friend of mine who was specializing in scatology—the study of excretory droppings of animals—and who later became a high-ranking scatologist with the United States Biological Survey" (8-9). He then ironically recalls, "But although I found the subject mildly interesting, it failed to rouse my enthusiasm to the pitch where I could wish to make it my lifework. Besides, the field was overcrowded" (9). Mowat thus positions himself against professional academic biology, which he derides as a lot of shit. However, his discomfort with "the unpalatable necessity of specializing, if [he] was to succeed as a professional biologist" (8), and implicit disapproval of those "in various esoteric specialties" (9), extends further to a critique of the use of scientific specimens:

> My personal predilections lay towards studies of living animals in their own habitat. Being a literal fellow, I took the word *biology*—which means the study of life—at its face value. I was sorely puzzled by the paradox that many of my contemporaries tended to shy as far away from living things as they could get, and chose to restrict themselves instead to the

> aseptic atmosphere of laboratories where they used dead—often very dead—animal material as their subject matter. In fact, during my time at the university it was becoming unfashionable to have *anything* to do with animals, even dead ones. The new biologists were concentrating on statistical and analytical research, whereby the raw material of life became no more than fodder for the nourishment of calculating machines. (9 emphasis in original)

Mowat's humorous recollections serve to establish his ethos as a naturalist-writer from an antimodern standpoint to discredit his colleagues, who evidently spend their professional lives in "the aseptic atmosphere of laboratories" studying excrement, carcasses, and numbers rather than in the pristine and beneficent wilderness.

Moreover, evoking the language used to describe modern warfare, his observation that "the raw material of life became no more than fodder for the nourishment of calculating machines" registers the absent-presence in the text of the Second World War. Karen Jones notes that Mowat first traveled to the Canadian Barren Lands, the setting of *Never Cry Wolf*, "Following a tour of duty during the Second World War," and she explains that "The North, in Mowat's estimation served as a refuge from modernity, a place to flee the realities of conflict and human sacrifice. Nature represented a benign and life-affirming alternative to the bankrupt and destructive military-industrial complex" (3). In "'Come on back to the war': Germany as the Other National Other in Canadian Popular Culture" (2009), Mark McCutcheon similarly observes that Mowat's postwar travel to the north "became an escape from 'civilization' with which he had grown

disgusted in the war" ("Come" 772). McCutcheon also posits that a "wartime Germany chronotope [represents] an organizing absence in the text" (772), a compelling interpretation that supports his larger argument that "Canadian popular texts figure Germany as another national Other against which Canada imagines its national community" (767). Although his thesis might successfully demonstrate "an important point of Canadian affiliation with the popular cultures of the United States and the United Kingdom" (767), the fundamental ambivalence of Canada's relationships with its imperial metropoles, however, would suggest that they are, like Germany, exogenous.[7] Even if this chronotope promotes a "national *Bildung*" (768) of Canada's "maturation as a process grounded in military commitment and victory" (769), its allegorization in the highly sympathetic figure of Mowat should also suggest that this process was not wholly an agreeable one, and it has left much room for nationalist resentments towards the exogenous powers involved in such brutality.

Indeed, Mowat's description of the Dominion Wildlife Service in Ottawa, where "Military titles were *de rigeur*" (12), presents an antimodern critique of his coworkers and marks his superiors as exogenous. Before reporting for duty, he informs us that his refusal to conform to modern practices in professional biology has left him with "nothing particular to offer in the biological marketplace," so it becomes, "therefore, inevitable that [he] should end up working for the Government" (10). As a maverick, not only does he know better than the academics in his field, but also better than the authorities at the

[7] At one point McCutcheon touches on the point I am driving at. After identifying Germany "as another national Other against which Canada images its national community," he posits, "In the globalized context of Canadian liberal multiculturalism, we might ask what nation does *not* figure as such an Other [. . .]" (767). Precisely. Exogeneity applies to *any* foreign Other, including the Americans and the British.

Wildlife Service whose level of competence is necessarily low because they are public servants. Accordingly, when he arrives "in the windswept, gray-souled capital of Canada" (10), he encounters "legions of Dantesque bureaucrats [. . .] in their gloomy, Formalin-smelling dens, where they spent interminable hours compiling dreary data or originating meaningless memos [. . .]" (11). Much like their private- and university-sector counterparts, these professional scientists are preoccupied with alienating and emasculating forms of sedentary work.

Because they are so "shrouded in professional dignity" (11), Mowat represents them as being either obsequious or pompous, the latter of whom insist on being addressed by military title. Bureaucratic obsession with rank goes so far that even "members of the staff who had not had the opportunity to acquire even quasi-military status were reduced to the expedient of inventing suitable ranks—field ranks if they were senior men, and subaltern ranks for the juniors" (12). When Mowat is "paraded into the office of the Deputy Minister" (11), for instance, he unwittingly addresses him as Mister:

> My escort of the moment, all white-faced and trembling, immediately rushed me out of the Presence and took me by devious ways to the men's washroom. Having first knelt down and peered under the doors of all the cubicles to make absolutely certain we were alone and could not be overheard, he explained in an agonized whisper that I must never, on pain of banishment, address the Deputy as anything but "Chief," or, barring that, by his Boer War title of "Colonel." (11-12)

This absurd scene attempts to secure Mowat within a settler subject-position by indicating the degree to which his colleagues are tainted by modernity. His escort is unmanly, both for cowering in such a way to his boss—who Mowat is free to describe with an ironic Eucharistic metaphor—and for hiding in the washroom and blathering like a schoolboy. As well, his fear of "banishment" is the result of an overcivilized softness within the civil service that keeps him from studying live animals in the field—which Mowat clearly believes biologists ought to be doing—in favour of remaining in the city. For his part, the Deputy's continuing strict adherence to the regimented lifestyle of the military of the British Empire marks him with the exogeneity of a foreign war in which he seems proud to have been a participant, rather than viewing it in antimodern terms similar to Mowat's opinion of the Second World War.[8] Moreover, being a veteran of the Boer War—we are later told "he joined the Department in 1897" (14)—indicates that he had once acquiesced to a social order with an imperial outlook that is now defunct.

Rather than the exogeneity of the immigrant or stranger, the Colonel's stems from his status as a throwback to a subjectivity that predates the particular settler subject-position sought out by Mowat, whose sensibilities are informed by a postwar antimodernism.[9] If "the allegory of manly maturation," as Coleman argues, "recurs

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[8] This reading assumes, because it is not explicated in the text, that the Colonel is Canadian-born. His character, however, could just as easily be British-born, which would further position him as an exogene.

[9] *No Place for Grace*, the American historian Jackson Lears's extensive study of antimodern sentiment, limits antimodernism as an historical aesthetic movement to circa 1880-1920. Canadian cultural production, however, has remained steadfastly antimodern since 1920 and the dénouement of British imperialism. Postwar antimodernism in Canada reflects historical changes in global realpolitik and the ascendancy of American neoimperialism. For instance, the recently acclaimed and very popular LP *The Suburbs* by the Montreal band *Arcade Fire* is but one example of the ways in which antimodern sentiment serves as a continuing idiom in the arts in Canada. Not only does the antimodernism of *The Suburbs*

throughout English Canadian nationalist rhetoric as it anxiously reiterates scenes of the civil incorporation of non-British people into the body of the nation, even as it detains these people at the nation's margins" (*White* 171), the Colonel is instead being tossed into the grave by *Never Cry Wolf*. Rather than figuring as the promise of a bright national future like the narrator, the Colonel symbolizes the death of Victorian imperialism: he is superannuated; his desk is "littered with yellowing groundhog skulls" and "the frowning, bearded portrait of an extinct mammalogist [. . .] glare[s] balefully down" from behind it (Mowat 14); his office smells "like the fetid breath of an undertaker's back parlor" (14); and he is there to follow orders from the House of Commons to destroy the wolf on behalf of "civic-minded and disinterested groups as various as Fish and Game clubs" and "members of the business community—in particular the manufacturers of some well-known brands of ammunition [. . .]" (15).[10] Mowat's animated interactions with *Canis lupis*, and the development of his woodcraft and conservationist viewpoint, by contrast, position this antimodern maverick within an indigenizing progress narrative.

As with his predecessors Seton and Roberts, however, the scientific accuracy of Mowat's woodcraft is a particular point of contention due to its importance to the indigenizing and antimodern needs of settler subjectivity. Even though Goddard's "A Real Whopper" (1996) carefully refutes the historical authenticity of *Never Cry Wolf* by

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respond to the dominant urban planning model of postwar North America, the album won both the Juno Award (Canada) and Grammy Award (US) for Best Album of 2010.

[10] Mowat takes great artistic liberties to provide an antimodern critique of the federal government of Canada—as tainted by modern violence and commodity culture—in order to foreground his indigenizing writer-naturalist persona. "Contrary to Mowat's claims," Goddard writes, "government documents of the period show that no anti-wolf sentiment existed in Ottawa at all. No wolf-extermination programme existed, no federal bounty existed (a provincial bounty existed in Manitoba), and federal wildlife policy already recognized that wolves benefit caribou herds by attacking mostly the weak and the lame" (52). Indeed, "For his book, Mowat appropriated the government position as his own rallying cry" (52).

reviewing "Documents recently made public at the National Archives of Canada, and papers that the author himself sold years ago to McMaster University" (48),[11] the rationale for the article, it seems, is ultimately to expose a literary deception. Echoing the sentiments of Theodore Roosevelt in the nature faker controversy roughly ninety years before, Goddard explains, "What Mowat may not realize is that by selling fiction as non-fiction, he has broken a trust with his public. By treating facts as arbitrary and subject to whim, he has not so much served a high purpose as muddied public debate on Inuit and wildlife issues for decades" (64). Yet while it may be true that "the Keewatin books say less about the Canadian north than they do about Mowat himself" (64), what remains unaddressed is why Mowat continues to be championed by the public—and why Goddard's critique is limited to a defense of generic conventions without an examination of the cultural value of Mowat's mythical wolves. Thus, Mowat's statement to Goddard that "Truth is largely subjective" is presented in the article as a moment of self-incrimination rather than as a truism that suggests a subject-position from which the "truth" of *Never Cry Wolf* can be deduced (49). That is, the gap between sign and referent is culturally determined, and in this case the difference between the image of the wolf and actual wolves is symbolically managed by a settler subjectivity seeking its own indigenization. So while the appearance of scientism is important to the ethos of the writer-naturalist narrator of *Never Cry Wolf*, scientific factuality itself is only useful so long as it does not interfere with the "truth" of animal kinship. Put another way, factuality is only of secondary importance to the necessity that the image of the wild animal serves

[11] Goddard's article also refutes the authenticity of Mowat's two other Keewatin novels, *People of the Deer* (1952) and *The Desperate People* (1959).

settler subjectivity as a bridge to the indigenizing freedom of nature *hors* the commodification and reification of modern settler culture. In Mowat's own words to Goddard: "I never let the facts get in the way of the truth!" (49).

Accordingly, the human-animal interactions depicted in what Mowat terms the "subjective nonfiction" of *Never Cry Wolf* blur the species boundary in various ways to reiterate the intimate proximity of the settler subject-position to the indigeneity of the wolf (48). As Brian Johnson observes, Mowat and other "early- and mid-century naturalists and animal rights advocates [. . .] often made the case for conservation by contesting the 'species boundary'" in their works and therefore considered that "anthropomorphism was not a pitfall to be avoided in the quest for greater empirical accuracy in depicting animal consciousness; on the contrary, anthropomorphism or even personification was implicit in their presumption of a fundamental kinship between animal and human subjects" (334-35). Consequently, the narrator of *Never Cry Wolf* departs from standard scientific practices to openly personify his research subjects, as Marta Dvorak has also noted, as a nuclear family (Johnson 336). Such a humanization of the wolf pack aids in "refut[ing] stereotypes of the wolf as a satanic beast or a devourer of little red-cloaked girls" (336), and plays off the narrator's "role of nervous, wolf-fearing urbanite," who gradually acquires woodcraft knowledge through scientific observation to debunk commonly held views of wolves, which have been imported from Europe (336). But this apparent de-centering of a cultural mythos corresponds to a re-centering of the semiotic field of the image of the wild animal to serve the indigenizing interests of settler subjectivity. To this end, *Never Cry Wolf* preserves the wild alterity of

its wolves by imbuing them with a dynamic consciousness that permits them to reciprocate Mowat's observational fieldwork by regularly gazing back at him throughout the text.

When the narrator's connection to the wolf pack risks becoming over-determined, however, the book reaffirms the radical Otherness of these animals right before it provides textual closure in the form of their presumed extirpation. As he prepares to leave the Barrens, the narrator's woodcraft falters when he mistakenly determines a wolf den to be vacated before investigating its interior "to round out [his] study of wolf family life" (Mowat 242). Inside the den, he encounters "two faintly glowing pairs of eyes" that reflect back "his dim torch beam" (244), and his former fear of wolves instantly reemerges: "Despite my close familiarity with the wolf family, this was the kind of situation where irrational but deeply ingrained prejudices completely overmaster reason and experience" (244). He then elaborates, "If I had had my rifle I believe I might have reacted in brute fury and tried to kill both wolves" (245). Hearing a wolf howl in the distance, the narrator concludes the scene by describing it as "the voice which spoke of the lost world which once was ours before we chose the alien role; a world which I had glimpsed and almost entered . . . only to be excluded, at the end, by my own self" (246). Underscored by the use of ellipsis, the failure of his woodcraft at this critical point in the narrative redefines the nature of his proximity to his research subjects. As Johnson explains,

> Mowat's concluding reassertion of the species boundary is an important

> rhetorical move. It returns the reader to an unpleasant reality and reveals the pastoral space of wolf-human boundary crossing in Wolf Bay [*sic*] as a virtual or utopian possibility from which we will all be excluded unless the wolf hunt is ended. (348)

Never Cry Wolf is thus able to uphold the fantasy of indigenization as a future possibility by invoking the human-animal kinship that functions as "the central strategy of ecological discourse in its paradigmatic form" (334). Moreover, Mowat is able to position indigenization itself as threatened by exogenous modernity in order to sustain the settler subject-position as the authentic defender of Canadian wildlife. The penetrative and appropriative gaze of the indigenizing writer-naturalist thus transitions into that of the authoritative yet seemingly benign conservationist.

