

**Carolyn Podruchny, “Werewolves and Windigos: Narratives of Cannibal Monsters in French Canadian Voyageur Oral Tradition,” *Ethnohistory* (in press, forthcoming 2003).**

While traveling around Lake Superior in the 1850s, German explorer Johann Georg Kohl met many retired and elderly French Canadian voyageurs and their Aboriginal wives and families. A constant theme in his discussions with them was privation. One old voyageur reflected that “In my utter misery, I have more than once roasted and eaten my mocassins.”<sup>1</sup>

Stories about starvation often led to stories about cannibals, such as that of a man who killed and ate his two wives and all his children in succession; another who turned on his friend; and a third who wandered about the forests like a hungry wolf, preying on unsuspecting humans.<sup>2</sup> Much as in the stories of werewolves in European and Euro-American communities, cannibals were frequently portrayed as humans transformed into monsters, terrorizing any that crossed their paths. Kohl reported that in 1854 on Île Royale, close to the north bank of Lake Superior, a “wild man” hunted humans, and was thought to be a windigo.<sup>3</sup> Windigos were specifically Algonquian monsters who ate human flesh and had hearts of ice.<sup>4</sup> Human beings could be transformed into windigos by witchcraft or famine cannibalism.<sup>5</sup> In one story told to Kohl,

A Canadian Voyageur, of the name of Le Riche, was once busy fishing near his hut. He had set one net, and was making another on the beach. All at once, when he looked up, he saw, to his terror, a strange woman, an old witch, une femme windigo, standing in the water near his net. She was taking out the fish he had just caught, and eating them raw. Le Riche, to his horror, took up his gun and killed her on the spot. Then his squaws ran out of the adjoining wigwam and shouted '[R]ish!' ... '[R]ish! cut her up at once, or else she'll come to life again, and we shall all fare ill.'<sup>6</sup>

What can we learn from these stories? On first glance it seems that the French Canadian voyageurs who chose to spend their lives in the *pays d'en haut* (literally translates as “the country up there”) adopted the cultural ways of their Algonquian wives and kin, which included a fear of windigos. Yet the stories reflect more complex cultural movement, a mingling of cosmologies, and oral technologies, distinct to French Canadian voyageurs. The cannibal monster stories that voyageurs told each other reveal many aspects of their lives and cosmology, such as starvation, mental illness, and metamorphosis. In addition, the French Canadian belief in werewolves (*loups garoux*) provided voyageurs with a framework to understand windigos in French Canadian terms, and in the narratives about cannibal monsters, the motifs of windigo and werewolf mingled. These points of cultural conjunction became a form of *métissage* outside of the practice of marriage and the birth of *métis* generations.

French Canadian voyageurs came from an oral world where systems of knowledge and meaning were shared through stories and songs. When French peasants crossed the Atlantic to settle in the St. Lawrence valley starting in the first quarter of the seventeenth century, they brought a rich oral tradition.<sup>7</sup> This oral tradition evolved among the peasants, called *habitants*, in Canada and came to reflect a distinct French Canadian identity.<sup>8</sup> When habitant families could not comfortably subsist on their crops, their sons joined the fur trade as indentured servants to raise money for the household. These voyageurs traveled great distances into the interior of North America, transporting furs and goods between Montreal and far-flung posts, and trading with many different groups of Aboriginal peoples. While working in the *pays d'en haut*, voyageurs’ identities became shaped by their French Canadian roots, their Aboriginal neighbors, and the circumstances of their workplace. From about the 1720s to the 1860s, numbers of voyageurs grew to a few thousand at any one time. Part of this labor-force was hired to work

year-round, staffing company posts and trading with Aboriginal peoples. The group of all-male sojourners were labeled as “travelers” because they were constantly in motion, leaving and entering the service, being posted to different forts, and transporting trade goods over vast distances. Only through ritual and oral performance could voyageurs maintain their knowledge base and identity, teaching novices and commemorating those that died or left the service.<sup>9</sup>

During their travels voyageurs encountered many oral cultures in which people used means other than inscribed symbols to preserve and share knowledge. Voyageurs were influenced by Aboriginal oral traditions primarily when they learned parts of Aboriginal languages and cultural systems. Voyageurs associated closely with Algonquian-speaking peoples. These included Montagnais (Innu) and Naskapis who lived north of the St. Lawrence valley; Ojibwes who lived along the most traveled fur trade routes; Ottawas, Menominees, Foxes, Sauks, and Potawatomis living in the southern part of the Great Lakes basin; and Crees living in the woodlands to the north.<sup>10</sup> Farther north they met subarctic and arctic groups (Dene and Inuit), and to the south they encountered Siouian-speaking peoples, such as Assiniboines and Lakotas.

Stories and songs dominated voyageurs’ discourse. When clerk George Nelson first entered the fur trade in the early 1800s, he reported that voyageurs told “legends, stories & tales of adventures, accidents & miracles” about most aspects of fur trade work, especially transporting ladings through difficult and dangerous rapids and portages.<sup>11</sup> According to Kohl, voyageurs delighted in stories and songs as much as Ojibwes.<sup>12</sup> Retired fur trader Paul H. Beaulieu reminisced that “winter evenings were spent in forming plans of various and different trips to be made, talking of old Supernatural beliefs, how to manage in the divers situations that a voyageur may be placed.”<sup>13</sup> Bruce White has explored one type of tale that appeared often in fur

trade documents: a lone fur trader confronted by a large group of Aboriginal people intending to steal his provisions scares them off by threatening to explode a keg of gun powder. White contends that the “fear of pillaging” motif warned traders to be fair and honest in their dealings with Aboriginal people.<sup>14</sup>

The most difficult methodological challenge in writing about the oral tradition of voyageurs is evidence. Voyageur stories and songs are difficult to find mainly because their culture and oral tradition has not survived to the present day. Of course this is also the case for most Aboriginal oral traditions in North America, but unfortunately, unlike many Aboriginal groups, voyageurs did not become a favorite subject of early anthropologists, such as Franz Boas and his students, or the subject of urgent ethnology programs.<sup>15</sup> The occupation began to decline in the 1820s, and disappeared by 1900. Most of the men returned to the St. Lawrence valley or settled in métis communities around the Great Lakes, in the Red River colony, and along fur trade canoe routes. Voyageurs themselves produced virtually no written accounts. Only distorted fragments of oral documents have survived in the writings of the primarily British fur trade officers and other European and American explorers passing through the fur trade world. Some, like Kohl, took a great interest in voyageurs and recorded long excerpts of their speech. Others took only a brief interest, mentioning clues in passing. Although these fragments can help to uncover patterns and illuminate a larger cultural context, they have many layers of interpretation, depending on how they were embedded in the written text. They were colored by class bias, translated from their original language, and torn from their context of performance. Some of the stories can be found in Algonquian and métis oral traditions, translated and recorded both recently and in the distant past. These fragmented remains are the only accessible clues to voyageur oral tradition.

This paper will sketch out patterns in stories about cannibal monsters. Voyager renditions of monster stories were a cultural product that both reflected and constructed their beliefs and values. Narratives that contained the motif of cannibal monsters represented many themes in voyageur culture and cosmology. I will look at privation in voyageurs' jobs, starvation and starvation cannibalism, the boundaries between humans and animals, mental illness, fascination with the supernatural, dreaming, and the process of metamorphosis. Cannibal monster stories provided a discourse in which voyageurs could express the physical privations caused by their extensive travels across difficult terrain and their psychological stress when encountering so many new and different Aboriginal worlds. The stories represent issues that were central in voyageurs' experiences.

