

# Us/Them, Me/You: Who? (Re)Thinking the Binary of First Nations and Non-First Nations

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*Names speak who we are and who we do not wish to be. Issues of belonging, entitlement, representation, and autonomy related to the naming represented in the socially constructed binary—First Nations and non-First Nations—are briefly examined. A legacy of colonialism is the dichotomy of us/them, characterized with a variety of terms. These include, among others, Native, Status Indian, Amerindian, Aboriginal, First Nations, Canadians, Euro-Canadians, Anglo-Canadian, and White. Just when is it appropriate to use the terms? The terms exclude individuals of mixed political, cultural, or other heritages, or recent immigrant Brothers and Sisters. Although the binary is necessary to explain longstanding geopolitical, spiritual, economic, and other injustices, the dualism obscures nuanced understandings of interrelated issues of class, gender or other discrimination. Unthinking use of the terms of this dichotomy contradicts some traditional teachings, which state that all humans are members of the same human family. (Over)Reliance on this dichotomy may enable forgetfulness about other binaries to consider.*

## *Introduction*

### *Who is Other?*

Some days I just don't know anymore. I have grown hyperconscious of the labels available to nuance human identity in terms of gender, ethnicity, class, educational access, educational attainment, gender preference, religious practice, or other variables. Some days I worry that I don't pay enough attention to the (dis)empowerment encoded within the woven text of the terms. Some days I fret that generic labeling contributes to a potentially irreparable fragmentation of the species. Uniqueness I can appreciate; divisiveness furrows my brow.

When two co-moms come by for chrysanthemum tea, I enjoy the visit; oblivious of their lesbian, non-Lutheran, intercultural identities. I do know, however, that any of these labels may unfavorably prejudice the enjoyment of their daily experiences. On other days I stammer and stew when addressing a multi(cultur)(nation)al classroom to describe colonial events. At times I rely on the shorthand codes of *Canadians* or *Euro-Canadians*, but I find myself wincing at the inadequacy of such terms. I do not want to wield such terms as weapons; but it is obvious that someone has invaded the 17th century location of Hochelaga. There's no escaping the fact that the *Indian Act* was authored by non-Haisla, non-Iroquoian, non-Musqueam, and non-First Nations citizens. As an act of reciprocity, the Iroquois did not author(ize) the Anglo/French Act. So particular proper nouns to identify collectives are needed to discuss his/herstorical matters, which of course spill their effects over into the lives lived today.

How did collectives become reduced to such a dichotomy? Are these Pan-identity terms always useful? As the 20th century zooms to closure, identity politics are hot as theorists, researchers, and citizens carve niches of self-identification, attempt to comprehend who they are, and rebut reductionist depictions of themselves. For example, Yee (1993) asks herself if she can ever be “Canadian” as a Chinese woman living in a

European occupied land—yet I will never know China, of being Chinese, from the inside, even if I were to choose to live and work there. For my place is here, where I grew up [above a gift and variety store in Toronto, Ontario], this is what I know. But, this is what I am constantly separate, separated from—by the forces of racism that always keep me asking questions of identity, belonging, place and voice. (pp. 3-4)

Labels appear to be highly significant in the (re)claiming of identity, belonging, place, and voice. Yet the differentiation seems to reassert an identity to honor, which may unwittingly obscure or entirely displace a primary sense of planetary family. We are, after all, also a group of two-leggeds, ideally conceived as one human family.

### *Scope, Sequence, and Significance*

This essay examines a fairly substantial pairing embedded in the interconnected relations between a “group of people known as Native, and a group of people from Western European countries known as Whites” (Pelletier, 1985, p. 20).

Numerous historical and contemporary examples mirror this distinction based on the concept of *race* borrowed from biology. Pelletier (1985) does not differentiate on skin color alone. Instead, he posits that each group

seems to have totally different lifestyles. One of the most important ways of looking at the discovery of the Americas is that it brought together a people dedicated to attaining and owning and a people devoted to growing and living as a tribal entity. This has separated each of these people so widely that, to this day, neither one understands the other. (p. 20)

There are also many attempts to explain this difference, often with the conclusion that a chasm continues to isolate Reds and Whites. Yet is it really so simple a distinction that one group covets material goods while the other craves familial relationships? Historically, the observation works; but what of May Yee? Where is she located in such generalizations?

This brief exploration of the Native/White dichotomy only begins to dance around the edges of the problematic of either abandoning entirely or sustaining the distinction of two camps. This study is not grounded with qualitatively or quantitatively collected data, nor does it qualify as an historical or theoretical study. Instead, what is offered is an interrogation of the enduring binary of First Nations and non-First Nations. Is the dichotomy always essential, merely historically expedient, or necessarily strategic? A desire is evident to collapse this binary. However, rugged attempts did not succeed. Outstanding historical issues require some pairing to discuss continuing inequities of power. Although all two-leggeds have power at micro- and macro-levels to disable or to resist disablement, it is clearly the case that non-First Nations have wrested extraordinary amounts of legislative, military, educational, political, religious, and other powers to weaken—but not entirely destroy—First Nations peoples. Equally, First Nations people have used

their powers to resist the onslaught of (neo-)colonial endeavors. This synthetic dualism continues to fuel thinking about who is and who is not favored, as well as who might be.