Marian Engel's *Bear*

Although not explicitly preoccupied with environmental issues, and thus not in danger of providing the same "detour for nationalist yearnings for indigenization" that Johnson sees in the conservationist discourse in *Never Cry Wolf* (350), Marian Engel's novel *Bear* nevertheless relies on the image of the wild animal and shares similar concerns as its literary predecessors. Lou, the protagonist, travels on behalf of the historical institute where she works in Toronto to northern Ontario, to catalogue the colonial-era library of the Cary family. While at Pennarth, their home on Cary Island, she is delegated to care for a semi-domesticated bear that has remained on the "estate" since the death of the last Cary, an eccentric woman named Colonel Jocelyn who willed all of

her possessions to the Institute. Despite being warned that the bear is fundamentally a wild animal, Lou begins interacting with it as a companion species until they finally have a number of sexual encounters before her return to Toronto. Her journey into the northern wilderness and her resulting search for identity can be read as an indigenization narrative, albeit one that is in reflexive dialogue with a tradition of wild animal narratives.[12] The postwar context of *Bear*, however, presents a crisis to the indigenizing settler subject-position since neither the Empire nor the Native is represented as authentic in the novel. This crisis is ultimately resolved by Lou's emotional and sexual relationship with the bear, but the novel is sure to reassert the species boundary at its conclusion in order to protect the exclusive indigeneity of the image of the wild animal.

Upon its publication in 1976, the novel "attained a perverse celebrity because of its supposed sex-with-animals content" (Harger-Grinling and Chadwick 57), and it was "simultaneously condemned as pornographic and celebrated as the Governor General's Award winner for fiction in 1976" (Guth 31). Scholars have since taken a remarkable number of critical approaches to the text; for example, *Bear* as an articulation of the female subject (Margery Fee); as symbolic of Jungian archetypes (Patricia Monk); as "a complex structure of pastoral, pornography, and myth" (Coral Ann Howells 105); as an

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[12] As discussed below, *Bear* directly cites the wild animal stories of Seton, Roberts, and Grey Owl. It also makes an intertextual reference, in the scene in which Lou attempts to fish, to Roberts's wilderness romance *The Heart of the Ancient Wood* (1902), a novel also featuring a close relationship between a young woman and a bear. As well, Susan Fisher further believes that, due to its publication date, *Bear* may have been "partly designed as a *riposte* to *Survival*" (259). Other intertextual considerations include the historical figure of Major William Kingdom Rains, who, as Christl Verduyn observes in *Marian and the Major* (2010), "provided a model for Colonel Cary [. . .]" (4); and Thomas Carlyle's *Sartor Resartus* (1833-34), which Engel references in the title of the short story she developed into *Bear*, "Ursus Resartus." The typescript of this story and two earlier drafts of the novel are housed at The William Ready Division of Archives and Research Collections at McMaster University. I will limit my discussion of these three typescripts to footnotes in this chapter in order to preserve the integrity of *Bear* as a final work while also adding—as palimpsest—pertinent support to my reading of the novel.

example of "intramodernism" (Mary K. Kirtz); as a blending of realism and romance reflective of the "contradictions at work in female experience" (Gault par. 34); as an intertext of *Heart of Darkness* (S.A. Cowan); as part of "the tradition of a midsummer madness" (Elspeth Cameron 93); as sexual gothic (Gerry Turcotte); and as an example of cultural appropriation (William Closson James). Much of this body of critical work, however, evaluates the text, as Cinda Gault observes, in terms of "a search for female or national identity, the holy grails of the dominant second wave feminist and Canadian nationalist social movements of [Engel's] era" (Gault par. 3).

More recently, Gwendolyn Guth resists such an interpretation, stating, "*pace* any number of critics, almost no symbolic or psychoanalytic residue adheres convincingly to the bear himself" (37). Instead, she claims, "Engel's method of approaching the unapproachable has something in common with the factual verisimilitude of [Charles G.D.] Roberts; little, except as ephemera, to do with the animal-as-symbol articulated by Engel's nationalist contemporaries in 1970s Canada [. . .]" (31). However, Guth presents somewhat of a straw-man argument here since she is aware that this particular form of symbolism—of animals standing in for human national subjects, a practice found most prominently in Atwood's *Survival*—has been widely dismissed on several fronts by critics. Moreover, because her dismissal of "Atwood's bald allegorization" does little to suggest a closing of the gap between Engel's bear and a real-world referent (35), Guth must acknowledge that "representation of some kind is necessary to the incorporation of animals into a work of art" (31). While I would agree with Guth in qualitative terms that "The inscrutability of the animal other thus emerges as one of the more intriguing

considerations raised by *Bear*" (32), or even that "From first to last, the bear remains a bear, a mystery, an inscrutable other" (37), its radical Otherness is that of the image of the wild animal. As such, its wild animality is deftly balanced against the mysterious union between Lou and the bear over the course of her sexual transgression. That is, although the bear in *Bear* does not serve as a metaphor of the Canadian national subject, it nevertheless functions symbolically as an image of a wild animal within an overarching imperialist discourse.

Bear seemingly begins straightforwardly as an antimodern, indigenizing wild animal narrative, and it features all six of the human figures I identify as conventional to the earlier work of Charles G.D. Roberts and Ernest Thompson Seton. Engel was evidently familiar with these texts, as indicated in *Bear* when the narrator informs us that Lou

> had read many books about animals as a child. Grown up on the merry mewlings of Beatrix Potter, A. A. Milne, and Thornton W. Burgess; passed on to Jack London, Thompson Seton or was it Seton Thompson, with the animal tracks in the margin? Grey Owl and Sir Charles Goddamn Roberts that her grandmother was so fond of. Wild ways and furtive feet had preoccupied that generation, and animals clothed in anthropomorphic uniforms of tyrants, heroes, sufferers, good little children, gossipy housewives. (Engel 59)

However, to paraphrase Guth, despite that Lou's "objection" to anthropomorphic representations of animals is "time-honoured," it would be reasonable to charge Lou with

"fuzzy analytical thinking" for equating "the naturalist-minded efforts of Seton, Roberts, and Grey Owl" with the work of their British counterparts (30). It is curious that even though the text presents Lou as having "had no feeling at all that either the writers or the purchasers of these books knew what animals were about" (Engel 60), *Bear* nevertheless represents humans, wild animals, and their interactions in much the same way as its Canadian literary predecessors. Not only does the bear paradoxically represent a connection to radical Otherness and the impossibility of such a connection, each of the figures of the woodsman, the trophy hunter, the Indian, the settler, the squatter, and the boy are employed in the text, as I will demonstrate, to emphasize that the legitimacy of the settler subject's proprietary claims to the land are paramount to all others.

Homer Campbell, the woodsman in *Bear*, is perhaps the most readily comparable figure to his counterparts in the works of Roberts and Seton.[13] Possessing an extensive amount of woodcraft, his knowledge is nevertheless as limited as his potential for cultural hybridity, and he speaks with the regional dialect of the woodsman. He acts as Lou's contact and guide in the north and provides her with valuable information pertaining to the Carys, such as accounts of their island and its surroundings, their house Pennarth and its outdated amenities, and their bear. The text clearly indicates, however, that his knowledge is specifically local and experiential, falling outside the provenance of the

[13] Homer Campbell's name is suggestive, as Mary Kirtz notes, of his role in the story as a source of subjective information for Lou. Kirtz sees him as a "touchstone in her search for the 'truth' [. . .] [and] whose name evokes both Homer, the great storyteller, and Joseph Campbell, the promulgator of myth" (358). Her reading of this character can be supported by looking at Engel's typescripts, where Homer began as "Hector" before turning into "Nestor" in the second draft of the novel. Engel may have wished to stress her character's unreliability by changing his name from allusions to Homer's epics to the name of the storyteller himself. As well, the appearance of his surname "Campbell" in the novel—if taken as a reference to the American scholar and mythologist Joseph Campbell (1904-1987)—would indeed substantiate Kirtz's view.

official history Lou deals in as an archivist. When they first arrive at Pennarth, for instance, Lou is surprised to see that it is "a classic Fowler's octagon," especially since it has not been "mentioned in the textbooks" or listed on the "index of houses like that" (22).[14] Homer replies,

> Oh, we're pretty cagey, up here. Nobody would know about this place who wasn't running around in a boat; and none of us are telling. We send all the tourists down to gaggle at that house Longfellow was supposed to have written that Indian poem in, down there in the main channel. This place has been forgotten about, sort of, and around here we think it's just as well. It's a dilly, isn't it? (22-23)

This passage demonstrates the way in which the text carefully places a limit upon Homer's knowledge, a limit that precludes him from occupying the idealized settler subject-position as an indigenized cultural hybrid of "the contending authorities of Empire and Native" (Johnston and Lawson 370). Although he is aware of the relevance of Henry Wadsworth Longfellow (1807-1882) to his region, he fails to identify, more formally, that "that Indian poem" is the American poet's epic *The Song of Hiawatha* (1855).

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[14] The "Fowler's octagon" was a house design developed by the American phrenologist and social reformer Orson Squire Fowler (1809-1887) and promoted in his books *The Octagon House: A Home for All* (1848) and *A home for all, or, The gravel wall and octagon mode of building: new, cheap, convenient, superior and adapted to rich and poor* (1853). *Bear* seems ambivalent about the Fowler's octagon: it describes it both as "one of the great houses of the province" (29) and as "an absurdity; too elaborate, too hard to heat, no matter how much its phrenological designer thought it good for the brain" (36). That designer, the narrator notes, "was the sort of American we are all warned about" (37). Interestingly, in the short story typescript of "Ursus Resartus" the house is a castle rather than an octagon, so its exogeneity began as European rather than American.

The novel further emphasizes Homer's preclusion from indigenization by hinting at his potential for atavistic degeneration. When Lou first meets him, the text is swift to establish that Homer's son is less of a woodsman figure than Homer:

> He was middle-aged and cheerful. His son Sim was pale-eyed, pale-haired, a ghost, an albino, silently loading a second motorboat with boxes of supplies they had ready for [Lou]. He spoke to his son in chirps and clucks as he would to an animal. The son was big-footed, bashful, passive: fifteen, fourteen, she concluded. (20)

This troubling depiction of "the silent, albino-looking Sim" raises the spectre of the discourse of atavism while also suggesting that, rather than being a candidate for indigenization because he has been born and raised in the north, Sim is actually whiter than his father (68). Presumably a diminutive of *Simon*, his name is also curiously evocative since the lack of a terminal *e* in at least its written form renders the *i* a short vowel. The resulting pronunciation therefore seems closer to an abbreviation of *Simian* rather than *Simon*. (The same can be said if his name is the less common *Simeon*.) In the discourse of atavistic degeneration, the apes are a first stop on the path of human devolution, one further signaled by Sim's big-footedness and the way his father speaks to him "as he would to an animal" (20).

Similarly, Homer's dialect, conventional as it is to representations of the woodsman, is an example of a degenerate form of Lou's English. In the same vein, his dialect indicates a class distinction between the regional settler subject and its urban counterpart. This class distinction is symbolic rather than material since Homer is a

successful small-business owner and Lou is of comparatively modest means, yet it is seemingly no less significant. When Lou and Homer are going through the trunks she has discovered in the basement of Pennarth, for instance, they uncover a number of "beautiful dresses from the nineteen twenties and thirties" once belonging to Jocelyn Cary (106). Homer then tells Lou that Jocelyn was educated in "England, I guess, or Montreal" and "had good connections," so she was able to go "to parties in Europe in the good old days before the crash" (106). He recalls, "She usedta tell me something about the way they lived over there. They'd hire a plane to get from Paris to parties in London or Oxford, a little open four-seater" (106). But such extravagance does not appeal to him: "Ah, you and me, what would we do with a butler, eh? Tip him and call him 'my man'? When I was guiding there was an old Yankee gent I liked, he was real generous, sometimes called me 'my boy'. I told him I'd quit if he didn't call me Homer" (106-07). When confronted by the exogenous modernity of Jocelyn Cary's experiences in Europe, or that of the figure of the American trophy hunter, Homer is secure in the antimodern *ressentiment* of his regional identity even while class distinctions are maintained.

He is far less secure, however, when faced by the settler subject-position that Lou attempts to occupy by putting on one of Jocelyn Cary's dresses. He makes a sexual advance on Lou, but as the narrator explains, "She liked him, but she did not like what he was doing" (108). Her indignation, however, is not because Homer is married: "Suddenly, she wanted to pull rank, pull class on him, keep him in his place. She knew they were equal but she did not feel they were equal, in her head she was a grand lady going to balls, he was a servant who knew her secrets" (108). This cognitive dissonance

Lou experiences results from her attempt to occupy the settler subject-position she imagines of Jocelyn Cary. Although Lou's modern sensibility dictates that she and Homer are equals as people, his symbolic role as a woodsman is nevertheless to serve as a kind of intermediary of settler indigenization. For her part, Lou remains unconscious of the class politics of her indigenization fantasy since she makes the distinction between herself as "a grand lady" and Homer as "a servant" before incidentally realizing that "She was still wearing, in fact, a ball gown" (108). The power of this symbolic economy is considerable: although Homer is hurt by Lou being "a snob" (108), he ultimately acquiesces to his position as a woodsman by "sheepishly" forgiving her (110).