Stories about cannibal monsters provided an intriguing point of cultural conjunction between French Canadians and Algonquian-speakers. Both cannibalism and monsters were abiding discourses in most Aboriginal and European cultures, and had a range of symbolic associations that were both sacred and secular. In *The Anthropology of Cannibalism*, Laurence R. Goldman aptly conjectures that every culture's consciousness of cannibalism blurs the boundaries between the historical and the fabled.<sup>16</sup> A variety of cannibal monsters existed in both Aboriginal and European imaginations. Among Algonquian-speakers, Skeletons (*Pākahks* or *Pākahkos*) were also human victims of starvation.<sup>17</sup> Louis Bird, a Cree hunter from Peawanuck on the southwest coast of Hudson Bay, has been collecting stories from his region for over thirty years.<sup>18</sup> In his rich archive, frightening and mysterious tales of great balls of fire and little people abound, but windigos dominate the genre of peril.<sup>19</sup> In Europe, vampires were only one of many widely feared monstrous races that had a great and enduring impact on the European literary and folkloric imagination. Frank Lestringant asserts that mythological creatures, such as

Cynocephali (dog-headed cannibals) and Cyclops, “passed almost without alteration from Pliny and Solinus to St Augustine and thence into Isidore of Seville’s *Etymologiae*. ... Isidore’s list of monstrous races continues with the Blemmyes, the Panoti (‘all-ears’), the Artabites, the Satyres and cloven-footed Faunes, the Sciopodes, the Antipodes, the light-footed Hippopodes, the legendarily long-lived Macrobes and the Pygmies... .”<sup>20</sup> Europeans were also influenced by cannibalistic images woven into the descriptions of the Americas by travel writers such as Christopher Columbus, André Thevet, Jean de Léry, and Jean de Brébeuf, and these writers relied upon the existing European categorizations of cannibals.<sup>21</sup> In his extensive study of European literary representations of cannibals, Lestringant strangely neglects werewolves, even though he dwells on cannibals’ canine etymology.<sup>22</sup> But, what he says about monstrous races is applicable to werewolves: monstrous races assumed a primordial role in European literature, playing “both foil and bogeyman, by turns as immovable enemy and – more frightening still – an alter ego.”<sup>23</sup>

Monstrous races were certainly a dominant theme in French Canadian folklore, but stories about humans turning into cannibals most often concern werewolves.<sup>24</sup> It would be interesting to explore the questions of whether class influenced the popularity of certain tales, and whether colonists told tales of wild beasts because they were preoccupied with the “wilderness” surrounding them, but these questions are beyond the scope of this article. Here I focus specifically on stories about windigos and werewolves for two reasons. Voyageurs’ tales of cannibal monsters most closely connect to stories about werewolves, and second, there was a genuine cultural mingling in the meeting of these two sets of stories. Werewolf stories provided a framework for voyageurs to understand windigos.

Werewolves have a long history in European folk cultures. The word werewolf appears in published sources as early as eleventh century, but Charlotte F. Otten suggests that clear roots are found in classical times and Biblical Scriptures, such as Christ's Sermon on the Mount: "Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves" (Matt. 7: 15, AV); and in Paul's address to the Ephesians: "For I know this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock" (Acts 20:21 AV). From very early times the condition of a human becoming a wolf was connected with Satan, and the term werewolf became associated with evil and crime. In contrast, the term lycanthrope, which emerged in the early modern period, referred to humans cum wolves as a medical condition.<sup>25</sup> Both men and women could be afflicted either by witchcraft or other werewolves. On the nights of the full moon, the afflicted would transform from humans into wolves or wolf-headed beasts. With supernatural power they hunted for meat, including human meat. When the night was over, they changed back to their human forms. Certainly wolf attacks on domestic animals and children constituted significant material concerns, but the fear of wolves always loomed large in fantasy. Medieval literatures of entertainment, including songs and stories, contained extensive collections of marvels, highlighting the motif of fluidity and transformation. Lycanthropy, or the change of men into wolves, was a favorite. Werewolves were most often portrayed as evil monsters. According to historian Caroline Walker Bynum, however, during the twelfth century a "werewolf renaissance" led people to sympathize with the monsters, and see them as victims of the evil magic of others.<sup>26</sup> Throughout European history, lycanthropy was characterized by five conditions. The first was an altered state of consciousness, such as the transformation into the fur, voice, and posture of a wolf. Second was the alienation from self and from human society; werewolves frequented cemeteries, woods, and isolated areas.

The third was acute physiological stress and anxiety. The fourth was a taste for bestial compulsions, such as wolvis sexual positions, and an appetite for raw flesh. The fifth was an obsession with the demonic, such as the evil eye, invasion of the body by the devil, and Satanism.<sup>27</sup>

These stories traveled with immigrants to the New World, and became a part of the oral tradition of French Canadian habitants in the St. Lawrence valley. The *loup-garou* was connected with evil spirits, as those who were not diligent and faithful Catholics were thought to be susceptible to the travesty of transformation.<sup>28</sup> Voyageurs brought these stories of monsters and metamorphosis with them into the interior of the continent. Perhaps werewolf stories became popular among voyageurs because wolves were thought to be more numerous in the *pays d'en haut* than in the dense settlements along the St. Lawrence. A general fear of wolves was widespread. Bourgeois<sup>29</sup> Alexander Henry the Younger commented one November night in 1800 that his French Canadian servants became very afraid of troublesome wolves that ceaselessly howled and tried to enter the tent. The Canadians believed the wolves to be mad.<sup>30</sup> One clerk with a particularly vivid imagination, George Nelson, was haunted by the fear of “man-wol[ves],” believing that because so many people had been attacked by the monsters, he could not avoid that fate.<sup>31</sup>

Perhaps werewolf stories remained popular among voyageurs living for long periods of time in the northwest precisely because they were similar to windigo stories. Windigos have a long history among Algonquian-speaking peoples in North America. The term windigo referred to the singular evil spirit, as well as to mortal monsters transformed from humans. A person could be turned into a windigo through possession, witchcraft or through extreme starvation, and the condition was usually irreversible. Some powerful medicine men could transform themselves

into windigos for short periods of time. Others could become windigos through misbehavior, such as gluttony or excessive fasting in preparation for visions.<sup>32</sup> The new windigos would be subject to fits of depression and hallucination, viewing other people as sources of food. Once a victim tasted human flesh, they gained an insatiable appetite for it, acquired superhuman physical and spiritual strength, developed a heart of ice, and incessantly hunted humans. Many scholars have defined a “windigo psychosis” as a mental disorder that is linked to depression, especially during times when the hunt was bad, or animal numbers began diminishing during the fur trade.<sup>33</sup> Others have argued that it was the result of a physiologic disorder, and that fatty meat could be a cure.<sup>34</sup> Richard Preston suggests that windigos are the most frightening monster in Algonquian cultures, and can be considered an Algonquian equivalent of the Christian Satan.<sup>35</sup> Preston further complicates windigos by arguing that they may not necessarily be cannibals, and in fact, windigos represent transformation into the domain of mythic persons.<sup>36</sup> The etymology of “windigo” has connections to “owl.” The descendant terms of “wiintikoowa” denote either monsters (in the languages of Cree Montagnais and Ojibwe, located in northern regions) or owls (in the languages of Fox, Sauk, Kickapoo, Miami and Illinois, located around the Great Lakes).<sup>37</sup> In Plains Cree culture owls are bad omens.<sup>38</sup> Robert Brightman explains that in most Algonquian cultures, owl calls prefigure death; owls, like windigos, are formidable predators; and that the staring of an owl is similar to the impassive staring of a windigo.”<sup>39</sup>

Windigos were culturally specific, occurring only among Algonquian-speakers in northern North America. Beings like windigos, however, could be found among most northern Aboriginal groups, such as the Wechuge among Beavers, man-eaters among Kwakiutls, cannibals among Tsimshians, giants among Ho-Chunks, and human-eating ghosts among Tuscaroras.<sup>40</sup> Comparisons could be extended southwards to Stoneclads among Cherokees.<sup>41</sup>

These figures were social outcasts, living outside of human communities. Frequently they did not eat their food, and sometimes they were cannibals. These “bogyman for adults” became a way to scare adults into continuing to participate in human society and following social rules to ensure their safety.

Windigos and werewolves were clearly different social phenomena. Windigos were defined primarily by cannibalistic urges, while werewolves were said to crave animals as much as humans. Werewolves were characterized mainly by physical traits, while windigos were characterized more by their behavior (notwithstanding their hearts of ice and occasional gigantic stature). Unlike werewolves, windigos rarely returned to their original human state. Yet, stories of werewolves and windigos contained the themes of transformation, magic and cannibalism. Both windigos and werewolves were distinguished from other phantoms, monsters and evil-doing because they involved a transformation (and consumption) of human flesh. Beliefs in each monster ranged from metempsychosis, that of a human soul trapped in an alien body, to a genuine metamorphosis, or “transformation of substance.” As early as 1695, in one French dictionary of an Algonquian language (Bonaventure Fabvre’s Montagnais dictionary), the term for windigo was glossed as “loups garoux” (werewolves).<sup>42</sup> These similarities became a point of cultural conjunction for Algonquian-speakers and Europeans.