Although Lou and Homer come to a more biding reconciliation once her sexual encounter with the bear resolves her need to feel indigenous, the continuing social difference between them remains in keeping with the antimodernism of the novel. To return to the earlier scene in which Lou first sees that Pennarth is a Fowler's octagon, Homer indicates to her that knowledge of the Carys' house is guarded by the inhabitants of the region. By describing countrypersons in opposing terms to outsider "tourists" (presumably, middle-class urbanites), such regionalism may be viewed as a type of cultural nationalism operating *within* the nation. "In the founding and growth of cultural nationalism," according to Anna Johnston and Alan Lawson, the "vector of difference" between settlers and indigenes is replaced by that of settlers and the imperium "as a strategic disavowal of the colonizing act" (365). Similarly then, the antimodern tradition in Canada enables this disavowal to occur on a regional scale inside the country even as it emphasizes the difference between a settler colony and its imperial centre on a national

scale. To summarize Johnston and Lawson, "In this process," the regional settler subject as "'the national' is what replaces 'the indigenous' and in doing so conceals its participation in colonization by nominating a new 'colonized' subject"—namely itself, in relation to both the now exogenous imperium and the modern cities that it has replicated within the settler colony (365).[15] Regional settler subject-formation in this sense relates to the way in which the authenticity of the indigene is dependent on its spatial and temporal proximity to modernity. As Goldie notes of the Australian context, which is readily applicable in North America,

> Usually the term "tribal" is applied to those Aborigines who continue to live far from major population centres and are deemed by the white culture to have maintained "traditional" hunter-gathering patterns, rituals, and language. They are, in the view of the white culture, "true" Aborigines, unlike the more urban, "false" Aborigines. (165)

However, while a spatial separation from modernity relegates the indigene to prehistory, the regional settler subject can be rendered as "backwards" or, more positively, "quaint." This spatial coordination of the regional settler subject in relation to its urban counterpart thus parallels national "belatedness" and "simplicity" in relation to the imperium. Regardless, then, of Homer's greater material wealth, he remains "subjugated" by Lou as

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[15] This view that Canadian national identities have been complicated by their development alongside that of transnational capital flows accords with Glenn Willmott's observation, in his discussion of the postcolonial bildungsroman in Canada, that "there was a much deeper and more immediate sense of a beginning to which postcolonial nationhood hitched itself. This was the dawning recognition of its subjection to a global modernity" (G. Willmott *Unreal* 23).

part of an economy in which the regional settler subject-position attempts to obscure its role in colonization.

Moreover, in *Bear* the propinquity of the urban to transnational modernity is signified by the antimodern depiction of Toronto and its inhabitants in relation to the imperial metropoles of the United States and Great Britain. The lack of authenticity and authority of the urban, modern, and exogenous is underscored, for example, by *The Song of Hiawatha* itself: based on a number of flawed colonial texts,[16] the poem is by Longfellow's own account, "purely in the realm of Fancy" (qtd. in Calhoun 208). Noting that *Hiawatha* is "still capable of exciting controversy," Charles Calhoun explains that

> [a] standard reading of it by modern academics is that it is a derivative poem rendered "unreadable" by its failure to understand the true nature of Native American oral literature and its dismissal of the full extent of that people's tragedy. The notion that it is "racist" has filtered down and makes this once-popular work "unteachable" in the school as well as university classroom. (204)

Although Calhoun seems to lament the fall of *Hiawatha* from the grace of canonicity, *Bear* specifically employs it as an intertext to repudiate settler representations of indigeneity and, therefore, the cultural hybridity implied by an "Indian epic."

However, rather than suggesting, as other wild animal narratives do, that the authority and authenticity of settler subjectivity is tied to the Canadian wilderness and a

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[16] According to Calhoun, among these texts, Longfellow consulted the "protoethnographical accounts" of Henry Rowe Schoolcraft (206), John G. Heckewelder's *History, Manners, and Customs of the Indian Nations* (1818), and the works "of the painter and student of Native American life, George Catlin, whose writings, paintings, and staged performances by actual Indians, here and in Europe, had sparked some interest in their 'unspoiled' culture" (207).

woodcraft knowledge of it, *Bear* forecloses such exclusionism by de-authorizing the figure of the woodsman entirely. While Homer might be predictably ignorant about the title of Longfellow's poem, his local knowledge of Longfellow is, far less predictably, incorrect. Both he and the other locals who redirect "all the tourists" to "the main channel" are mistaken in their belief that Longfellow wrote his poem on Lake Huron—*Hiawatha* was written in New England and based largely on texts Longfellow accessed at the Harvard University library in Cambridge, Massachusetts (Calhoun 206-08). Although it is understandable that Homer's regional subjectivity would limit his knowledge of the poem's composition history, as it does its title, it is somewhat surprising for such a woodsman figure to lack the local knowledge that Longfellow never set foot in his region. Instead, Homer and his country peers are as duped as the "tourists" they repel by an erroneous myth originating from elsewhere.[17] Put simply, although the woodsman might be conventionally represented as simple, he is never wrong about things relating to the land around him in his role as a woodcraft guide to "the boy" and the reader. Mary Kirtz considers Homer as the text's postmodern repudiation of colonial historiography (353-54), and Homer's information as having "neither accuracy nor absolute truth but is rather simply another kind of oral history" (355). As such, Homer differs from the traditional woodsman in that he is also a modern regional subject.

[17] The thoroughness of Engel's familiarity with Longfellow's work is further suggested by the lengthy intertextual reference to *The Kalevala* in the novel, after Lou has sex with Homer. This nineteenth-century poem, considered as the national epic of Finland, provided Longfellow with "the suggestion of a meter that sounded 'primitive' and the organizing principle of a central hero around whom any number of more or less disparate tales could be linked" (Calhoun 205).

And just as he is susceptible to exogenous forms of knowledge, he is decidedly un-woodsman in appearance. Despite the red mackinaw jacket he wears, an article of clothing iconic to the Canadian north,[18] he is curiously described as also having "a shrewd face, round pink-framed plastic glasses, very false false teeth [. . .]" (Engel 39). His unexpectedly effeminate eyewear suggests an urban effeteness, a physical defect, and, more symbolically, an otherwise flawed vision of his surroundings. His dentures also suggest an urban influence—and contrast sharply with the "toothless" Lucy Leroy (49)—if not a self-indulgent vanity. Perhaps just as symbolically, as the repetition of "false" underscores, what passes from his lips cannot be so easily interpreted as the gospel truth of woodcraft that the woodsman conventionally transmits.

Indeed, despite his comprehensive understanding of his environment and a seemingly encyclopedic knowledge of his local community, Homer tellingly knows very little about the bear at Pennarth.[19] Whenever he discusses the bear, his language becomes tentative and the bear comes to represent a conspicuous lacuna in his woodcraft. Even though Homer is able to give Lou a detailed history of several generations of the Cary family, for instance, he knows nothing of the bear's origin and tells Lou, "I don't know where they got it, there aren't any bear around here" (27); later he repeats to her, "I don't know who gave [Jocelyn Carey] that bear, but you couldn't say it was hers" (80). Homer

[18] Indeed, in the United States the mackinaw is commonly referred to as the "Canadian dinner jacket," and, depending on the region in Canada, the "Sudbury dinner jacket" (as I grew up calling it), "Kenora dinner jacket," "BC dinner jacket," "Burnaby dinner jacket," etc. The "Canadian dinner jacket," it should be noted, is distinct from the "Canadian tuxedo," the pairing of blue jeans with a blue denim jacket.

[19] Homer possesses extensive knowledge of boating, camping, fishing, hunting, soil conditions and gardening, trees, wild foods (morels, asparagus, and hazelnuts), and the ecological benefits of outhouses. While it might be understandable that he does not know much about bears because "there aren't any bear around here" (27), this lack of knowledge challenges the conventional representation of the figure of the woodsman as infallibly knowledgeable.

also cannot fathom what one does exactly with a bear: he attempts to commiserate with Lou at the beginning of her stay at Pennarth by saying, "I don't know what I'd do if anybody laid a bear on my shoulders" (27), and he later says, "I don't know what the hell they [the Carys] did with it, pardon my French" (40). When Lou asks Homer if the bear is "vicious," he responds, "That bear? Jeepers, no. It's just . . . well, he's just a plain old bear, and he's been on that chain for so many years there's no telling what would happen if you let him loose. He might kill you, he might just sit there, he might walk across the yard and take a leak" (41). Although Homer is able to assure her that the bear is not dangerous, he nevertheless can only speculate on what its behaviour might be. Even at the end of the novel, when before her departure Lou confirms the Indian figure Lucy Leroy's opinion that it is a "good bear," Homer is able only to respond, "I guess he is. I wouldn't know myself" (140). His consistent lack of knowledge about the bear problematizes the conventional relationship of the figure of the woodsman to the wilderness and his role in the indigenization of the settler subject.

While the flaws of Homer's woodcraft might seem to locate *Bear* within a tradition of postmodern incredulity toward indigenizing grand narratives, the authenticity and authority the novel assigns Lucy Leroy and the bear suggest instead that indigenization is impossible because of modernity rather than because indigenization itself is a colonial myth. Like the bear, who "remains a bear, a mystery, an inscrutable other" (Guth 37), Lucy remains enigmatic throughout the text because, as an elderly indigene, she is emblematic of an authentic, "unspoiled" pre-modern past. Goldie explains that such images of the "aged indigene [. . .] [are] almost always employed as

the past in the present, as an incongruous artifact that offends the process of natural time" (167). The narrator first explains that "Joe King's aunty, Lucy Leroy, [is] a hundred years old, if you could believe" what people say (Engel 26), a description Lucy later confirms when she tells Lou, "I am one hundred years old" (49). The two women briefly meet once, when Lucy appears suddenly and mysteriously one morning at Pennarth "on the stoop [. . .] babbling and crooning to the bear" (48). Lou is somewhat nonplussed by Lucy's presence, telling her, "I didn't hear your boat," to which Lucy replies by only "grin[ing] unnervingly, still holding onto [Lou's] hand" (48). When Lou then confesses that she doubts she can take care of the bear, Lucy continues being nonverbal for a few more moments as her "live eyes crinkled" before ambiguously stating, "Good bear [. . .]. Bear your friend" (49). Lou then inquires about the bear's age, but this mystery remains textually safeguarded as "Lucy's face crinkled with some inconceivable merriment. She did not look one hundred years old, only eternal. 'Shit with the bear,' she said. 'He like you, then. Morning, you shit, he shit. Bear lives by smell. He like you'" (49). Lucy's indigenous authority is confirmed at this point: she knows all about the real world and real human shit, not the academic shit noted by Mowat. Fittingly, this is the only bit of woodcraft Lou is taught about the bear.

But before Lucy's authenticity as a pre-modern Indian can be jeopardized by any development of her character as a realistic living person, she vanishes as suddenly as she first appears: "Snap, crackle, she was off. The bear didn't move and neither did Lou. She had no time to. Lucy was gone, that was all, a hundred years old, gleaming, toothless, and gone" (49). Despite Homer's stereotyping claim that "she and Joe are nearly full-blooded

Indians, and what that means is, you never know where they are" (79), the text safely stows Lucy in an ahistorical past because the indigene is "not a part of [the] developing fabric" of settler culture (Goldie 149). Not only does her abrupt disappearance from Pennarth position her in such a way, Homer's initial description of her is very telling:

> Oh, she was a funny one. I've seen her with that bear. She used to take one of them straight kitchen chairs out to the back yard and sit and just talk at it for hours. Maybe French talk, maybe Cree, I couldn't make it out. She's a wonderful knitter, Mrs. Leroy, and on a fine day she'll sit there and talk and knit a mile a minute. The two of them together, they were a sight to see. (41)

Although Homer's dialect entails a non-standard use of tense and aspect, the inconsistency of his grammar is perhaps informed by the indeterminacy of Lucy's ahistorical status as an image of the indigene. Even while his dialect might use the past simple tense to convey an habitual aspect in the past—i.e., "she was a funny one" to connote that the interactions he routinely witnessed between Lucy and the bear were odd or amusing—his grammatical tense then jumps in short order to the present perfect, the habitual past, the past perfect, the present simple, the future simple, and finally back to the past simple. Lucy particularly is described in the past ("she was"), the present ("she's"), and the future ("she'll"), all of which indicates that, as an image of the indigene, she is positioned "on the other side of [an] atemporal temporal divide [. . .]" (Goldie 165). By denying her temporal coevalness with the other characters, *Bear* not

only secures Lucy's authenticity as invulnerable to the taint of modernity, but also precludes her from any current or future claims to the land.

Lucy's position as such is further stressed by her impending death at the novel's conclusion. Quite conventionally, then, *Bear* invokes the trope of the dying Indian to ensure that Lucy's pre-modern authenticity is representative of a race that is imminently lost to the irrevocable past. "The attraction of these dead races has many parts," according to Goldie (155). "At one level, they provide a way of avoiding the question of 'indigene as social problem'. Most images of the prehistoric indigene are constantly met by the fact that the indigene is a contemporary reality [. . .] more present politics than prehistoric artifact" (155). Before the presence of contemporary Natives in *Bear* might raise such a fraught question, however, these figures, like Lucy, are discursively contained—only in this case their coevalness de-authenticates their indigeneity because they are as tainted by modernity as anyone else. That is, the antimodern idealization of the pre-modern de-indigenizes contemporary Natives who could otherwise represent a claim to the land. Although modernity does not racially transform indigenes into settlers, the contemporary Native faces the same impossibility of indigenization as the settler subject in *Bear*: neither can ultimately overcome the exogeneity of a pervasive modernity.

Lucy's nephew Joe King, for example, serves largely as an absent-presence in the text until he appears finally to retrieve the bear from Pennarth. His modernity is initially suggested by his surname, the anglicized form of *Leroy*. While both Joe's and Lucy's names are the result of European colonization, Lucy's represents a pre-modern period of

French influence in present-day northern Ontario. As well, while both surnames ostensibly signify sovereignty, the suggestion of a legitimate Native claim to the land is obscured by their European origin, and Joe's name further reflects his position within the modern social and economic order of English Canada. Unlike Lucy, who lives in a cabin on the far side of Carey Island, Joe lives there only part-time "when he has his traplines out in the winter" (21). His relationship to the land in this instance is strictly pecuniary, as is his connection with Pennarth, where he and Homer will have "a job" as its caretakers for the Institute (128). Moreover, when Lou at last meets Joe, the text avoids using the word *Indian* to describe him like it repeatedly does with Lucy. Aside from the vaguely racialized observation that he has "a shock of black hair," Joe is otherwise described simply as a large "man in a red and black mackinaw" (137). Whereas Lucy's authenticity is the result of a denial of her coeval status with contemporary settler culture, Joe's modernness constitutes an "approach to the coeval [that] leads to a decrease in Aboriginality" (Goldie 166). Lou's encounter with Joe is as brief as hers with Lucy: long enough for them to discuss Lucy's failing health, the bear, and Lou's return to Toronto. During this conversation, however, Joe assures Lou that he will take care of the bear after Lucy dies by telling her, "We [Natives] don't eat bear paws any more" (138). Although he is perhaps being ironic in pointing out the potential racism in Lou's concern for the bear, his comment nevertheless emphasizes his post-traditional lifestyle. And although he remarks that the Carys "didn't know much" because "They were tourists," it is Lou who politely observes, "Compared to you and Lucy" (138).[20]

[20] This scene is significantly longer in the second typescript draft, where Joe King inconsistently

Despite assuring Joe of his authority and authenticity as a Native, however, *Bear* seems more focused on assuring the reader that the contemporary indigene has been de-indigenized by modernity. The remaining Natives in the novel are on the ferry Lou takes on her way north to Cary Island, and the text calls attention to their modernness: "There were not many passengers aboard at this time of year: a few hunters, a couple of Indians in magenta ski jackets, an elderly couple reading side by side at the top of the companionway. A French-speaking family in new pastel sporting clothes" (17). Not only is there little to distinguish the vivid magenta of the Indians' clothing from the brightness of the French-speaking family's pastels, the materiality of such clothing signifies modern design and middle-class leisure and consumerism.[21] The "Indians in magenta ski jackets" also present a contrast to Lou herself, who has prepared for her journey northward by "root[ing] out her old camping gear—motheaten mackinaw jackets, hiking boots, a juvenile sleeping-bag" (17). "The tradition that everything for outdoors must be spoiled and pilled and forty years old," the narrator observes, "seemed to have died except in her" (18). Lou's observance of an antimodern tradition of wilderness recreation seems to suggest an authenticity these Natives lack. Similarly, as she prepares to disembark from the ferry the text again draws attention to the modern lifestyle of these Natives: "she

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replaces the earlier character name of Lou Cadotte. Joe/Cadotte reveals that he once lived in Toronto, but "Didn't like it much" (148). He was a Latin teacher downtown at Jarvis Collegiate high school before he returned to the north. As he departs with the bear, his last words are: "Spose Hector [Homer] filled you up with a bunch of nonsense about us as Indians. *We're as white as he is. Except Lucy*. Still keep my hand in at the trap-lines on weekends though" (148 emphasis added). Although it is not terribly surprising that this potentially controversial passage was omitted from the final draft, it nevertheless corresponds to the way in which *Bear* seeks to de-indigenize the indigene.

[21] Indeed, in the first typescript draft this passage reads: "There were not many passengers. Men who were obviously hunters in new woodesmen's clothing. A few Indians in ski jackets, looking better than Indians used to look" (4). This last sentence is omitted from the second draft.

watched the Indians getting into a new white panel truck" (19). Their truck is a literally glaring exception to Lou's traditional sense of the north, a region described as lying beyond "a Rubicon near the height of land" (17), which after crossing "she began to feel free" (18). The novel's commitment to this antimodern paradigm of the Canadian wilderness thus results in the de-indigenization of the modern indigene so that the settler subject can maintain a viably competing claim to the land. This process of discursive de-indigenization is particularly important in *Bear* because the settler subject-position cannot indigenize due to the modernization of the Canadian wilderness and its human inhabitants. Homer explains that by the end of the nineteenth century "civilization was creeping in. [. . .] When [Cary] died the hard winter of '78 this part of the north was already opened up. It wasn't a wilderness any more" (78). Despite Lou's initial view of the northern landscape, the ideal of the cultural hybridization of the "contending authorities of Empire and Native" is now impossible in the modern and postimperial context of Cary Island (Johnston and Lawson 370).[22]

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[22] I use "postimperial" here to indicate the period after the end of the British Empire, which happened in the decades immediately following the Second World War (1939-1945). As Phillip Buckner explains, "The empire came to an end at different times and in different ways for different groups of Canadians. But the critical period was the decade from 1956 until 1967 when most English-speaking Canadians were compelled—some very reluctantly—to come to grips with the lingering death of the empire" (9). Of course, this means that "postimperial" is contemporaneous with "neoimperial" since, as Buckner also observes, "In retrospect it seems clear that by the end of the war Britain had neither the will nor the ability to hang on to its empire and that Canada was rapidly becoming more Americanized in culture" (5). John Darwin concurs:

> In the great imperial crisis of 1940-42, Canada, Australia, and New Zealand had all turned to the United States to take Britain's place as their strategic guardian—in Canada's case, this shift occurred even before the United States entered the war in late 1941. After 1945, Canadian governments, not without misgivings, deepened their economic and strategic dependence on Washington. (21)

However, I would not consider "neoimperial" and "postimperial" as synonyms since Canada's relationships with its imperial metropoles are distinct.

Quite fittingly, then, Lou begins her journey longing for a past imperial order containing an authentic, indigenizable settler subject-position. To this end, rather than only representing a potential for progress as in earlier wild animal narratives, indigenization in *Bear* is also presented as the lost object of Lou's imperial nostalgia. Before setting out for the north, "Lou dug and devilled in library and files, praying as she worked that research would reveal enough to provide her subject [Colonel Cary] with a character" (Engel 14). She continues attempting to resurrect Cary once she arrives at Pennarth, affectionately saying to his portrait, "you old wastrel" (52); imagining "for a moment she was Cary advancing boldly on the new world, *Atala* under one arm, *Oroonoko* and the handbooks of Capability Brown under the other" (52); and "pictur[ing] Cary unfolding a faded Union Jack on the Queen's Birthday. He would have thought Victoria an improvement on Queen, Queen Caroline [*sic*] but disapproved of the prudishness even then advancing on the bush" (53).[23] Lou seems unaware that Cary can only be an imagined reconstruction until Homer gives her the details of the Cary family history, when she learns that, later in life, Cary "went kind of crazy, living alone here with his books" (77), and that his granddaughter Jocelyn Cary "wasn't a great lady" (81).

Although Lou is deeply troubled to learn that the Carys were not quite as she had imagined them—as nostalgic reconstructions of a pre-modern, romantic imperium—her

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[23] Lou's need to imagine herself as Cary also leads to a number of "monarch-of-all-I-survey" scenes in which she mimics the "seeing man," a conventional figure of conquest narratives "whose imperial eyes look out and possess" (Pratt *Imperial* 9). For instance, on the first morning after her arrival at Cary Island—"her kingdom: an octagonal house, a roomful of books, and a bear" (Engel 29)—"she got up and put her boots on; went outside to survey her kingdom" (30). In a similarly aristocratic description, she awakes another morning, "pulled herself out of the Colonel's baronial bed and went to the window. The world was furred with late spring snow" (45). In yet another instance, "She looked out the back window. 'Greetings to my people,' she said. Went back on with her work" (53).

admiration for Colonel Jocelyn Cary remains largely in tact. As a variation of the figure of the boy conventional to wild animal narratives, Jocelyn represents the ideal of an indigenized cultural hybridity. Her full name, the result of a legal loophole her father created to circumvent the requirement "that the estate had to go to the child who became a colonel" (75), seems particularly appropriate to her symbolic role in the text, although there is little doubt that Engel was part of a "generation of women writers," as Christl Verduyn observes, "writing against stereotypical notions of femininity and the limiting roles and identities reserved for women" (78). In a genre dominated by men writers and male characters, it is interesting to see the antimodern implications of female gender performance in the wilderness. Whereas the modern city represents a threat to masculinity, the wilderness destabilizes the femininity of both women and overcivilized men. Homer's description of Jocelyn therefore illustrates that she is both masculine and feminine: Jocelyn was ladylike in that she "walked English style, as if she was riding a horse" but "she was the first woman to wear pants up here" (78); "she was a great gardener, and a great fisherman"; "She had big hands like a man" but she "Did all those things women are supposed to do"; she "Kept her house spick and span" but "she kept herself with a trap line" (79). The rigours of the backwoods require one to shed the pretensions and delicacies of urban life, yet Jocelyn also maintained the elegance and domesticity characteristic of her gender. When Lou then wistfully states, "She was a great lady" (81), Homer insists on Jocelyn's gender balance: "She wasn't a great lady. She was an imitation man, but damned good one" (81). By complimentarily referring to

her as "an imitation man," Homer conforms to an antimodern idealization of (regional) settler femininity being both practical and traditional.

It is also important to consider, however, that the contrasts Homer identifies in Jocelyn's character also pertain to the differences between exogenous modernity and the indigenous wilderness. Just as she represents both genders, that is, Jocelyn is presented as a cultural hybrid of Britishness and indigeneity. Lacking an inheritance and subsisting on a small teaching pension, Homer explains, Jocelyn would supplement her income:

> until she was an old woman she'd put on her waist-waders and shove off in the boat in the season and trap [musk]rat and beaver. That's tough, cold work, you got to be part Indian to put up with it, but she did it. She knew all the cricks and the inlets, she had a licence of course, and she wasn't afraid to work. Yet when the Anglican missionary and his wife came through she set out the blue plates and what was left of the silver (when my wife saw the tea service her eyes popped out) and put on a dress like something out of an old Hollywood movie and make them feel like common clay. (80)

Although her relation to the land is pecuniary, Jocelyn lacked the taint of modern capital and rather lived off the land instead of profiting from it. This passage also emphasizes immediately that she did not poach—a hallmark of the figure of the squatter in wild animal narratives—since she trapped "in the season" and "had a licence of course." Needing to be "part Indian" to perform such difficult work further denotes Jocelyn's cultural rather than ethnic hybridity, a point maintained by the larger family history

Homer provides. This labour itself also required comprehensive woodcraft skills as well as the knowledge of "all the cricks and inlets." Jocelyn's indigeneity is perfectly balanced, however, with her exogenous "part": "the Anglican missionary," "the tea service," and the dress "out of an old Hollywood movie." Despite so thoroughly fulfilling a fantasy of indigenization, all of these details of Jocelyn Cary's character and life trouble Lou because they do not correspond precisely to her preconceptions, and they fall outside of the historical archive that has offered her "protection against the vulgarities of the world [. . .]" (19). Most troubling for Lou, however, is that she cannot occupy the same settler subject-position because the social order in which Jocelyn Cary's apparent indigenization was made possible no longer exists.

Lou's postimperial anxiety exacerbates the broader existential crisis she faces, in which she becomes overwhelmed by the feeling that she has to "justif[y] herself by saying that she was of service, that she ordered fragments of other lives" (83). Although Lou "was given to crises of faith" (82), and her feelings of alienation and inadequacy are well in keeping with the novel's antimodern sentiment, this crisis seems to extend much further. Indeed, as several critics have argued, Lou's stay in the northern wilderness is a quest for identity:

> Most of the critical articles written about *Bear* have a similar thesis: Elspeth Cameron concludes that "*Bear* shows the integration of an alienated personality through contacts with a vital natural world" (93); for Donald S. Hair, *Bear* is about "the achievement of an integrated personality" (34); and S. A. Cowan writes that Lou "finds her identity and

> learns how to live her life through an encounter with reality in the form of the wilderness" (73). (Fee 21)

Since "Identity is a social function, constantly and painfully produced and reproduced in individuals" (22), Margery Fee is right to take issue with these critics' shared assumption that "contact with 'vital' nature itself is what bestows an identity [. . .]" (21). However, Fee's analysis of *Bear* focuses on Lou's struggle "with a problem of subjectivity common to many well-educated and independent modern Western women. Acculturated into a feminine subjectivity and educated formally into a masculine subjectivity, she is comfortable with neither" (22). While Fee's reading of the novel is compelling, it does little to acknowledge the postcolonial context of these gendered subjectivities. So while I agree that "Identity in *Bear* is closely connected with language, and seen as male, violent, powerful, irreconcilable with domesticity and actively misogynist" and that Lou relies on "The Romantic intellectual legacy" (22), her identity, language, and intellectualism are all aspects of a settler postcolonialism endeavoring to indigenize. Echoing Frye's famous question "Where is here?" she is often forced to ask herself, "What am I doing here?" (82), a question she has felt "could be answered with lists" (83). The narrator continues,

> What was the use of all these cards and details and orderings? In the beginning they had seemed beautiful, capable of making an order of their own, capable of being in the end filed and sorted so that she could find a structure, plumb a secret. Now, they filled her with guilt; she felt there would never, ever, be anything as revealing and vivid as Homer's story, or as relevant. They were a heresy against the real truth. (83)

Homer's family history reminds Lou of the gap between word and world, a gap she has tried to ignore by insisting that her work as an archivist has been that of "ordering" rather than a (re)textualization of history and thus the discursive construction of a modern social order.