European observers were clearly influenced by concepts of savagism and wildness among people they perceived to be primitive. Cannibalism and western imperialism have been inextricably linked in western writing, as cannibalism became a defining characteristic of supposedly uncivilized non-Europeans, and a lens through which to view indigenous peoples.<sup>43</sup>

In *The Anthropology of Cannibalism*, Goldman explains that:

Michel de Montaigne's Renaissance *essai* "Of Cannibals" has long been regarded within anthropology as a *locus classicus* of how in the representation of otherness, and most particularly the "exotic," we need to decenter ourselves from our own culturally shaped morality. ... Cannibalism is here, as it always has been, a quintessential symbol of alterity, an entrenched metaphor of cultural xenophobia.<sup>44</sup>

Euro-American descriptions of the "animal-ness" and "monstrousness" of Aboriginal peoples have been extensively documented by historians, anthropologists and literary critics.<sup>45</sup> But scholars have debated the forms of transcultural representation. In an anthropological reading of Sir Walter Raleigh's *The Discoverie of the Large, Rich, And Bewtiful Empyre of Guiana*, Neil Whitehead asserts that colonial encounters could produce symbiotic, mimetic and negotiated meanings. Defining mimesis as "the active attempt to seek convergences in meanings and the conscious incorporation of symbolic similarities in cultural repertoire," Whitehead argues that recognitions of commonalities across cultures were frequently produced in writings about "monstrosities and marvels."<sup>46</sup> This may be the pattern with windigos and werewolves.

Voyageurs could access cultural similarities of Algonquian-speaking peoples through monster stories. In this case of cross cultural encounter between French Canadian indentured servants in the fur trade and the Algonquian-speaking communities with whom they traded, cannibalism was not a symbol of alterity, but rather one of sameness.

Studies of colonial writings of difference generally neglect class and social orders among Europeans. Did colonial officials, missionaries, merchants, and ethnographers, men with power and privilege, hold the same views as "voiceless" Euro-Americans, such as voyageurs? As indentured servants, voyageurs were legally and culturally bound to obey their paternalistic masters, and did not directly participate in the intellectual world of the European *litterati*.<sup>47</sup> Yet,

their cerebral oral traditions intersected with higher orders of monstrous imaginings. Some voyageurs may have told windigo stories because they thought of Aboriginal people as “man-beasts,” but the longer voyageurs lived among Aboriginal peoples, the more they recognized Aboriginal peoples’ “human-ness” and came to be influenced by their cultural beliefs. Stories of cannibal monsters more often expressed the blurring of boundaries between animals and humans than they portrayed alien peoples as beasts. Most Algonquian thought clearly distinguished animals from humans, and recognized that each species had a distinct character and form of community. In the mythic past humans and animals could communicate with ease, but in the contemporary world, communication between animals and humans has been hampered. In Algonquian oral tradition, metamorphosis between humans and animals occurred often. Some myths asserted that beavers and bears cohabited and had children with humans, and their animal descendants recognized a human ancestry.<sup>48</sup>

Stories about cannibal monsters could represent a literal as well as a figurative mixing of motifs between voyageurs and Aboriginal peoples. In voyageur stories, both Euro-Americans and Aboriginal peoples could turn into cannibal monsters. Euro-Americans could also be victims of windigos. In the early 1840s, British scientist and surveyor John Henry Lefroy recorded in a “country legend” that two Scottish bourgeois in the Athabasca district were attacked and devoured by some starving Aboriginal women, who had previously murdered their husbands and children in the same way.<sup>49</sup> Because these windigos were Aboriginal, this story could be interpreted as an example of Europeans demonizing Aboriginal people as the other, yet the more interesting point is that Europeans could fall victim to Aboriginal classifications of demons. Fear, murder, magic and transformation could cross cultures, and the stories provided a forum for a shared dialogue on starvation.

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Voyageurs' jobs were unquestionably difficult, requiring great physical exertion and endurance in dangerous circumstances. Shortages of food, damaged canoes, illnesses and injuries made their difficult jobs even harder. Stories of particularly trying circumstances helped voyageurs learn about potential dangers, prepare for the worst, and put their misery into a larger perspective.

While at Fort Astoria in January 1812, Gabriel Franchère related a story of hardships suffered by two canoes of Euro-American traders, including the bourgeois Donald McKenzie and Robert McClellan, clerk John Reed, and eight voyageurs. The group began their journey on the Missouri River in the spring of 1811, and by the beginning of August started across the mountains. Wishing to avoid the Blackfeet, they took a southern detour. Some of the party decided to return east. Those who continued on towards the Columbia encountered many rapids and waterfalls. Some of the canoes overturned, one man drowned, and part of their baggage was lost. They abandoned their canoes, cached excess baggage, divided into four parties, and followed the stream on foot, two groups on one side and two groups on the other. For twenty days they found nothing to eat and steep rocks prevented them descending to the water to drink. Their dogs died of thirst. Some men began to drink their urine. All ate roasted beaver skins to stave off their hunger, and they even resorted to eating their own moccasins. Those on the south bank suffered less because some Aboriginal people helped the group kill their horses for food. Those on the north side encountered an American in even worse condition than them. He was "derranged" and starving, and had been wandering for three years after his trading party was killed by the Blackfeet. He had stayed alive through the charity of Snake people.<sup>50</sup>

Tales about these kinds of trials circulated widely. Securing food was a central preoccupation of voyageurs and the fear of starvation was almost constant. Dementia often accompanied hunger, and was an additional threat to survival. Voyageurs also learned from stories that Aboriginal people were frequent saviors to the starving. Eating one's moccasins became a leitmotif, appearing frequently in any fur trade tale about starvation. It was also common in Algonquian stories.<sup>51</sup>

A famous case featuring starvation and mental illness described by Nelson occurred in 1809 at Grand Rapid, where the Saskatchewan River flows into Lake Winnipeg. The manager of the post, John Duncan Campbell, had lapsed into an alcoholic haze, and had left his men without food, trade goods or leadership. The post disintegrated into apathy and despair, and the voyageurs that did not desert began to starve. When Nelson's party arrived at the fort in 1809, they found a voyageur named Baudry who was close to death. Nelson provides a vivid description of the mental illness that could accompany starvation. Baudry did not respond to greetings, and upon closer inspection, he seemed to have lost his faculties of reason. He babbled to himself, but his voice was hoarse and his speech slow. He was filthy and he smelled terrible. His hair and beard were full of leaves, fish scales, ashes, spittle of tobacco, and frozen in icicles. His fixed eyes emitted a deadly glare. The "tout ensemble" of his stare, voice, motions, and language "displayed a picture of idiocy & wretchedness, indiscribable."<sup>52</sup> This account of derangement caused by starvation is remarkably similar to descriptions of windigos. Starvation led to insanity and descent into demonism. Nelson himself wrote of windigo symptomology, emphasizing the swings between depressive and frenzied states:

I look upon [the state of being a windigo] as a sort of mania, fever, a distemper of the brain. Their eyes (for I have seen people who are thus perplexed) are wild and

uncommonly clear — they seem as if they glistened. .... They are ... sullen, thoughtful, ... and perfectly mute: staring, in sudden convulsions, wild, incoherent and extravagant language.<sup>53</sup>

Nelson's analogous descriptions of a starving voyageur and a windigo are echoed in another story that he recorded in his journal. In this case a voyageur suddenly became crazed, ran away from his crew, and exhibited supernatural abilities. On a return journey to Montreal, at the portage called the 'Mattawan' (along the Ottawa River), one of the voyageurs:

all of a sudden, & without any cause known fled into woods- the people went after him, & tried every argument of persuasion & menace. He would allow them to come so near as almost to touch him & immediately bound off like a deer into the woods. After long & fruitless trials they had to leave him.' It was with great reluctance .... But as there were many other canoes coming behind they hoped that some one might pick him up. They tied a letter to a long pole giving an account of this Sad affair, recommended him to the mercy of God and the Saints, [and] pushed off. But what was their astonishment the next day, to see him walking leisurely about at one of the old encampments. - when he discovered them, he seemed quite wild, exhibiting every mark of uneasiness, alarm & dread. He sculked off to the woods: they followed, but to no purpose! In the afternoon they again saw him, in another place, & far distant. He exhibited the same alarm, - they endeavoured again, but to no avail. They immediately concluded of course there must be something Supernatural in this; for it was utterly impossible that any human being by his own mere exertions or powers could possibly travel such immense distances so rapidly, 'without aid'! They concluded 'it must be the evil Spirit who thus transported him.' They decided upon a plan, if ever they should see him again. 'The next day they discovered

him in a bend of the river. They went a shore with the utmost caution, surrounded him; and as they went so stealthily, he did not observe them 'till they were upon him. He showed all the signs of horror & anxiety upon being seized; they secured & carried him on board. he looked quite wild & dejected, & his clothes were all in rags!"<sup>54</sup>

This voyageur seemed to exhibit qualities of a windigo: loss of reason, fear of humans, and supernatural powers of transport.

Starvation cannibalism among fur trade and exploration parties occurred infrequently, but incidents were widely reported and assumed almost legendary status, as demonstrated by the famous and frequently told case of Sir John Franklin's exploration of the Arctic. In 1819, setting out for the first time to map the Arctic and search for the elusive northwest passage, the expedition suffered terribly from cold, hunger, poor planning, and Franklin's ineptitude. Eleven of the twenty men in the expedition died. At least two were murdered and eight or nine starved, and rumors of cannibalism plagued the crew. Franklin's third and fatal expedition to the Arctic in 1845 added fuel to the rumors, when Inuit told rescuers that the crew had resorted to cannibalism in its final days.<sup>55</sup>

In 1817 Bourgeois Ross Cox recorded a story of starvation cannibalism in the interior plateau of the Rocky Mountains. While crossing a chain of rapids and whirlpools known as the Dalles, the canoes of Cox's party were damaged. They decided to divide into two groups. One group, made up of the injured and ill, returned to Spokane House, while the other group of slightly more able men pushed on to Canoe River. The group sent back contained six voyageurs, and an English tailor named Holmes. Cox recorded in his journal that "on separating from their comrades, some of them appeared dejected and melancholy, and forboded that they would never see Canada again. Their prophecy, alas! was but too true."<sup>56</sup> Cox did not hear of the fate of

this unfortunate party until three years later. They lost their canoe and all their provisions in a rapid of the Upper Dalles. They had no food, no blankets and had to force their way through the brush, walking down the river. Their only refreshment was water and their progress was slow, owing to their weakness, fatigue and ill health. On the third day the voyageur Maçon died, and the survivors ate his remains. The tailor Holmes died next, and his body was eaten. Only two of the seven men survived -- La Pierre and Dubois. La Pierre was found on the borders of the upper lake of the Columbia by two Aboriginal men. He stated that after the death of the fifth man, he and Dubois loaded themselves with as much of his flesh as they could carry. When they reached the upper lake, they began searching for Aboriginal people. When they had eaten all the flesh, La Pierre became suspicious of Dubois, and remained on his guard. While La Pierre feigned sleep, he observed Dubois cautiously opening his knife. Dubois sprung on him, and wounded his hand though he had aimed for the neck. A silent and desperate conflict followed. La Pierre succeeded in wresting the knife from his antagonist, and was obliged in self-defense to slit Dubois's throat. A few days later he was discovered by Aboriginal people and rescued.<sup>57</sup>

Like Ross's recounting of this tale of starvation cannibalism, Cox wrote of the story as if it actually happened. Cox went even further, claiming he was tangentially involved. Bruce White found the same pattern among "fear of pillaging" stories -- raconteurs told stories as if they actually happened and often claimed a connection to the participants.<sup>58</sup> These "truth tales" helped to reinforce the authenticity of the teller, especially if the story was meant to convey a warning or a lesson for the audience. Likewise, in Algonquian historical discourse, story-tellers often assume a personal role in the tale as a means of affirming the evidence. The emphasis on lessons in Algonquian stories is pervasive.<sup>59</sup> The didactic nature of the above tales of starvation cannibalism represents an overlap of Algonquian and European oral forms. An obvious lesson in

starvation cannibalism stories was to be wary of your crewmates. A more subtle message was that eating dead people could keep you alive. The most vital lesson in these stories is that voyageurs needed Aboriginal people to survive.

Most of the northwest stories about cannibalism involve violence and aggression.<sup>60</sup> Although voyageurs participated in what some may consider to be ritualized cannibalism in the form of transubstantiation in Roman Catholic communion, they viewed cannibalism as evil and debased.<sup>61</sup> Likewise, in Algonquian stories of windigos, cannibalism was despised, and windigos were portrayed as violent.<sup>62</sup> Anti-social behavior was suspiciously regarded as a possible step towards cannibal aggression. In one of the stories told to the German traveler Kohl by a Lake Superior voyageur, an Aboriginal man who many believed to be a windigo was nicknamed “the little man of iron” because he was so tough. He lived as a hermit. A voyageur that knew him well said he hated groups of people (especially other Aboriginals), never smoked with others, did not eat often or much, remained unmarried, and wandered the forests, accepting no gifts, and seldom visiting his relatives. Yet, he was known far and wide, and greatly feared. He believed himself to be persecuted by others. The voyageur, who did not believe the man was a windigo, nonetheless told Kohl:

'One evening he appeared at our fire in a very savage condition, thin and pale, 'et la vue tout-à-fait égarée et la bouche ouverte. [looking completely frenzied with an open mouth]' He looked at our women preparing the supper. We offered him some food. 'No,' he said .... And then he opened his mouth again all so stupidly, and looked so wild. 'If thou wilt not eat, Missabikongs, then retire from here. No one wants to kill thee, but thou mayst be thinking of killing a fellow-man. Go away!' Very quietly he rose, and went out into the forest, where he disappeared. Since that time I never saw him again.'<sup>63</sup>

In the other stories told to Kohl that I mentioned above, cannibal monsters more often attacked their families and friends, and themselves, before moving on to strangers.

Algonquian-speakers believed that killing windigos was crucially important because they would continue attacking humans unless restrained. Many windigos were murdered at their own request before they had hurt anyone because the windigos did not want to harm their families who were sure to be the first victims. In 1899 at Sturgeon Lake, a Cree named Moostoos begged his family to kill him because he thought he was turning into a windigo and did not want his children to be hurt. His family waited until Moostoos started to exhibit signs of infection, such as floating off the ground and developing super-human strength, before they granted his wish and murdered him.<sup>64</sup> Killing a windigo was not easy and could involve great battles. Some stories celebrated the bravery of those who acted as bait in windigo traps.<sup>65</sup> Often only medicine men could successfully rid a community of a windigo.<sup>66</sup> Windigos were said to come back to life if their bodies had not been completely mutilated. Recall the story of the voyageur Le Riche at the beginning of the paper. When he thought that he had killed a female windigo who was raiding his fish nets, his Aboriginal wives told him that he must cut the body into small pieces or it would come back to life. Moostoos's family cut off his head to ensure that he would not revive.<sup>67</sup> In a Cree story told by elder Simeon Scott on the west coast of James Bay, recorded sometime between 1955 and 1965, medicine men were able to kill windigos by breaking their bones and setting them on fire, which melted the ice inside the windigos' bodies.<sup>68</sup> Among the Omushkegowak people, Louis Bird reported on one story about a family of windigos that were killing many people but seemed resistant to human retaliation. A council of elders met to discuss the problem, and appointed a special windigo exterminator. This man infiltrated the family of

windigos, discovered that their hearts had been removed from their bodies and were cached for safekeeping. He was able to kill the windigos by cutting up their hidden hearts.<sup>69</sup>

Voyageur attitudes towards the supernatural had a variety of influences. Although Roman Catholicism shaped French Canadian cosmology and regulated habitant lives, the beliefs and practices of French Canadian voyageurs (who traveled far away from their parishes) fell outside the institutional regulation of the Church. Varieties of beliefs and practices thrived in Catholic cultures where the boundary between the sacred and the magical was ill-defined and fluid.<sup>70</sup> Perhaps because voyageurs lived and worked in unfamiliar lands and among unfamiliar peoples, the supernatural came to occupy a central location in their new cultural space.

Voyageurs frequently reported that they saw ghosts. One voyageur named Laroque “got such a fright as to become entirely speechless and motionless for some time” when one night he saw “the apparition of an unknown person in the house.”<sup>71</sup> One clerk named Graeme related that the previous winter he and a couple of his men had traveled by dog sled from Fort Isle à la Crosse to an Aboriginal camp about 20 miles distance in order to fetch furs and meat. On their return to the lake at night with a full moon, Graeme traveled ahead of his men by about a mile, and while he was waiting for them, he saw an all-white apparition of a coach, with two men seated on it, and two horses flying through the sky. The next season, Graeme himself and one of his men disappeared on that very river, and were believed drowned.<sup>72</sup> Place names also reflected their beliefs. Voyageurs named one place “Plain-Chant” because they heard spirits singing simple melodies there.<sup>73</sup> Bourgeois Angus Mackintosh noted that a very large opening in a rock on the north side of the French River was referred to as “the entrance to Hell” by his voyageurs.<sup>74</sup>

Hardship and the supernatural were commonly associated in stories, such as miraculous apparitions of saints rescuing voyageurs from dangerous rapids, and superhuman strength

appearing to save voyageurs from dangerous animal attacks. After undergoing severe trials, men were thought to assume supernatural qualities. In another version of Ross Cox's story about cannibalism near the Pacific coast, Alexander Ross emphasized the supernatural in the ending. He related that a group lost their boat, all of their provisions, guns and ammunition. After quarreling, they divided into two groups and went separate ways. The stronger of the groups reached safety at a post 300 miles distant, but only after "suffering every hardship that [a] human being could endure."<sup>75</sup> Of the other group of five, only one man survived by eating the bodies of his dead comrades. After two months of wandering, he reached the Okanagan, "more a ghost than a man."<sup>76</sup> This passing reference reveals a pattern of associating hardship and cannibalism with the supernatural.