Although Lou's existential crisis permits her to begin questioning the ethics of her nostalgic longing for her own indigenization, it is, alas, short-lived. Her "childish, sulky" feelings of self-recrimination come to reinforce her imaginary connection with Cary even as she senses the anxious un-belonging of the settler subject-position: "She would soon have to admit that up here she was term-serving, putting in time until she died. Colonel Cary was surely one of the great irrelevancies of Canadian history and she was another. Neither of them was connected to anything" (84). She manages to shake off this "mood" by reviewing her instructions from the Institute Director in order to precipitate a relapse (84): "She read the instructions twice and sighed with relief. Anything she did would be relevant. Now she had her licence to exist" (85).[24] Even though she has felt "she could not justify herself" in the wilderness of Cary Island (83), she manages to calm the uncertainty of her un-indigenizable subject position by reengaging in imperial nostalgia to attempt once again to "know how and who this Cary was" (91).

At this point in the text—right before her first transformative sexual encounter with the bear—Lou also turns her attention to Edward John Trelawny (1792-1881), the writer and adventurer best known for his association with the Romantic poets Percy

[24] In the first draft of the typescript, this last sentence reads, "Returning to sources always made her feel better; she was now armed with her license to exist" (66). Engel has struck through the clause preceding the semi-colon, however.

Bysshe Shelley and Lord Byron. Immersing herself in his autobiographical memoir of his time with Shelley and Byron, Lou is "enthralled" by him: "What a man! Big. Abusive. A giant" (90-91). Her admiration for him is connected with the authority of his narrative voice: "Trelawny is good. He speaks in his own voice. He is unfair, BUT HE SPEAKS IN HIS OWN VOICE" (91). As indicated by the novel's only capitalized passage, Trelawny's authenticity stands in juxtaposition with Lou's own feelings of inadequacy. Fee reads Lou's fascination with Trelawny in terms of gender:

> As is expected of women, she wants to reveal Cary's voice, a male voice, not to assert her own. But nonetheless, she admires the men because they have a power she feels she lacks: to dominate their subject, to create their version of the 'truth'. To be voiceless is to be powerless, and so she aspires to a voice. (22)

While I agree for the most part with such an interpretation, it nevertheless seems that Lou aspires more to an *authentic* voice since she is captivated by how Trelawny "SPEAKS IN HIS *OWN* VOICE" rather than his ability just to speak. Moreover, since these men are also exogenous figures, it seems that Lou is attracted to their textual authority because it is undivided in relation to the "double inscription" of second world narratives and the mimickry of the settler subject (Johnston and Lawson 369). Accordingly, she quickly assigns Trelawny's ethos to both Cary and the bear: "There was some connection, some unfingerable intimacy among them, some tie between longing and desire and the achievable" (91). While the "power she feels she lacks" is certainly gendered, it also

relates to the continuous in-authenticity of her own settler subject-position, which is neither indigenous nor exogenous.

Even after "skipp[ing] to the end of the book" and discovering Trelawny was a "Disgusting man" for having "turned the shroud back to have a look at Byron's lame foot" (91), Lou remains motivated by her nostalgia. She immediately provides herself an apology for Trelawny to protect her idealization of Cary: "All the Victorians, early or late, she thought, were morbid geniuses. Cary was one of them and bought himself an island here" (92). She then muses on his motivations for coming to Canada, referencing some of the texts of her earlier daydream of herself as Cary "advancing boldly on the new world" (52): "How did he start wanting it? Did he come entranced by the novels of Mrs. Aphra Behn, then move on to *Atala* and the idea of the noble savage, then James Fenimore Cooper?" (92). Her idealization of Cary becomes spectacularly inflated: "He came for some big dream. He knew it was going to be hard," she speculates (92). "He came, she thought, to find his dream [. . .]. He was adventurous, big-spirited, romantic. There was room for him in the woods" (92). Perhaps realizing in the midst of Cary's library that he and his authenticity are forever lost, especially since he has left no written record of his life, Lou feels "suddenly lonely" (92), and she begins "in her desolation to make love to herself" before the bear joins in with his "fat, freckled, pink and black tongue" (93). That is, unable to access the "truth" she hopes to find in the written words of Cary's library, Lou comforts herself physically until the bear offers her an alternative in the form of a sexual orality that "transmits natural truth" (Goldie 120). Much in the way that human "Speech is deemed to be more natural than writing and therefore the oral

culture is much closer to nature than one that writes," the bear's performance of what humans would consider cunnilingus serves as a metaphorical connection between indigeneity, the oral, and the natural (113). Orality is antimodern in that it remains "untainted by print" (108); as Goldie explains of the image of the indigene,

> Orality represents a different order of consciousness, one which makes the indigene so clearly Other, something far more alien than simply an older, a more primitive, a more sexual, a more violent society. Orality provides the white observer with both manifestation of and a definition of Otherness. (110)

Although she is prevented from assuming the singularity of voice of the exogene, Lou experiences a physical connection to indigenous orality. However, the authority and authenticity of this Otherness bypasses the modernized indigene and woodsman altogether to be relocated to the postimperial wild animal's tongue.

Lou's sexual coupling with the bear thus serves as an alternative means for her to resist her "anarchic inner voice" (83). Superceding her work at the Institute and her reconstructions of Cary, the bear provides her with "intimations of a standing truth from before history" (Goldie 150). That is, as with the image of the indigene, historicity can be understood as functioning as a standard commodity of the image of the wild animal. Earlier in the novel, Lou directly compares the bear with her archival work: "It was if the bear, like the books, knew generations of secrets, but he had no need to reveal them" (70). As a representation of "contact with pure prehistoricity" (Goldie 148), the bear in this sense, as Johnson observes of the wolves of *Never Cry Wolf*, "seem[s] ultimately to

trump the indigeneity of the [indigene] to become [a] cipher[] for an indigeneity that is now truly a fantasy—an indigeneity that cannot answer back and contest the desires of settler-invader nationalism" (350). Indeed, Lou finds it most appealing that "she could paint any face on him that she wanted, while his actual range of expression was a mystery" (Engel 72). Her understanding, knowledge, and emotional connection to the bear thus cannot be separated or understood in the same logocentric terms of the studied woodcraft of earlier wild animal narratives. The narrator is only able to surmise, as Lou prepares to depart the island, that it was a "high, whistling communion that had bound them during the summer" (134), and that

> [w]hat had passed to her from him she did not know. Certainly it was not the seed of heroes, or magic, or any astounding virtue, for she continued to be herself. But for one strange, sharp moment she could feel in her pores and the taste of her own mouth that she knew what the world was for. She felt not that she was at last human, but that she was at last clean. Clean and simple and proud. (136-37)

Whether Lou is thus able to "achieve a second naïveté" (James 42), or she simply "chooses to read the indifference of nature as benign" (Howells 108), her libidinal connection to the wilderness serves the same function as woodcraft. As Cowan observes, "An alternative to laundering and taming the wilderness is to adopt its ways, become part of it" (77). That is, rather than an attempting to appropriate the indigeneity of the wild animal by claiming a totalizing knowledge of it, *Bear* imagines indigenization as the acquiescence of the settler subject to the mysterious Otherness of the wild animal.

Similar to *Never Cry Wolf*, however, when Lou's connection to the bear has become over-determined, the text reaffirms the radical Otherness of the image of the wild animal right before providing textual closure in the form of Lou's departure from Cary Island. Noticing that the bear's "great cock was rising," Lou attempts to consummate their sexual union with genital sex: "She took her sweater off and went down on all fours in front of him, in the animal posture" (131). Unaccountably, "He reached out one great paw and ripped the skin on her back" (131). Critics generally agree that the resulting wound, "one long, red, congealing weal mark[ing] her from shoulder to buttock" (134), symbolizes the species boundary between humans and animals, but they are in less agreement about what the text's reestablishment of this dividing line means.[25] In terms of the relation between the settler subject-position and the image of the wild animal, the slash on Lou's back has a comparable function in the text as "Mowat's concluding reassertion of the species boundary" at the end of *Never Cry Wolf*: it serves to reveal to the reader the "pastoral space" of human-animal boundary crossing at Pennarth "as a virtual or utopian possibility" (Johnson 348). However, whereas the conservationism of Mowat's book threatens the reader's inclusion in such a fantasy of indigenization "unless

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[25] For instance, Fee believes "The clawing [. . .] draws a line between the animal and the human" so that Lou may rationalize that "she and the bear are not really equals [. . .]" in order to "convince herself that this relationship is free of domination [. . .]" (24); Gerry Turcotte views the mark as "a symbol, of sorts, that she has freed herself from socialized orthodoxy" but that "the incompletion of desire" is necessary because "the union of the powerful human figure (Lou is very much in control of the bear at this stage) with that of compliant nature would reduplicate the imperial/patriarchal takeover of Nature, which this text goes on to criticize" (76); Donald Hair claims that "in symbolic terms, the bear releases Lou into her full human identity by marking the limits of kinship, and finally separating animal from human" as part of a "process lead[ing] to the renewal of her fully human self" (38); and Coral Ann Howells observes, "finally it is the bear who draws the demarcation line between them and shows her what is forbidden by natural law" (106), which allows Lou to "recognize the impossibility of her dream of communion with wild nature" and recognize "herself as human, him as animal, and the natural order as inviolable" (111).

the wolf hunt is ended" (348), *Bear* simply limits the possibility of settler indigenization by presenting such boundary crossing as both indefensibly taboo and improbable.

Nevertheless, the presentation of Lou's intimate proximity to the bear's indigeneity is widely considered one of the novel's major strengths, which "critic after critic praises for its believability, its realism" (Guth 31). Lou's sexual encounter with the bear is also an emotional revelation for her and even physically transformative. The narrator describes Lou later looking at herself in a mirror: "Her hair and eyes were wild. Her skin was brown and her body was different and her face was not the same face she had seen before. She was frightened of herself" (Engel 125). Later, Lou looks at herself in the mirror again and the narrator similarly states, "She was different. She seemed to have the body of a much younger woman. The sedentary fat had gone, leaving the shape of ribs showing" (133-34). The text is thus able to signal Lou's transformation into a more "authentic" self by describing her physical changes in antimodern terms, of the therapeutic effects of wilderness on the health of the overcivilized urbanite. Moreover, Lou's transformation coincides with a change in her opinion of Trelawny and Cary: her valorization of the bear comes at the expense of the exogeneity with which she has been so enamored. "Once and only once," the narrator observes, Lou

> experimented with calling him [the bear] "Trelawny" but the name did not inspire him and she realized she was wrong: this was no parasitical collector of memoirs, this was no pirate, this was an enormous, living creature that was for the moment her creature, but that another could return to his own world, his own wisdom. (119)

Equipped with the image of the wild animal, Lou de-authenticates her idea of Trelawny by referring to him as "parasitical" and de-authorizes it by calling him a "pirate." Just as readily, her nostalgia for Cary and his family withers because it cannot serve her renewed and redirected indigenizing interests. As she prepares to leave Cary Island, Lou

> sat in the empty, enormous house. She had not found its secrets. It spoke only of a family who did not want to be common clay, who feared more than anything being lost to history. [. . .] Much good it did them, she thought, perishing in the wilderness. Colonel Jocelyn was the only one who knew anything: how to tan a lynx. (139)

Even as she acknowledges Jocelyn's authority, the text implies that Lou has surpassed all of the Carys since she can sum them up in the present and from the privileged position of an indigenized settler postcolonialism.

Like the figure of the boy conventional to the wild animal narrative, such a position necessarily entails an imaginary transcendence of the current social order, which remains steadfastly colonial.[26] Not only does this constitute a "strategic disavowal of the colonizing act" (Johnston and Lawson 365) and an attempt to evade colonial guilt and accountability, it renders settlers not occupying the same rarified position—the un-indigenizable majority—as permanent squatters and thus symbolically exogenous to North American indigeneity. As Lou continues her musings in Cary's library before

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[26] Lou's privileged position in the world is further emphasized by her ability to consider taking a new job in the United Kingdom. As they say goodbye to one another, she tells Homer she does not think she will return the following summer because she is "thinking of changing jobs. Time to move along" (141). Only the day before, the narrator reports, "A summer's *Times Literary Supplements* overflowing with advertisements for archivists" arrived in the mail (134). In "Ursus Resartus" Hilary (Lou) goes back to the city and buys a large furry dog and spends the following summer traveling in Europe (12).

leaving the north, the narrator predicts, "Some winter, snowmobilers would break in. They would take the telescope for its brass screws, and smash the celestial and terrestial [*sic*] globes. Well, let the world be smashed: that was the way things were bound to go" (Engel 139). The snowmobile has already appeared in the novel as a symbol of the modernization of the north, a process Homer views ambivalently: "Didn't need to lock up before the snowmobilers came [. . .]. You win some, you lose some" (24). But in Lou's eyes these snowmobilers no longer just represent one of the drawbacks of modernity; they represent the inherent atavism of a doomed social order to which she is no longer subject. As squatter figures, these snowmobilers would be trespassers on Cary Island and their lack of interest in knowledge and responsibility means they would vandalize the house and steal the telescope only for the value of its "brass screws." Moreover, their smashing of the Carys' globes rhetorically introduces in the passage the discourse of degeneration applied to a broader context. Like the works of Seton, *Bear* presents atavism as a "retrogressive animalism" to contrast the progressive indigenization of the postcolonial settler subject in proximity to the image of the wild animal (Seitler 7).

Such an economy therefore necessitates that animality in *Bear* represent a radical Otherness that cannot be contained by the human social order.[27] Indeed, the potency of this symbolic economy is evident in the mythic final sentence of the novel: "It was a brilliant night, all star-shine, and overhead the Great Bear and his thirty-seven thousand virgins kept her company" (141). True to the indigenizing function of the image of the

[27] On the one hand, the discourse of atavism works to naturalize and justify human differences as threats to civilization from within. On the other, the image of the wild animal requires a dynamic consciousness accessible only to the indigenizing settler subject.

wild animal, the bear at last comes to reside well outside the human world yet within eternal proximity to Lou.

Conclusion

My interpretive strategy in this dissertation is twofold: I argue that the semiotic field circumscribing the image of the wild animal determines the representation of wildlife in Canadian animal narratives in English; I also insist that, despite the restrictions of that field, this image manages to suggest the actual existence of wild animals in Canada. Although this dichotomy might seem contradictory, I think it concedes how fictional are the narratives but also how much they can be accepted as realism. Both fiction and reality barely contain a subtext which reveals the contexts of colonial history and human-animal relations in North America.

As such, my goal is partly to provide a biocentric corrective to a consistent anthropocentric bias in literary scholarship on wild animal writing in Canada. At worst, this bias rehearses the indigene-animal analogy by collapsing the images of each into the category of indigeneity, without considering either the numerous differences in the way each of these images signify, or the distinct relationships each of their referents has had with North American settler societies. At best, it attempts to imagine the image of the wild animal as a metaphor for the settler subject, but in doing so appropriates the wild animal's indigeneity for the settler subject-position while also eliding the political status of wildlife. Such anthropocentric interpretations are thus unable to address the persistent need for the settler subject-position to attempt its own indigenization. At the same time, they are not positioned to consider that the relationship between humans and wild

animals in North America is a colonial dialectic, textualized as a political unconscious in the wild animal narrative.

Reading animal narratives in terms of the image of the wild animal thus represents a significant departure from the bulk of critical work done up to this point. While these narratives are often cited as an intersection of natural science and literature, they also remain suspended between Other and Mother as literary artifacts in the indigenizing service of the settler subject. As such, the image of the wild animal employed in these works is not just an anthropomorphic metaphor of the human, despite the certain gap between sign and referent. As John Sandlos similarly observes of the shortcomings of a number of critical responses to the works of Roberts and Seton, they "expos[e] the literary animal as a human composite construction (of national myths, ideologies, and moral maxims) but refus[e] to acknowledge the material, biological, and ecological concerns that inform Seton's and Roberts's work" (75). In considering these concerns, however, it is equally important not to overcompensate by conflating sign and referent, since the image of the wild animal is a taxidermic and colonial artifact rather than a scientific specimen. Although I do agree with Sandlos that "the stories are about human relationships to animals; about how observed animal behaviour—their 'biological' habits, social behaviour, and abilities to reason and act as moral agents—positions them in relation to 'us' within a larger ecological and philosophical framework" (75), I would hasten to add that wild animal narratives position "us" in relation to an image created within an overarching discursive framework of British imperialism. Although it "might be better to characterize the Canadian literary animal," as Sandlos

proposes, "more as a creative attempt to comprehend our relationship to the other beings with which we co-inhabit the living world" (76), this relationship remains both dialectical and colonial.

Chapter Review

The majority of my dissertation has focused on works from the decades following Confederation, since this was when current national subjectivities in Canada initially developed. Along with industrial and social modernization, and the prevalence of a reactionary antimodern sentiment, this period also witnessed a shift in the ways an increasingly urbanized population viewed and understood wildlife. These material conditions also fostered the innovation of the wild animal story, a very popular genre established specifically by two Canadians, Charles G.D. Roberts and Ernest Thompson Seton, publishing extensively in American magazines. My dissertation demonstrates that the representations developed by these writers of humans, animals, and the interactions between them are consistent enough to be considered as generic conventions. Moreover, I demonstrate that subsequent wild animal narratives published after the Second World War have continued to employ these conventions, despite historical changes in Canada, to constitute a literary tradition.

In chapter one, "Theorizing the Image of the Wild Animal and Its Literary Origins," I discuss the way in which the wild animals featured in these foundational works must represent for the settler subject-position a radical Otherness to the human while simultaneously serving as a bridge to this indigenous animality. This essential

paradox of the image of the wild animal thus permits the settler subject-position some claim of kinship—be it biological, spiritual, or observational—to an indigenous animality forever impervious to the colonizing forces of modernity. Such forces may be considered *exogenous*, or aspects of *exogeneity*, or representative of the *exogene*. As a portmanteau of "foreign Otherness," my concept of *exogeneity* may be applied to any consideration of races, ethnicities, species, or nationalities perceived as external to the political or regional boundaries of a given settler society. I postulate these related terms in order to demonstrate that the process of settler indigenization is a simultaneous process of de-exogenization. Different settler subjects have different exogenous traits defined by cultural and political elites. The traits vary but they define indigenization: those who lack exogeneity may participate in the process of indigenization, those who are exogenous may not. At the end of the nineteenth century, these elites in Canada accordingly subscribed to and actively perpetuated antimodern views that idealized the wilderness as a cure for the degenerating effects of overcivilization, a transatlantic social problem originating from the modernity of the exogenous cultural homelands of Europe and the United States. Indigenized settler subjectivity was therefore imagined as a cultural hybridity at once free of the taints of both exogenous modernity and indigenous savagery. In the works of Roberts and Seton, this subjectivity is embodied in the figure of "the boy," who symbolizes the promise of Canada's progress and future by combining the scientific method with traditional woodcraft knowledge to understand wildlife. I conclude this chapter by discussing how the nature faker controversy (1903-1907) that the wild

animal story elicited was symptomatic of underlying anxieties concerning human-animal relations in North America and settler indigenization.

Chapters two and three, "The Wild Animal Stories of Charles G.D. Roberts" and "The Wild Animal Narratives of Ernest Thompson Seton," respectively, focus on the representation of six main human figures that interact with wild animals. Each of these figures' relative claim to the land is predicated both on their possession of woodcraft knowledge and their distance from the taint of modern commodity exchange. Roberts in particular examines various forms of hunting practices and how they represent the "invading techno-human, the white" (Goldie 25). Professional trapping, trophy hunting, poaching, and the feather trade in general disqualify their participants from the possibility of indigenization. Although Seton emphasizes that humans and animals share biological and moral similarities far more than Roberts, both writers nevertheless must also present the image of the wild animal as radically Other. In order to remain un-commodifiable and un-exogenizable vis-à-vis modernity, the image of the wild animal maintains a characteristic dynamic consciousness: it returns the colonial gaze, it often represents physical danger to humans, and its interiority remains unrepresented. Further, by eliciting sympathy for the wild animals that are killed for the commodity value of their bodies, and depicting such slaughter as needless, Roberts positions his readers as conscientious, indigenizing subjects. In contrast, Seton tends to focus instead on the exogenous traits of various characters relative to the scientifically pure woodcraft knowledge practiced by an autobiographical figure of the naturalist. I examine these human-animal relations in Seton's *Two Little Savages*, while also analyzing how his troubling portrayal of

exogeneity relies on contemporary discourses of atavism and degeneration in order to valorize this autobiographical figure. My discussion then turns to this character's acquisition of woodcraft as a budding naturalist, and how the collecting practices of the scientific discipline of natural history related to the formation of national subjectivities and turn-of-the-century antimodernism. By examining an extended scene in the novel detailing the taxidermic preparation of an owl carcass, I then discuss how the display of taxidermic mounts in settler societies not only served to present the superiority of the human over the animal, but also the superiority of the settler subject over the exogene. I then adapt Pauline Wakeham's notion of taxidermy as a semiotic system to argue that both the image of the wild animal and wild animal narratives may be regarded as literary taxidermy.

Finally, in chapter four, "Postwar Wild Animal Narratives: Fred Bodsworth's *Last of the Curlews*, Farley Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf*, and Marian Engel's *Bear*," I consider the ways in which these later works continue as a literary tradition. These novels each depict conventional humans, animals, and their interactions in order to privilege the subject-position of the indigenizing settler. Perhaps the most significant change in postwar animal narratives from their turn-of-the-century predecessors is the severity of the imperilment humans pose to the wilderness. I argue that the heightening of the tensions between humans and entire wild animal species signals an assumption that the power of settler society over the land has finally been consolidated. The pessimism these works express concerning the inevitable fate of the wilderness, however, exults in the dominance of the settler over the landscape, even as it registers deep anxieties about the

effects of human populations on wildlife. Furthermore, the settler subject-position is also vindicated in antimodern terms by its relative superiority to the degeneration represented by exogenous modernity.

Bodsworth's *Last of the Curlews*, as I discuss, presents the imminent extinction of the Eskimo curlew in conventionally antimodern terms in order to appeal to a Canadian settler nationalism to achieve its conservationist goals. To assign the novel's title character an indigeneity the reader can appropriate, the text e explicitly identifies the curlew as a Canadian bird struggling in exogenous surroundings during his annual migration to and from South America. His mate is senselessly killed by a Canadian Prairie farmer, who is tainted by the commodity exchange and American capital investment of modern agribusiness. The text, however, assigns the curlew some share of the responsibility for its own extinction since the very physical feature that makes it such an exceptional bird species—its speed and stamina resulting from the structure of its wings—is what will inevitably doom it. By depicting the curlew as at least partly self-extinguishing, the novel is able to absolve settler guilt while also preserving the image of the wild animal as impervious to modernity. I then examine the way in which Mowat's *Never Cry Wolf* also depicts the endangerment of wild animals at the hands of ignorant humans. Rather than assigning blame to the wolves in the novel for their own demise, however, Mowat vilifies the Dominion Wildlife Service as exogenous in order to authenticate the autobiographical figure of the naturalist-narrator. By reaffirming the species boundary at the end of the novel when this figure makes a critical woodcraft error, Mowat is able to safeguard the dynamic consciousness of the image of the wild

animal while, as Brian Johnston similarly observes, maintaining a utopian fantasy of settler indigenization for the conservation-minded reader. Engel's *Bear* employs a similar rhetorical strategy when the protagonist's sexual relationship with a bear abruptly ends after he seriously injures her. Indigeneity itself is presented in the novel both as the dynamic consciousness of the image of the wild animal—the bear—and the atemporality of the image of the authentic, dying indigene—Lucy Leroy. I argue that Lou's experience of crossing the species boundary permits her to imaginatively transcend her divided position as a settler subject in the colonial social order. This order is further undermined by postimperial modernity itself, evidenced by Lou's imperial nostalgia for the authority of the exogenous voice and an indigenized settler subject. The novel further privileges the settler subject-position by de-authenticating the characters that surround Lou in the wilderness: the contemporary indigenes and regional settler subjects in *Bear* are unaware of their subjugation by modernity, and none of them has meaningful interactions with the image of the wild animal.

Because these postwar wild animal narratives continue to subscribe to the semiotic field of the image of the wild animal, this dissertation now raises the question, Can the image of the wild animal be decolonized? Addressing this question involves a politics quite separate from that surrounding the image of the indigene, a point that further emphasizes the necessity of considering the two images discretely. In his conclusion of *Fear and Temptation*, Terry Goldie reasons that because of the "shape and extent of the cultural conditioning in Canada [. . .] that consistently reifies the indigene" (221), any attempt "to create the indigene as subject liberated from past economies has

thus far proven impossible" (222). Indeed, even textual representations of indigenes by indigenous writers reveal "many of the same problems as in white texts" (217). Although the same can surely be said for the image of the wild animal, the key difference here of course is that wild animals will never be writing subjects. That is, despite the burden of Canada's colonial cultural inheritance, and the truism that "the object of a writing subject [. . .] cannot be turned into a subject [. . .] [and] the process of textual production creates inherent restrictions on the subject's liberation of the object" (217-18), Native writers have the continuing opportunity to creatively challenge and undermine the barrier between settler-centric literary forms and Native cultures. The wild animal narrative, on the other hand, will remain entirely anthropogenic, and the barrier between writing and animality, unbridgeable. Regardless, then, of the degree of seeming fidelity or sympathy that any textual representation has to the wild animal, a healthy skepticism ought to be maintained, perhaps most carefully in any post/colonial context such as Canada.

The SF Image of the Wild Animal in Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake*

Even if we accept that Canadians tend to possess a greater ecological awareness today than they did at the turn of the twentieth century, our discursive relation to wildlife remains relatively similar to that of Roberts and Seton. Very recent Canadian works, such as Margaret Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* (2003), Andrew Pyper's *The Wildfire Season* (2005), and Alissa York's *Fauna* (2010), continue to present wild animality as a dynamic consciousness serving as an indigenizing bridge to the freedom of nature for the settler. This subject-position itself is determined by social differences concealed by the pretense

that the settler's proximity to wilderness and wildlife allows him or her exclusive access to local knowledge unspoiled by modernity. Consequently, the interactions between a small variety of human figures and wild animals in these novels are readily comparable to works that predate them by more than a century. The settler episteme that ultimately structures human-animal relations in Canadian culture thus seemingly cannot be evaded, no matter how oppressive it may be for both animals and humans.