The supernatural was further associated in stories of cannibal monsters through the idea that transformation into a monster enabled people to cross over into a mythical realm. In his studies of Algonquian-speakers, Richard Preston suggests that windigos were understood as mythic persons, and could not be judged by human standards. Windigos could live unprotected in a harsh physical environment, easily find food, withstand isolation and ostracism, and could not eat non-humans.<sup>77</sup> Jennifer S. H. Brown and Robert Brightman caution that in northern Algonquian thought, mythic beings are not confined to another or ancient world. Mythic beings could interact with humans in dreams, visions, and divination rituals (such as shaking tent ceremonies), and participated in the social and mental life of humans.<sup>78</sup>

Humans could communicate with mythic beings in dreams, and they also referred to mythic beings as "Dreamed." Humans often induced dreams through fasting in order to encourage communication with their guardian spirit. Usually mythic beings entered a human's dream to protect and guide the dreamer but it was possible for a windigo to hunt through dreams.

George Nelson reported a case where the “North Wind” urged a human faster to eat from platters filled with tempting foods. Through the intervention of another spirit, the faster realized the platters contained human meat, and narrowly escaped becoming a windigo.<sup>79</sup>

Passing back and forth between the material world and the mythic world entailed metamorphosis. The theme of transformation, from human to cannibal monster, reflected a central condition of voyageurs’ lives. Voyageurs were in constant motion, travelling great distances from the St. Lawrence valley, to the farthest reaches of the *pays d’en haut*. They passed through dramatically different geographic areas, from parkland to the Laurentian Shield, the prairies, the subarctic, and even to the tundra. They traveled on large lakes, fast-running rivers, and low-water streams, filled with long and frequently dangerous portages. They encountered diverse peoples, including Iroquoians, Algonquians, Athapaskans, Siouans, Salishans, Kutenais, Wakashans, and Inuits.<sup>80</sup> As voyageurs traveled from their homes in French Canada to the Aboriginal interior, they underwent continuous transformations in identity and cultural association.<sup>81</sup> Liminality, or borders and passages, came to characterize their entire cultural space.<sup>82</sup> Transformation into a cannibal monster may have expressed the anxiety voyageurs felt as they entered new worlds, where the ground was always shifting and rules were always changing. The journey into the realm of the mythic could have been seen as the ultimate journey for these travelers.

Some voyageurs made a dramatic cultural transition by remaining in the *pays d’en haut*. They married Aboriginal women and joined Aboriginal communities, learning the language and embracing the new culture. Others formed new social spaces for themselves and created independent “freeman” communities with their Aboriginal wives, which blended Aboriginal and French Canadian ways.<sup>83</sup> Stories about cannibal monsters reflected the idea of metamorphosis

within voyageur thought, but clearly voyageurs who joined Aboriginal communities envisioned their metamorphosis as positive.

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Stories of people becoming monsters are common all over the world. Yet the telling of monster stories can reveal a great deal about cosmology and cultural beliefs. In eighteenth-century French Canada, the *loup-garou* was a person who turned into a wolf-like beast at night during the full moon, and preyed on other people. Algonquian-speakers told stories about people becoming windigos and turning against their fellows. These common motifs in French Canadian and Algonquian stories converged in voyageur oral tradition. Voyageurs told each other stories about starvation, insanity, cannibalism, and turning into cannibal monsters. These stories reflected the widespread privation in voyageurs' jobs; the fear of starvation and starvation cannibalism; the occurrence of mental illness; a fascination with the supernatural; blurred boundaries between animals and humans; dreaming; and finally the process of metamorphosis. Each of these themes exhibits aspects of voyageurs' lives. Their oral tradition reflected their working experiences, such as wonder at new worlds, fear of hardships and the unknown, and their constant passage through numerous geographic and social spaces. Werewolves and windigos were sometimes conflated in the historic record. Elements of both appear in stories of cannibal monsters. Clearly, Cree and Ojibwe thought influenced voyageurs. This conflation also represents a mechanism for métissage that could occur outside of cross-cultural marriage and miscegenation.

The stories implicitly instructed voyageurs to cultivate relationships with Aboriginal people as a means of survival. In the first story, Le Riche's Aboriginal wives taught him how to protect himself from "une femme windigo" by dismembering her dead body. In the Grand Rapid

tale, the fur trade workers who do not desert – presumably to join Aboriginal neighbors – starved and became monstrous. The Lake Superior hermit windigo was unmarried, and in the Ross Cox Rocky Mountain narrative, the last man standing was rescued by Aboriginal people. The importance of Aboriginal people is a recurring theme.

Although tales of cannibal monsters were frequently coupled with stories of privation, they were not restricted to starvation conditions, and could appear at any time. Concern over food and safety was never far from voyageurs' thoughts, even when they were fed and secure. Windigos could be both men and women, and attacked men and women of all ages. Both Algonquian-speakers and French Canadians could turn into cannibal monsters and be attacked by them. The universality of the stories reflects cross-gender and cross-cultural concerns over shortages of food, fear of evil spirits, and the occurrence of mental illness. There was no fixed meaning in these stories. Rather, to borrow the words of Julie Cruikshank, for the speakers and listeners, the narratives provided "a framework for experiencing the material world," and for scholars, they reflect "larger historical and social processes."<sup>84</sup> Both European and Aboriginal stories were not fixed things. They mutated in ways that were fluid, dynamic, and dependant on cross-cultural interaction and exchange. The entangled motifs of windigos and werewolves is reminiscent of many instances of cross-cultural exchange. In his work on material objects in the southwestern Pacific, Nicholas Thomas observes that "objects are not what they were made to be but what they have become."<sup>85</sup> Although werewolves and windigos constituted different social phenomenon, they blurred in the northwest as they became a site of cultural conjunction, and they lead to the emergence of a new cultural form of *métissage*. Recall one of Kohl's stories -- a man was said to wander the forest like a hungry wolf, preying on humans. Werewolf or windigo?

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<sup>1</sup> Quoted in Johann Georg Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami: Life Among the Lake Superior Ojibway*, trans. by Lascelles Wraxall (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society Press, 1985, first published 1860), 355.

<sup>2</sup> Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 355-7.

<sup>3</sup> Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 356.

<sup>4</sup> I use the term “Algonquian” to refer to the speakers of one or more of the languages of the Algonquian family. This is an awkward term in part because speakers of Algonquian languages share neither a common culture nor common environment, and cover a tremendous geographic range. The peoples on which I primarily focus are the various groups of Crees and Ojibwes.

<sup>5</sup> Robert A. Brightman, “The Windigo in the Material World,” *Ethnohistory* 35: 4 (Fall 1988: 337-79), 337. The term has also been spelled as “wendigo,” and “witiko.” See Richard J. Preston, “The Witiko: Algonkian Knowledge and Whiteman Knowledge,” *Manlike Monsters on Trial: Early Records and Modern Evidence*, edited by Marjorie M. Halpin and Michael M. Ames, 111-31 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980). In Ojibwe, the word can be spelled as “wiinigoo.” John D. Nichols and Earl Nyholm, *A Concise Dictionary of*

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*Minnesota Ojibwe* (Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 1995), 120, 285. In Cree, the word can be spelled as “wīhtikow” or “wīhtikōw.” H. C. Wolfart and Freda Ahenakew, *The Student’s Dictionary of Literary Plains Cree based on contemporary accounts* (Winnipeg: Algonquian and Iroquoian Linguistics, Memoir 15, 1998), 200, 419.

<sup>6</sup>Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 355-63.

<sup>7</sup> See the extensive collection of the Archives de Folklore at the Université Laval, Québec. For published examples see C. Marius Barbeau, “The Field of European Folk-Lore in America,” *The Journal of American Folk-Lore* 32: 124 (April – June 1919), 185-97; Evelyn Bolduc, “Contes Populaires Canadiens (troisième série),” *Journal of American Folk-Lore* 32: 123 (January – March 1919), 90-167; E. – Z. Massicotte and C. Marius Barbeau, “Chantes Populaire du Canada,” *The Journal of American Folk-Lore* 32: 123 (January – March 1919), 1-89; C. Marius Barbeau, *Quebec: Where Ancient France Lingers* (Toronto: MacMillan, 1936); Marius Barbeau, *Jongleur Songs of Old Quebec*, trans. by Sir Harold Boulton and Sir Ernest MacMillan (Toronto: They Ryerson Press and New Brunswick: Rutgers University Press, 1962); and Edith Fowke, *Folktales of French Canada* (Toronto: NC Press, 1979).

<sup>8</sup> There has been a growing interest in the cultural history of French Canada in the past couple of decades. For examples related to oral traditions see Terence Crowley, “Thunder Gusts: Popular Disturbances in Early French Canada,” *Canadian Historical Association Historical Papers for 1979*, 11-31 (Ottawa: Canadian Historical Association, 1979); Allan Greer, *The Patriots and the People: The Rebellion of 1837 in Rural Lower Canada* (Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1993), 52-86; and Peter N. Moogk, *La Nouvelle France: The Making of French Canada – A Cultural History* (East Lansing: Michigan State University Press, 2000), 145-8, 247-9.

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<sup>9</sup> See Carolyn Podruchny, "Sons of the Wilderness: Work, Culture and Identity Among Voyageurs in the Montreal Fur Trade, 1780-1821" (Ph.D. dissertation, University of Toronto, 1999).

<sup>10</sup> See Helen Hornbeck Tanner, ed., *Atlas of Great Lakes Indian History* (Norman: The Newberry Library and University of Oklahoma Press, 1987) and William C. Sturtevant, gen. ed., *Handbook of North American Indians*, vols. 6 *Subarctic*, ed. by June Helm, 13 *Plains*, ed. by Raymond J. DeMallie and 17 *Northeast*, ed. by Bruce G. Trigger (Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 1981, 2001, 1978).

<sup>11</sup> Toronto, Metropolitan Reference Library, Baldwin Room, S13, George Nelson's Journal "No. 1," written as a reminiscence, describing a journey from Montreal to Grand Portage, and at Folle Avoine, 27 April 1802 - April 1803, 12. Also see Alexander Henry the Younger, *New Light on the Early History of the Greater Northwest: The Manuscript Journals of Alexander Henry*, ed. by Eliot Coues (Minneapolis: Ross and Haines, 1897), 1: 100, 297; Toronto, Metropolitan Reference Library, Baldwin Room, S13, George Nelson's Journal and Reminiscences, 1 December 1825 - 13 September 1836, 32; Alexander Ross, *Fur Hunters of the Far West; A Narrative of Adventures in Oregon and the Rocky Mountains* (London: Smith, Elder and Co., 1855), 2: 237.

<sup>12</sup> Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 86-7.

<sup>13</sup> Paul H. Beaulieu, "The Fur Trade by Paul H. Beaulieu, 1880," in *Escorts to White Earth 1868 to 1968, 100 Year Reservation*, ed. by Gerald R. Vizenor (Minneapolis: The Four Winds, 1968), 91, as cited by Bruce M. White, "The Fear of Pillaging: Economic Folktales of the Great Lakes Fur Trade," in *The Fur Trade Revisited: Selected Papers of the Sixth North American Fur Trade*

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*Conference, Mackinac Island, Michigan, 1991*, ed. by Jennifer S.H. Brown, W.J. Eccles, and Donald P. Heldman, 199-216 (East Lansing, MI: Michigan State University Press, 1994), 199, 213n2.

<sup>14</sup>White, “The Fear of Pillaging.”

<sup>15</sup> On the impact of Franz Boas and Native American studies see George W. Stocking, Jr., ed. *The Shaping of American Anthropology, 1883-1911; A Franz Boas Reader* (New York: Basic Books, 1974); and Regna Darnell, *And along came Boas: Continuity and Revolution in American Anthropology* (Amsterdam: J. Benjamins, 1998).

<sup>16</sup> Laurence R. Goldman, ed., *The Anthropology of Cannibalism* (Westport, CT: Bergin and Garvey, 1999), 8.

<sup>17</sup> Jennifer S. H. Brown and Robert Brightman, “*The Orders of the Dreamed*”: *George Nelson on Cree and Northern Ojibwa Religion and Myth, 1823* (Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press, 1988), 51-3, 94-5, 196.

<sup>18</sup> Louis Bird, personal communication. For background see Louis Bird and George Fulford, “Making the Past Come Alive: The Omushkegowak Oral History Project,” *Pushing the Margins: Native and Northern Studies*, ed. by Jill Oakes et. al., 270-89 (Winnipeg: Native Studies Press, University of Manitoba, 2001); and <http://www.uwinnipeg.ca/academic/ic/rupert/bird/index.html>.

<sup>19</sup> For another example of Cree stories of little people and balls of fire, see the 1991 Fisher River Oral History Project in Winnipeg, Provincial Archives of Manitoba, Fisher River, C2017-2047, C2080-2092.

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<sup>20</sup> Frank Lestringant, *Cannibals: The Discovery and Representation of the Cannibal from Columbus to Jules Verne*, trans. by Rosemary Morris (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1997), 15.

<sup>21</sup> Lestringant, *Cannibals*, 23-31, 41-9, 56-80, and 131-5.

<sup>22</sup> Lestringant, *Cannibals*, 17-22. The only place Lestringant mentions werewolves is in a discussion of Jean Bodin's configuration of types of cannibalism determined by climatic zones. Bodin asserts that the South is superior to the North in the same way as humanity is superior to animals. Lestringant comments that "bestial rage, inspired by an excess of blood, is at the bottom of the human and climatic scale. The 'wolfish' individual, who, driven by extreme hunger, flings himself upon his fellow man, is more of a wolf than a man: a werewolf." Lestringant, *Cannibals*, 90.

<sup>23</sup> Lestringant, *Cannibals*, 22

<sup>24</sup> This observation is based on a survey of the Archives de Folklore at the Université Laval, Québec.

<sup>25</sup> Charlotte F. Otten, ed., *A Lycanthropy Reader: Werewolves in Western Culture* (Syracuse: Syracuse University Press, 1986), 3-7.

<sup>26</sup> Caroline Walker Bynum, "Metamorphosis, or Gerald and the Werewolf," *Speculum*, 73 (1998: 987-1013), 1000-1.

<sup>27</sup> Otten, ed., *A Lycanthropy Reader*, 21.

<sup>28</sup> For a few examples see Québec, Université Laval, Archives de Folklore, Collection Michel Boucher, bobine 2, enregistrement 36, interview, 1965, Josaphat Pépin; Collection Catherine Jabiseu? Enrg 842, 1964, Maxine Chiasson; Collection Carmen Allison, no. 24, A40, 1975,

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Joseph Mathieu; Collection Luc Lacourcière, bob. 154, enreg. 2295, 1955, Pierre Pilote; Collection S.M.S. Hélène, f.m.a. enrig HM 447, bo. 8, 1962, Joseph Leblanc; Collection Michel Duval, bobine 1, enreg. 9A; Collection de S. François-de-Fatima, (M.-Pauline Cayouette), enrig 6, bobine 1, 1965, Israël Bujold; Collection Dionne, Majella et Claude Bellavance, enreg 138, A40, 1965, Joseph Rodrigue. Also see C. Marius Barbeau, “Anecdotes Populaires du Canada (Première série),” *The Journal of American Folk-Lore* 33: 129 (July – September 1920, 173-297), 202-4.

<sup>29</sup> “Bourgeois” is what Montreal-based fur trade masters called themselves. It was widely used to refer to managers, officers, and powerful clerks.

<sup>30</sup> Henry (the Younger), *New Light*, 1: Sunday, 2 November 1800, 133.

<sup>31</sup> George Nelson's Journal and Reminiscences, 1 December 1825 - 13 September 1836, 78.

<sup>32</sup> Theresa S. Smith, *The Island of the Anishnaabeg: Thunderers and Water Monsters in the Traditional Ojibwe Life-World* (Moscow, ID: University of Idaho Press, 1995), 105-6.