Atwood's *Oryx and Crake* is particularly useful to discuss as a testament to the power of this symbolic economy since, as an SF novel, it does not face the same constraints as the other works examined by this dissertation to represent either the past as it was or the present as it is. Despite being free to imagine a post-national and post-natural dystopian future in which ideological values have radically changed, *Oryx and Crake* nevertheless remains subject to the discursive limits of the image of the wild animal, so it largely conforms to the generic conventions of the wild animal narrative.[1] Relying on the antimodern discourse of overcivilization,[2] the novel presents the social order of the near future suffering from the effects of environmental degradation and

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[1] *Oryx and Crake* is the first novel in what is popularly referred to on the internet at present as the MaddAddam Trilogy. The second novel in the planned trilogy is *The Year of the Flood* (2009), a "simultaneuel" according to Atwood, which focuses on the God's Gardeners, a cult that plays only a marginal role in *Oryx and Crake*. According to her website, Atwood is currently at work on the third novel, which internet discussions speculate will focus on the MaddAddam bioterrorist resistance group.

[2] Modern living, for instance, separates the haves from the regional have-nots in the novel. Compare Jimmy, who grows up in an affluent and sealed Compound, with his one-time girlfriend Amanda (who also appears in *The Year of the Flood*) from one of a number of wasted former cities they refer to as pleeblands:

> Amanda had a rundown condo in one of the Modules, shared with two other artists, both men. The three of them were all from the pleeblands, they'd gone to Martha Graham on scholarship, and they considered themselves superior to the privileged, weak-spined, degenerate offspring of the Compounds, such as Jimmy. They'd had to be tough, take it on the chin, battle their way. They claimed a clarity of vision that could only have come from being honed on the grindstone of reality. (242)

dehumanization caused by rapacious globalized capitalism. The "corrosive power of modernity" (Garrard 239), which cannot be resisted because democratic protections have been supplanted by "neo-liberal exploitation by transnational corporations" (Spiegel 122), is finally overthrown in the novel when Crake unleashes a virus designed to destroy the human race. Salvaging what remains of the earth's biosphere, his "supreme act of bioterrorism" also serves to safeguard the "Crakers" or "Children of Crake," a transgenic humanoid species he has created to replace humanity (Glover 56).

Genetically comprised of a "variety of features from the animal kingdom" (55), the Crakers are examples of Donna Haraway's libratory image of the cyborg and "initially do seem to be a practical path to a utopian world based on some kind of ecological ethic" (54). However, as Jayne Glover also observes, "It is the confusion of boundaries which is partly what allows Crake to assume that the natural world—including its human inhabitants—is part of an enormous laboratory which he has the right to control" (53). As a member of an elite corporate-scientist class living within protected Compounds, Crake's lack of ethical considerations about "instrumentalist meddling with nature" is problematized by the financial gains which motivate his class's scientific research (53). That is, each of the numerous transgenic species that are loosed onto the world by these scientists—like rakunks, wolvogs, spoat/giders, snats, bobkittens, and pigoons—was initially developed by for-profit corporate labs in a globalized market economy. As in Roberts, Seton, Mowat, and Engel, then, knowledge itself is tainted in *Oryx and Crake* when it participates in commodity exchange. Moreover, the way in which the species boundary remains wrenched open and transgenic species are left to run

amok in *Oryx and Crake* presents the obverse of Mowat's conservationist rhetorical strategy in *Never Cry Wolf*: rather than closing this boundary to exclude the reader from "a virtual or utopian possibility" of indigenization (Johnson 348), Atwood's novel presents the dystopian prospect of exogenization as the looming threat of global flows of capital. That is, even as the continuing encroachment and intensification of commodity-exchange relations endangers ecosystems worldwide, it also jeopardizes the freedom that nature represents to the settler subject-position as *hors* the commodification and reification of modernity.

The novel's historical context of prolonged environmental crisis, resulting especially from anthropogenic climate change, indicates the degree to which the wilderness has become subjugated by modernity. Atwood's version of the future thus represents the next step in a teleology of escalating animal endangerment that she observes in *Survival*, with earlier wild animal narratives detailing the death of individual animals and later narratives detailing "the death of a species" (76). As Greg Garrard observes of the future in the novel, "Atwood's scenario for North America before the plague is one in which [. . .] 'nature' has already ended [. . .]" (238). The effects of global warming are total: "the coastal aquifers turned salty and the northern permafrost melted and the vast tundra bubbled with methane, and the drought in the midcontinental plains regions went on and on, and the Asian steppes turned to sand dunes [. . .]" (24). As well, because of the numerous transgenic animal and plant species developed by humans, the narrator observes, "The whole world is now one vast uncontrolled experiment—the way

it always was, Crake would have said—and the doctrine of unintended consequences is in full spate" (Atwood *Oryx* 228).

In addition to these exogenous species that threaten to "spread, make inroads, choke out the native plants" (228), there is a "long, long list" of wild animals that have been forced into extinction (344).[3] Indeed, similar to the online computer game "Blood and Roses" (in which players trade in human achievements and atrocities as commodities), Crake and Jimmy play "Extinctathon," "an interactive biofreak masterlore game" in which players challenge each other to name "some bioform that had kakked out within the past fifty years" (80). "It helped," the narrator informs us, to consult a list maintained by the website of every extinct species, even though it is "a couple of hundred pages of fine print and filled with obscure bugs, weeds, and frogs nobody had ever heard of" (81). But such a representation of the extinction of species as an *inevitable* future outcome of our current misuse of the biosphere, "when read in their national-postcolonial context," as Brian Johnson observes of the works of Bodsworth and Mowat, "may in some cases evoke the indigenizing proleptic allegories of 'doomed races', or even [. . .] 'dead races' [. . .]" (339). That is, even though *Oryx and Crake* serves similarly "as a dire warning and an impetus to humanitarian intervention," the image of the wild animal unavoidably serves an indigenizing function within "the proleptic elegies of conservation discourse" (339).[4]

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[3] I read these transgenic species as exogenous because of their origins within the Compounds, their status as commodities developed by corporations, and the threat they pose to "native" species.

[4] The novel's intention to warn the reader of what lies ahead is evident in the first of its two epigraphs, taken from Jonathan Swift's *Gulliver's Travels*: "[. . .] because my principal design / was to inform you, and not to amuse you" (n. pag.).

The bioterrorist group that monitors the Extinctathon website, MaddAddam, reappears later in the novel when Jimmy learns that Crake has recruited most of them to work on his Paradice Project. "They're the splice geniuses," Crake tells Jimmy, who "were pulling those capers, the asphalt-eating microbes, the outbreak of neon-coloured herpes simplex on the west coast, the ChickieNob wasps and so on" (298). Despite being "anti-Compound" (299), however, this resistance group is as instrumentalist as its adversary Compound scientists, splicing genetic material as a means of destroying "the whole system" with its own technology (217). The extent to which modernity has penetrated the natural world so powerfully is such that MaddAddam must paradoxically use hyper-modern technologies to resist its effects. Their approach serves as a foil to that of the God's Gardeners—a back-to-nature, antimodernist cult that goes on to serve as the focus of *The Year of the Flood*[5]—and represents the sole example of efficacious political resistance, evident in that Crake actively recruits them. Nevertheless, MaddAddam remains ethically culpable for the environmental effects of routinely crossing the species boundary, even if we are to interpret that their ends justify the means. Quite fittingly, then, its members sequestered by Crake are killed by his virus just like the Compound scientists and other agents of the social order responsible for commodifying nature that the settler subject-position requires to be unspoiled.

Perhaps the most troubling boundary crossing in the novel involves the pigoons Jimmy's father helps create as a "genographer" at the OrganInc Farms Compound (22).

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[5] In *The Year of the Flood*, members of the God's Gardeners survive the plague that their religion has prophesized as "the waterless flood," and the novel ends with several of them starting anew as Pioneers of sorts. As such, these characters correspond closely to the figure of the settler, whose claim to the land is legitimized by its ethical relationship to the land and wildlife.

These animals, formally *sus multiorganifer*, were designed "to grow an assortment of foolproof human-tissue organs in a transgenic knockout pig host—organs that would transplant smoothly and avoid rejection, but would also be able to fend off attacks by opportunistic microbes and viruses, of which there were more strains every year" (22). The narrator continues, "now they were perfecting a pigoon that could grow five or six kidneys at a time. Such a host animal could be reaped of its extra kidneys; then, rather than being destroyed, it could keep on living and grow more organs [. . .]" (22-23). The text initially casts aspersions on the human/animal kinship of transgenic hybridity by using the trope of cannibalism: despite OrganInc's official claim that "none of the defunct pigoons ended up as bacon and sausages [because] no one would want to eat an animal whose cells might be identical with at least some of their own" (23-24), the workers at the Compound cannot help but notice "how often back bacon and ham sandwiches and pork pies turned up on the staff café menu" (24). When Jimmy's father then announces the success of his "neuro-regeneration project," in which his team is able to "have genuine human neo-cortex tissue growing in a pigoon" (56), Jimmy's mother protests and leaves him and Jimmy to enter the political underground. She responds to her husband's professional enthusiasm by stating derisively, "That's all we need [. . .]. More people with the brains of pigs. Don't we have enough of those already?" (56). Her objection to his work purposely confuses the direction of its boundary crossing, and by doing so intertextually references *The Odyssey*, when the sorceress Circe transforms Odysseus' men into pigs. Far from seeing his father's work as an important contribution to the common good, Jimmy's mother fittingly likens it to black magic: "What you're

doing—this pig brain thing. You're interfering with the building blocks of life. It's immoral. It's . . . sacrilegious" (57). At the very least, the pigoons represent a considerable danger to Jimmy after Crake's virus wipes out the human population, and the text raises the spectre of cannibalism again to reiterate the threat exogenous modernity presents to the settler subject-position:

> Those beasts are clever enough to fake a retreat, then lurk around the next corner. They'd bowl him over, trample him, rip him open, munch up his organs first. He knows their tastes. A brainy and omnivorous animal, the pigoon. Some of them may even have human neocortex tissue growing in their crafty, wicked heads. (235)

Their craftiness, wickedness, and penchant for cannibalism—all aspects of the pigoon's dynamic consciousness—are characteristics that can nevertheless be traced back to the labs and lunchrooms of Jimmy's father and his team at OrganInc. Moreover, such monstrous transgenic hybridity presents the opposite of the ideal of indigenized settler subjectivity: degenerated atavistically into the body of an animal, this "human neocortex tissue" is also exogenized by both the pigoon's basis as a commodity and the old world origins of "the pig host" itself.[6]

Because transgenic techno-science is presented as monstrous in the text, *Oryx and Crake* is often read as an intertext of Mary Shelley's *Frankenstein* (1818). For instance, Glover characterizes Atwood's novel as "a postmodern remaking of the Frankenstein story" (52), and Mark McCutcheon observes that "Atwood's plot [. . .] adapts both

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[6] Imagine how differently such an exogene/wild-animal hybrid would signify if it had begun as a beaver or bald eagle!

Frankenstein and *The Last Man*, Shelley's 1826 novel about the world of 2097 [. . .]" ("Medium" 217). In a similar vein, Giuseppina Botta contends that "Crake embodies the Faustian myth, the representation of an insatiable desire both for knowledge and for possession [. . .]" (249). In either intertextual case, the nature of that knowledge—as dangerous, hyper-modern, and exogenous—gestures to the dystopian aspect of the novel most pertinent to settler subjectivity: in the absence of the indigenizing bildung of woodcraft or conservationism for the boy in an SF future, he remains into adulthood the exogene of a globalized social order. That Crake wishes to use the same techno-scientific knowledge of a corrupt system to bring it down thus positions him, in antimodern terms, as a tragic hero. Unaware that he is hopelessly corrupted by exogenous modernity, he cannot foresee that the fruits of his instrumentalist labours carry the same taint.

Perhaps in order to assert that Crake is a villain outright for committing mass murder, many critics limit themselves to "read[ing] Crake through the 'mad scientist' archetype" (Spiegel 120). Such a view is too limited, however, since, in spite of his emotional detachment,[7] Crake's actions are not only deliberate, but also rationally motivated by revenge. When Jimmy visits Crake at the Watson-Crick Institute, Crake tells him that his father was murdered by the Compound he had worked for. "He was going to do some whistle-blowing," Crake says, because HelthWyzer had for years been creating new diseases and spreading them in their vitamin pills (Atwood *Oryx* 212). "That's how come they pushed him off a bridge," he calmly tells Jimmy (211). Quite

[7] Michael Spiegel makes a compelling argument that, rather than "evidence of an author's waning storytelling skills" (120), as some critics have implied with their complaints of "cardboardy" characterization in *Oryx and Crake* (119), the emotional detachment of many of Atwood's characters is more reflective of the neomedievalism of the novel's post-national context, in which "shouldering multiple loyalties and identities" might require, in Jamesonian terms, "embracing 'the waning of affect'" (128).

rationally then, since neither secret was ever exposed, Crake adapts the same distribution model for the virus he engineers to bring down this immoral system, and the same disposal method for the MaddAddam scientists he detains who fail to cooperate. Indeed, as Hannes Bergthaller also observes, "it is quite clear that Crake, underneath his veneer of cynical aloofness, nourishes a deep disgust of the world he grows up in, and that he is motivated not by greed but by a genuine desire to change it" (735). Crake's awareness of the risks involved are apparent in the name he gives his Paradice Project at the RejoovenEsense Compound that hires him after his graduation from Watson-Crick. While this complex that houses the Crakers might be "a living space which reminds one of the Bible's Earthly Paradise, full of all kinds of vegetation, and his inhabitants really recall Adam and Eve" (Botta 251), *Paradice* also very clearly puns on "pair of dice," the implication being that Crake has clearly understood his whole project as a hazardous gamble.