<sup>33</sup> Ruth Landes, “The Abnormal Among the Ojibwa Indians,” *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology* 33 (1938), 14-33; A. Irving Hallowell, “Psychic Stress and Culture Patterns,” *American Journal of Psychiatry* 42 (1936), 1291-1310; Morton I. Teicher, “Windigo Psychosis; a study of a relationship between belief and behavior among Indians of northeastern Canada,” *Proceedings of the 1960 Annual Spring Meeting of the American Ethnological Society*, ed. by Verne F. Ray, 93-103, (Seattle: American Ethnological Society, 1960); Raymond Fogelson, Psychological Theories of Windigo ‘Psychosis’ and a Preliminary Application of a Models Approach,” *Context and Meaning in Anthropology*, ed. by Melford Spiro (New York: The Free Press, 1965); Charles A. Bishop, “Ojibwa Cannibalism,” *Ninth International Congress of*

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*Anthropological Sciences*, Chicago, 1973; and James G. E. Smith, "Notes on the Wittiko," *Papers of the Seventh Algonquian Conference, 1975*, ed. by William Cowan, 18-38. (Ottawa: Carleton University, 1976). This theory is refuted by Lou Marano, "Windigo Psychosis: The Anatomy of an Emic-Etic Confusion," *Current Anthropology* 23 (1982), 385-412.

<sup>34</sup> Vivian J. Rorhl, "A Nutritional Factor in Windigo Psychosis," *American Anthropologist* 72 (1970): 97-101. Her argument was refuted by Jennifer S. H. Brown, "Cure and Feeding of Windigos: A Critique," *American Anthropologist* 73 (1971): 2-22.

<sup>35</sup> Richard J. Preston, "Ethnographic Reconstruction of Witigo," *Papers of the Ninth Algonquian Conference*, ed. by William Cowan, 61-7 (Ottawa: Carleton University, 1978), 63.

<sup>36</sup> Preston, "The Witiko: Algonkian Knowledge and Whiteman Knowledge," 128-9.

<sup>37</sup> Ives Goddard, "Owls and Cannibals: Two Algonquian Etymologies," presented at the *Second Algonquian Conference*, St. John's, Newfoundland: 1969; and *Leonard Bloomfield's Fox Lexicon*, ed. by Ives Goddard (Winnipeg: Algonquian and Iroquoian Linguistics, 1994), 185.

<sup>38</sup> Sarah Whitecalf, *kinêhiyâwiwininaw nêhiyawêwin / The Cree Language Is Our Identity: The La Ronge Lectures of Sarah Whitecalf*, ed. and trans. by H. C. Wolfart and Freda Ahenakew (Winnipeg: Publications of the Algonquian Text Society, University of Manitoba Press, 1993), 40-1.

<sup>39</sup> Brightman, "The Windigo in the Material World," 340-1.

<sup>40</sup> Robin Ridington, *Trail to Heaven: Knowledge and Narrative in a Northern Native Community* (Iowa City: University of Iowa Press, 1988), 53; Robin Ridington, "Wechuge and Windigo: A Comparison of Cannibal Beliefs among Boreal Forest Algonquians and Athapaskans," *Anthropologica* 18 (1976): 107-29; Peggy Reeves Sanday, *Divine Hunger: Cannibalism as a*

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*Cultural System* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1986), 113-20; Franz Boas, *Tsimshian Mythology based on texts recorded by Henry W. Tate, U. S. Bureau of Ethnology, Thirty-First Annual Report*, 1916, (reprinted New York: Johnson Reprint Corporation, 1970), 350-4; Paul Radin *Winnebago Culture as Described by Themselves: The Origin Myth of the Medicine Rite: Three Versions* (Baltimore: Waverly Press, 1950), 123-32; and Lucinda Thompson, "A Man-Eating Ghost," translated by Anthony Wallace in Philadelphia, the American Philosophical Society Library; Hewitt, John Napoleon Brinton and Albert Samuel Gatschet, 497.3 H49 (for a description of the collection see John F. Freeman's Nos. 88 and 3796 in *A Guide to Manuscripts Relating to the American Indian in the Library of the American Philosophical Society* (Philadelphia: The American Philosophical Society, 1980) and original is in the Smithsonian Institution, Bureau of American Ethnology, #445, Washington, D. C.). For stories of cannibal spirits among Bella Coolas, see Franz Boas *The Mythology of the Bella Coola Indians, Memoirs of the American Museum of Natural History* vol. II, section I, part I, (November 1898): 30, 34, 35, and for stories of sea monsters among Tlingits, see John R. Swanton, *Tlingit Myths and Texts, Smithsonian Institution Bureau of American Ethnology Bulletin 39* (Washington: Government Printing Office, 1909), 40-4, 170-3.

<sup>41</sup> Raymond D. Fogelson, "Windigo Goes South: Stoneclad among the Cherokees," *Manlike Monsters on Trial: Early Records and Modern Evidence*, ed. by Marjorie Halpin and Michael M. Ames, 132-51 (Vancouver: University of British Columbia Press, 1980).

<sup>42</sup> As cited by Brightman, "The Windigo in the Material World," 342.

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<sup>43</sup> W. Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth: Anthropology and Anthropophagy* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1979), 18-21; Francis Barker, Peter Hulme, and Margaret Iverson, eds., *Cannibalism and the Colonial World* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 3-8.

<sup>44</sup> Goldman, ed., *The Anthropology of Cannibalism*, 1.

<sup>45</sup> For some of the best examples see Robert F. Berkhofer, Jr., *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian from Columbus to the Present* (New York: Vintage Books, 1978); Olive P. Dickason, *The Myth of the Savage and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas* (Edmonton: University of Alberta Press, 1984); Tzvetan Todorov, *The Conquest of America and the Question of the Other* trans. by Richard Howard (New York: Harper and Row, 1984); Mary Louise Pratt, *Imperial Eyes: Travel Writing and Transculturation* (London: Routledge, 1992); and Gordon M. Sayre, *Les Sauvages Américains: Representations of Native Americans in French and English Colonial Literature* (Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 1997).

<sup>46</sup> Moreover, the rhetoric of difference in colonial writing often could not find practical application because they so obviously countered the everyday interactions between Aboriginal peoples and Europeans in the colonies. Neil L. Whitehead, "Monstrosity and Marvel: Symbolic Convergence and Mimetic Elaboration in Trans-Cultural Representation: An Anthropological reading of Raleigh's *Discoverie...*" *Studies in Travel Writing* 1: 1 (Spring 1997), 72-95.

<sup>47</sup> See Carolyn Podruchny, "Unfair Masters and Rascally Servants? Labour Relations Between Bourgeois, Clerks and Voyageurs in the Montreal Fur Trade, 1780-1821," *Labour/ Le Travail: Journal of Canadian Labour Studies* 43 (spring 1999), 43-70.

<sup>48</sup> Brown and Brightman, "Orders of the Dreamed," 122-4; and Angeline Williams, *The Dog's Children*, ed. by Bloomfield and Nichols, 56-83.

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<sup>49</sup> John Henry Lefroy to sister Isabella, Lake Athabasca, Christmas day, 1843, John Henry Lefroy, *In Search of the Magnetic North: A Soldier-Surveyor's Letters from the North-West, 1843-1844*, ed. by George F.G. Stanley (Toronto: MacMillan Company of Canada, 1955), 86.

<sup>50</sup> Gabriel Franchère, *A Voyage to the Northwest Coast of America*, ed. by Milo Milton Quaife (Chicago: R.R. Donnelley & Sons Company, 1954), 102-109.

<sup>51</sup> Alice Ahenakew, *âh-âyîtaŵ isi ê-kî-kiskêyihthahkik maskihkiy / They Knew Both Sides of Medicine: Cree Tales of Curing and Cursing Told by Alice Ahenakew*, ed. and trans. by H. C. Wolfart and Freda Ahenakew (Winnipeg: Publications of the Algonquian Text Society, University of Manitoba Press, 2000), 108-9. For a humorous story about accidentally eating moccasins, see Glecia Bear et. al., *Kôhkominawak Otâcimowiniwâwa, Our Grandmothers' Lives as Told in Their Own Words*, ed. and trans. by Freda Ahenakew and H. C. Wolfart (Saskatoon: Fifth House Publishers, 1992), 180-1.

<sup>52</sup> Toronto, Metropolitan Reference Library, Baldwin Room, S13, George Nelson's Journal "No. 5," June 1807 - October 1809, written as a reminiscence, dated 7 February 1851; 30-32, also numbered as 214-16.

<sup>53</sup> Brown and Brightman, *"Orders of the Dreamed,"* 91.

<sup>54</sup> George Nelson's Journal "No. 1," written as a reminiscence, describing a journey from Montreal to Grand Portage, and at Folle Avoine, 27 April 1802 - April 1803, 12-13.

<sup>55</sup> John Franklin, *Narrative of a Journey to the Shores of the Polar Sea in the Years 1819-20-21-22* (London: J.M. Dent and Sons, Ltd., 1823); John Rae, "The Fate of Sir John Franklin and his Comrades," *The Albion* (October 28, 1854): 512; Sir Robert John McClure, *The Arctic Dispatches: containing an account of the discovery of the North-West passage* (London : J.D.

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Potter, [1854?]); and Ann Savours, *The Search for the North West Passage* (New York : St. Martin's Press, 1999).

<sup>56</sup> Ross Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia River* (New York: J. & J. Harper, 1832), 245.

<sup>57</sup> Cox, *Adventures on the Columbia River*, 243-5.

<sup>58</sup> White, "The Fear of Pillaging," 200.

<sup>59</sup> H. C. Wolfart, "Commentary and Notes," in A. Ahenakew [eds. Wolfart and F. Ahenakew], *The Knew Both Sides of Medicine*, 147-52; Simeon Scott et. al., *âtalôhkâna nêsta tipâcimôwina / Cree Legends and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay*, ed. by C. Douglas Ellis (Winnipeg: Publications of the Algonquian Text Society, University of Manitoba Press, 1995), xxii.

<sup>60</sup> This is a common pattern all over the world. For some examples see Arens, *The Man-Eating Myth*, 9; Goldman, ed., *The Anthropology of Cannibalism*, 3-5; D. Duclos, *The Werewolf Complex. America's Fascination with Violence* (Oxford: Berg Press, 1998); Neil Whitehead, "Hans Staden & the Cultural Politics of Cannibalism," *Hispanic American Historical Review* 80: 4 (2000), 721-51; K. George, *Showing Signs of Violence: The Cultural Politics of a Twentieth-Century Headhunting Ritual* (Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996); G. Yue, *The Mouth That Begs: Hunger, Cannibalism and the Politics of Eating in Modern China* (Durham: Duke University Press, 1999); and Yi Zheng, *Scarlet Memorial. Tales of Cannibalism in Modern China* (Boulder: Westview Press, 1996).

<sup>61</sup> For a discussion of the various ways in which cannibalism could be integrated into a culture see Sanday, *Divine Hunger*. For a discussion of how transubstantiation is reconciled with cannibalism in European thought, see Lestringant, *Cannibals*, 8-9.

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<sup>62</sup> For examples, see Col. George E. Laidlaw, ed., *Ojibwa Myths and Tales*, Reprinted from the *Archaeological Report, 1918*, (fourth paper), No. 40, "Me Sah Ba and the Windigo (No. 2), Told by Jonas George (Wah-sa-ghe-zik), No. 89, The Wrecked Indians and the Windigoes (No. 4), Told by Lottie Marsden, 3, 25-26; and Simeon Scott, "The windigoes," in *Cree Legends and Narratives from the West Coast of James Bay*, 78-89.

<sup>63</sup> Kohl, *Kitchi-Gami*, 355-63.

<sup>64</sup> David T. Williamson, "Killing of a Wetigo," *Alberta History* 27: 2 (spring 1979), 1-5.

<sup>65</sup> A. Ahenakew [eds. Wolfart and F. Ahenakew], *They Knew Both Sides*, 34-5; Wolfart, "Commentary and Notes," in *They Knew Both Sides*, 162-3; and Brown and Brightman, "The Orders of the Dreamed," 86-9.

<sup>66</sup> For examples see Laidlaw, ed., *Ojibwa Myths and Tales*, "Me Sah Ba and the Windigo (No. 2), told by Jonas George (Wah-sa-ghe-zik), 3; and William Jones, *Ojibwa Texts*, ed. by Truman Michelson, 2 volumes, Publications of the American Ethnological Society, volume vii, part i, ed. by Franz Boas (Leyden: E.J. Brill and New York: G.E. Stechert & Co., 1917), 2: 175-6.

<sup>67</sup> Williamson, "Killing," 3. Also see Laidlaw, ed., *Ojibwa Myths and Tales*, No. 104. The Windigo (No. 5) Told by Lottie Marsden, 31-2.

<sup>68</sup> Scott, "The windigoes," in *Cree Legends and Narratives*, 88-9.

<sup>69</sup> Louis Bird, personal communication, fall 2000.

<sup>70</sup> Carolyn Podruchny, "Dieu, Diable and the Trickster: Voyageur Religious Syncretism in the Pays d'en haut, 1770-1821," *Western Oblate Studies 5 Études Oblates de l'Ouest 5 Actes du cinquième colloque sur l'histoire des Oblats dans l'Ouest et le Nord canadiens/ Proceedings of the fifth symposium on the history of the Oblates in Western and Northern Canada*, ed. by

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Raymond Huel and Gilles Lesage, 75-92 (Winnipeg: Western Canadian Publishers, La Société historique de Saint-Boniface, Presses universitaires de Saint-Boniface and Centre d'études franco-canadiennes de l'Ouest, 2000).

<sup>71</sup> Toronto, Metropolitan Reference Library, Baldwin Room, S13, George Nelson's Journal, 1 April 1810 - 1 May 1811; Thursday, 21 February 1811, 45 (my pagination).

<sup>72</sup> Ottawa, National Archives of Canada, Autobiographical Notes of John McDonald of Garth, 1791-1815, written in 1859, photostat, 29-30 (the original is in Montreal, McGill Rare Books, MS 406, and a typescript is in Toronto, Ontario Archives, MU 1763).

<sup>73</sup> Georges-Antoine Belcourt, "Mon itinéraire du Lac des Deux-Montagnes à la Rivière-Rouge," *Bulletin de la Société historique de Saint-Boniface*, vol. IV (Montréal: Arbour & Dupont, Imprimeurs, 1913); and "The Diary of John Macdonell," *Five Fur Traders of the Northwest*, ed. by Charles M. Gates (St. Paul: Minnesota Historical Society, 1965), 80n30.

<sup>74</sup> Toronto, Ontario Archives, MU 1956, Box 4, Angus Mackintosh Papers; Angus Mackintosh, "Journal from Michilimackinac to Montreal via the French River," July 1813, 7.

<sup>75</sup> Ross, *Fur Hunters of the Far West*, 1: 60.

<sup>76</sup> Ross, *Fur Hunters of the Far West*, 1: 60.

<sup>77</sup> Preston, "Algonkian Knowledge," 128-9.

<sup>78</sup> Brown and Brightman, "*Orders of the Dreamed*," 120.

<sup>79</sup> Brown and Brightman, "*Orders of the Dreamed*," 90-1, 138-42. Also see Smith, *The Island of the Anishnaabeg*, 61.

<sup>80</sup> Here I mean groups of people who spoke languages within the linguistic families of Iroquoian, Algonquian, Athapaskan, Siouan, Salishan, Kutenais, Wakashan, and Inuit.

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<sup>81</sup> For an example of transformations along voyageurs' travel routes, see Carolyn Podruchny, "Baptizing Novices: Ritual Moments Among French Canadian Voyageurs in the Montreal Fur Trade, 1780-1821," *Canadian Historical Review* 83: 2 (June 2002), 165-95.

<sup>82</sup> The concept of liminality was first suggested by Arnold van Gennep in his work *The rites of passage*, trans. by Monika B. Vizedom and Gabrielle L. Caffee (London: Routledge and Kegan Paul, 1909). The concept was further developed by Victor Turner, *The Ritual Process: Structure and Anti-Structure* (Chicago: Aldine, 1969), 94-5 and *Blazing the Trail: Way marks in the Exploration of Symbols* (Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1992), 48-51. For a theoretical discussion and cross cultural comparisons of *communitas* or the development of community in liminal spaces see Turner, *The Ritual Process*, 96-7, 125-30 and *Blazing the Trail*, 58-61.

<sup>83</sup> On freemen see John E. Foster, "Wintering, the Outsider Adult Male and the Ethnogenesis of the Western Plains Métis," *Prairie Forum* 19: 1 (Spring 1994), 1-13 and Heather Devine, "Les Desjarlais: The Development and Dispersion of a Proto-Métis Hunting Band, 1785-1870," *From Rupert's Land to Canada: Essays in Honour of John E. Foster*, ed. by Theodore Binnema, Gerhard J. Ens and R. C. MacLeod, 129-58 (Calgary: The University of Alberta Press, 2001).

<sup>84</sup> Julie Cruikshank, *The Social Life of Stories: Narrative and Knowledge in the Yukon Territory* (Vancouver: The University of British Columbia Press, 1998), xii.

<sup>85</sup> Nicholas Thomas, *Entangled Objects: Exchange, Material Culture, and Colonialism in the Pacific* (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1991), 4.