Of course, Crake's plan to murder humanity *in toto* and replace it with the Crakers goes beyond his simple desire to bring down the system—a far less extreme act of bioterrorism could have devastating enough effects on the globalized modernity of the novel, which is presented as both precarious and tentative. As Crake himself claims, if "civilization as we know it gets destroyed [. . .] it could never be rebuilt" (Atwood *Oryx* 223). He explains to Jimmy that this is "Because all the available surface metals have already been mined" and even with the "metals farther down, [. . .] the advanced technology we need for extracting those would have been obliterated" (223). "It's not like the wheel," he adds, "it's too complex now. Suppose the instructions survived, suppose

there were any people left with the knowledge to read them. Those people would be few and far between, and they wouldn't have the tools" (223). So what remains unexplained in the text is why Crake feels it necessary to replace humanity at all once he wipes it out. Marketed to his corporate bosses as a transeugenic method of bioengineering children, Crake's Paradice Project actually intends to replace humanity with the transgenic hybrid creatures Crake promotes merely as "floor models" (305). The utopian aspect of the Crakers is that they cannot modernize since they biologically lack the complexities of the "ancient primate brain," described by the narrator as its "destructive features, the features responsible for the world's current illnesses" (305). Designed to live in closer harmony with their environment and one other, they are vegans who do not require territory to hunt or farm; "lack the neural complexes" that would create social hierarchies (305); are able to reproduce only while in oestrus, so "Their sexuality [is] not a constant torment to them" (305); and are "programmed to drop dead at age thirty" (303). Although they might thus reflect "many of the principles familiar to us through ecological philosophy" (Glover 59), the Crakers as such also appeal to indigenizing fantasies of the ultimate merging of the settler subject-position with nature to overcome its status as interloper and to sanction finally its possession of the land. Furthermore, the Crakers also represent—like that of Frankenstein and Faustus—Crake's intellectual vanity. Crake's utopian vision of populating the earth with a humanoid species of his own creation thus further demonstrates the inadequacy of considering him simply as an archetypical "mad scientist." This is not to say that such figures cannot be vain—indeed, they often are—rather, it is the complexity of his desire to know the mysteries of nature and impose his

own pattern onto the landscape that makes Crake more closely akin to the figure of the boy, albeit one who is tragically de-authenticated and de-authorized by his exogeneity.

In turn, the Crakers' indeterminable status in the novel may be resolved by considering them as the image of the wild animal *and* as a figure of the human. To clarify, this is not to say that the image of the wild animal in this case serves as a metaphor for the human; rather, their transgenic hybridity permits them to signify chimerically as both. In terms of their animality, the Crakers, like the pigoons, represent a hazardous bridge between the human self and animal Other, if for no other reason than that they seem to be better fitted for survival than humans in a post-natural environment. Their animal traits resulting from numerous gene splices gives them a competitive advantage over humans: they have luminescent green eyes, they purr over wounds, they produce caecotrophs to digest cellulose, they reproduce only when the women are in oestrus, and the men mark their territory twice daily with chemically enhanced urine that mimics that of larger predators. However, the text ensures that the Crakers do not signify as malevolent by emphasizing an essential humanity that cannot be "edited out" of their makeup (Atwood *Oryx* 311). Unlike the pigoons, whose tusks atavistically reappear as "they [are] reverting to type now they'd gone feral, a fast-forward process considering their rapid-maturity genes" (38), the Crakers dream and sing because "Crake hadn't been able to eliminate dreams. *We're hard-wired for dreams*, he said. He couldn't get rid of the singing either. *We're hard-wired for singing*. Singing and dreams were entwined" (352).

Thus entwined, the connection between humanity and the Crakers paradoxically allows for them to maintain a dynamic consciousness like that of the image of the wild animal. It is clear throughout the novel, for instance, that the Crakers are developing a religion centering around their origins in Oryx and Crake, a result that apparently signals a limit to Crake's techno-science:

> Crake thought he'd done away with all that, eliminated what he called the G-spot in the brain. *God is a cluster of neurons*, he'd maintained. It had been a difficult problem, though: take out too much in that area and you got a zombie or a psychopath. But these people are neither. (157)

By the close of the novel, it is certain that Crake's intention to remove a number of troublesome human traits has failed since the Crakers have built an effigy of Jimmy and participate in a musical ritual to ensure his safe return to them. The narrator suggests that this development is the tip of a very large iceberg:

> *Watch out for art*, Crake used to say. *As soon as they start doing art, we're in trouble.* Symbolic thinking of any kind would signal downfall, in Crake's view. Next they'd be inventing idols, and funerals, and grave goods, and the afterlife, and sin, and Linear B, and kings, and then slavery and war. (361)

Despite Crake's intention that they will be entirely non-violent and predictable, their residual humanity is flourishing as a series of unintended consequences with dangerous potential. The text, furthermore, declines to elucidate any of the details of the Crakers' imaginative awakening or their interiority. Jimmy "longs to question them—who first had

the idea of making a reasonable facsimile of him [. . .] out of a jar lid and a mop? But that will have to wait" (361).

Their transgenic hybridity also leaves Jimmy at an ontological loss when he attempts to frame his interactions with them. He considers his relation to the Crakers as a colonial one, continuing a line of thinking from the very start of the novel in which he imagines the recommendations made in "a book, some obsolete, ponderous directive written in aid of European colonials running plantations of one kind or another" (4). Having led them safely from the RejoovenEsense Compound to the seashore, as per Crake's request, Jimmy copes with his frustration by turning once again to colonial discourse:

> *When dealing with indigenous peoples*, says the book in his head—a more modern book this time, late twentieth century, the voice a confident female's—*you must attempt to respect their traditions and confine your explanations to simple concepts that can be understood within the contexts of their belief systems.* Some earnest aid worker in a khaki jungle outfit, with netting under the arms and a hundred pockets. Condescending self-righteous cow, thinks she's got all the answers. He'd known girls like that at college. If she were here she'd need a whole new take on *indigenous*. (97)

His misogyny aside, Jimmy makes the pertinent observation that the collapse of humanity and introduction of the Crakers has indeed overturned previous conceptions and relations of identity. However, the Crakers still adhere to the basic schema of human figures in the

wild animal narrative even if the rules of the game have changed. Although the Crakers may seem poised for indigenization in the sense that they have replaced the human population and "are far better adapted to this new world" than Jimmy (Bergthaller 734), such indigeneity is de-authenticated *ab initio* by their transgenic origins and the novel's function as cautionary tale. Jimmy's unenviable role as woodsman to them further suggests that despite their superior biological suitability they lack sufficient knowledge to survive unaided beyond their old world context of Crake's "bubble-dome" (Atwood *Oryx* 283).[8] Indeed, their monstrous hybridity, as a kind of miscegenation, more closely aligns them to the figure of the Métis in Seton's work. That is, even though they may seem to be bio-technological marvels, they nevertheless embody the negative aspects of both sides of their hybridity: their humanity is tainted by the exogenous modernity of their design, and their animality nevertheless constitutes an atavistic degeneration in relation to their human genetic framework.

Moreover, as the text repeatedly notes of their incredible beauty as the result of "Crake's aesthetic" (8), the Crakers also symbolize the moral degeneracy of their exogenous creator himself. Their very design embodies any number of Crake's ideological and egotistical assumptions, and his desire to arrange and display a vision of

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[8] Jimmy's position is unenviable not only because he has not chosen it for himself, but also because it makes him "painfully aware of his own atavism" (Bergthaller 734). Greg Garrard similarly observes that Jimmy "leads the genetically modified Crakers in their lethal transgenic-infested environment like some stinking, starving, over-sexed Moses, a Yahoo left in charge of a new race of dreadfully sensible Houynhmns" (238). Referring to Jimmy, the title of the third section of chapter thirteen of the novel is "Remnant." As the last of a dying race, he serves as an atavistic historical supplement: the narrator explains, "On some non-conscious level [he] must serve as a reminder to [the Crakers], and not a pleasant one: he's what they may have been once. *I'm your past*, he might intone. *I'm your ancestor, come from the land of the dead. Now I'm lost, I can't get back, I'm stranded here, I'm all alone. Let me in!*" (Atwood *Oryx* 106). However, although the novel's use of extinction discourse can be read as the trope of the dying Indian being creatively applied to a non-indigene, it nevertheless also indicates the semiotic limits of the postcolonial episteme.

the world and his knowledge of it. As such, Crake can be viewed as a kind of taxidermist, the Crakers as living taxidermic mounts, and *Oryx and Crake* as a taxidermic diorama, all of which illustrates how taxidermy as a "sign system demonstrates an uncanny ability to reproduce itself in new eras, revivifying colonial and racist discourses through malleable semiotic codes that find fresh ways to reinforce fantasies of colonial mastery in the current era" (Wakeham 6). That is, despite that the novel is set in an SF future in which its transgenic species have no real-world referents, *Oryx and Crake* is nevertheless just as limited as Canadian realistic works by a colonial epistemic framework to represent human-animal interactions. In its bid to warn the reader of a looming dark age ahead, it projects its fear of the demise of settler subjectivity in the face of globalization onto images of monstrous animal Others in order to valorize human identities impervious to degeneration and change.[9] Whereas the "colonial logic" of such dioramic displays usually positions the indigene and the wild animal in close proximity in order to "dramatiz[e] a white supremacist narrative of evolution that fetishizes the supposed lost objects of primitive wilderness" (5), the SF future of *Oryx and Crake* permits a fantasy of indigenization in which the colonial mastery of nature is total and the "lost objects of primitive wilderness" are settler subjects overcome by exogenous modernity and supplanted techno-scientifically by monstrous exogeneity.

Although my reading of this novel runs counter to the political commitments Atwood has displayed for decades as a public intellectual, a text's epistemological assumptions cannot be avoided by any writer—or hidden from an analytical eye. Indeed,

[9] Such a reading also conforms to the basic thesis of Atwood's *Survival*: that wild animals represent human national subjects fearing being overrun by American power.

Oryx and Crake is well in part of a genre that Atwood, incidentally, was one of the first to identify, a tradition in which the image of the wild animal is so uniformly circumscribed by the settler episteme. As an ideological horizon in these texts, the image of the wild animal thus presents a site of the textualization of the ongoing dialectical history of humans and wild animals in North America. The contradiction presented by this image—that a necessarily unbridgeable wild animality is bridgeable to some—indicates an attempt on the part of a settler culture to reconcile its ambivalent relationship to appropriated land and the animal species that populate it.

Reading Things Differently

An understanding of the image of the wild animal as taxidermy presents an interpretive strategy for wild animal narratives in North America that calls attention to "the reality of the texts and their ideology, and of the ideology of the authors and their culture" (Goldie 5). Perhaps more importantly, however, the ideological distance implied by such an interpretation allows for a consideration of both contemporary human-animal relations in North America and how the image of the animal relates to a sense of self, "of the artifices we employ to gather a world around us" (Clifford 229). Although such a self-reflexive and biocentric prescription for the image of the wild animal risks becoming "a radical strategy for conserving an old text" (Sontag 6), it is neither possible nor desirable, *pace* Susan Sontag, to read wild animal narratives according to a perceived sense of authorial intent or historical context. As Clifford reminds us, "While the object systems of art and anthropology are institutionalized and powerful, they are not immutable. The

categories of the beautiful, the cultural, and the authentic have changed and are changing" (229). "Thus," he continues, "it is important to resist the tendency of collections to be self-sufficient, to suppress their own historical, economic, and political processes of production [. . .]. Ideally the history of its own collection and display should be a visible aspect of any exhibition" (229).

Indeed, such reflexivity has been widely incorporated into recent museum practice with regard to the exhibition of taxidermic dioramas. As Rachel Poliquin discusses in "The Matter and Meaning of Museum Taxidermy" (2008), at institutions such as the Natural History Museum in London and the Field Museum in Chicago taxidermic exhibits include self-reflexive signage that attempts a "historical bracketing of taxidermy" (125). The narratives conveyed by these signs establish both "past damage done to animals and their habitats and the abuses perpetrated by hunting and the exotic animal trade" and "The museum's acknowledgement of its own discomfort with its collecting history" (126). Moreover, as Poliquin observes, these narratives "undermin[e] the mimetic value of the animals [. . .] and through a barely veiled critique of past collecting practices, the signs suggest that what is on display is not so much nature but another era's vision and manipulation of nature" (126). "That is," she continues, "rather than attempting to enchant viewers by creating a mysteriously 'real' vision of nature, the signs call attention to the human forces which killed, skinned, remounted and brought these creatures into view and the inherent constructed perspective of that vision" (126). Although wild animal narratives already written cannot themselves be made self-reflexive, an interpretation predicated upon the image of the wild animal as taxidermic

sign—rather than metaphor or, as naïvely, referent—renders these works as taxidermic dioramas and offers a postcolonial insight on the dialectic of human-animal relations in North America.

Our connection to the wilderness and wildlife is part of a colonial inheritance that requires drastic transformation if the current environmental crisis is to be mitigated. Because of the continuing ideological role nature plays in Canada, the discourse of decolonization is not typically applied to considerations of North American wildlife. The general perception in Canada that Canadians are great stewards of the land in spite of a baleful *recent* history of environmental neglect speaks both to the myopia of settler nationalisms and to the urgency of our need to revolutionize "a legacy of untenable power structures in our societies" (Goldie 221). In my relatively short lifetime alone, I have witnessed a number of Canadian environmental disasters caused by our way of life and which our systems of governance could not prevent and which have met with inadequate public concern—among them the spectacular collapse of the cod fishery, the mining of the Alberta tar sands, and Canada's failure to meet the limits of atmospheric carbon dioxide emissions set out in the Kyoto Protocol. I imagine it ultimately seems too difficult to bite the hand that feeds you; our concern about the effects of our modernity on the environment seems necessarily limited by the immense comforts we enjoy because of it. But an awareness that our society is one of irresponsible domination and that our conceptualization of the wilderness is vain in its anthropocentrism might be a step to understanding ourselves beyond the limiting terms of progress and degeneration relative

to the exogenous, and rather as part of a larger world impoverished by the limits we imagine as the possible.

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