Sources used in this inquiry are few. Some textual examples are used to illustrate the presence of this *Native/non-Native* dichotomy in order to explore the functions of this dualism. The published textual passages of Ojibwe Teacher Arthur Solomon (1991) and Cree Teacher Chief Louis Sunchild (Lightning, 1992) are used as primary commentary to remind that the separation of the human species into distinct groupings contradicts teachings about the people as members of one species, themselves members of a vastly interrelated Living Force.

The Elders were concerned about the totality of those things and the connectedness of those things, and the fact that the domains do not exist independently, so that a negative influence existed in all domains.... I recall that [my grandmother] would say not to harm people, not to harm another person, because in a sense it would be harming yourself. (Lightning, 1992, pp. 244, 246)

The Teachings about harm are strict and tend to enunciate that any harm is self-harm. No one likes to get hurt.

Sources like Lightning (1992) are used to support this scrutiny in four key areas diagrammed in Figure 1, which illustrates a holistic integration of four primary areas of the dichotomy to guide this discussion about identity politics: (a) belongingness, (b) entitlement, (c) representation, and (d) autonomy. The four associations are located with particular directions, which are aligned with particular facets of personhood. These include: the Direction of the East with the Spiritual, the Direction of the South with the Emotional, the Direction of the West as Physical, and the Direction of the North as the Cognitive.<sup>1</sup> The circularity of the figure indicates that the issues raised must be "read" in an interconnected manner, cognizant that emotions, thoughts, actions, and spiritus<sup>2</sup> are not exclusive and in continuous interaction. Effects felt in one realm do have repercussions in other areas of daily lived experience: just try reading Derrida's (1976) text *Of Grammatology* with a head cold.<sup>3</sup> When the physical realm is unhealthy, cognitive functions are also impaired and our emotions are unsettled. This discussion begins at the South, the Emotional Realm.

### *Why Question the Obvious?*

However, before proceeding to this direction of inquiry, it is fair to ask a question or two. Why question this dichotomy? What might be gained with displacing this binary? So what will we call us/them?

In the case of First Nations ancestry and non-First Nations ancestry, some rather sharp lines are discursively etched into descriptions of one species. There is an historical trope of "Cowpersons" and "Indian persons," often with the Indian less privileged and more absented than present (Durham, 1994). The First Nations/non-First Nations duet is nested within a larger categorization, described by Slemon (1995) as the

foundational principle ... [in] the field of postcolonial criticism is at heart a simple binarism: the binarism of Europe and its Others, of colonizer and colonized, of the West and the Rest, of the vocal and the silent. It is also a center/periphery model with roots in world systems theory. (p. 107)

This binarism operates outside of post-colonial critique as well. Theorists and researchers who do not consider themselves postcolonial critics also exhume and examine the material evidence of uneasy and unequal relationships built on the basis of abusively wielded power between and among a number of human groupings. Slemon (1995) admits that the binary befores events with a broad brush, overlaying detail, contradiction, and ambivalence. As well, the West seemingly continues to receive preferential treatment. In Slemon's quotations only those European (i.e., the West) are given the honor of a name. Although an argument could be made that *European* is a disempowering homogenization, unattentive to the nuances of Spanish or French identities, a name is nonetheless provided. *The Rest*, positioned outside the West, are nameless *Others*. Any reader can only assume that *the rest* includes, for example, Haida, Mohawk, Sto:lo, Maliseet, and Oneida—and, oh yes, Mary Yee.

Examination of the binary may assist individuals to reconceptualize geopolitical and spiritual events and conditions in historical and contemporary terms. Kalia (1991) observes that perception of racially embedded issues can no longer be reduced in the late 20th century to "assume a meaning of just White versus Black, or in Canada of White versus Native" (p. 276). In 1998, as issues of racial oppression, gender discrimination, or enmeshed White privilege become more transparent, our use of languages needs to "expand to accommodate the multitude of experiences that await adequate inclusion, and we all need to manipulate language in order to speak previously silenced truths" (Kalia, 1991, p. 276).

Overly large labels are now more recognizable barriers to fuller understanding of complex issues. For example, feminist empiricism and feminist standpoint approaches were severely challenged by *others*, generically categorized as *women*. The whitewashed effects obscure the fact that some White women had hired some non-White women for inequitable wages in exploitive domestic situations.

As well, the homogenization of non-White women, coded as *Women of Color* is deconstructed as a nonsensical bracketing, leaving Seema Kalia (1991) to fault the troubling dismissive summation of the term because it is

a convenient way for the ruling class to lump my experiences as an East Indian immigrant with those of an 8th generation Black Canadian. Women of color can claim very few experiences with other racial and ethnic groups, except those arising from being non-white in a white-supremacist culture. (p. 277)

Other researchers and theorists also deepen the understanding that inequity cannot rely on a single causative factor. Apple and Weis (1983) assert that "social life is constituted of dynamics of class, race, and gender" (p. 25). Although some may argue that this umbrella categorization—*us/them*—is necessary to resolve outstanding historical claims, reparation, and compensation, the binary's language may conceal the subtleties espied by Kalia (1991). Within the too harshly lit binary of First Nations/non-First Nations, there are shadows not yet distinguished.

And within these shadows there are other binaries and unities that need some attention too.



## Naming

The things we give ourselves to, we become part of and they can own us. (Lightning, 1992, p. 244)

This article about naming looks at the (over)use of terms to designate two groups of people in terms of belonging, entitlement, representation, and autonomy. Each of these general terms is described within the discussion embedded at a Direction. Although the initial paper sought to eliminate the binary entirely—and too hastily—later versions of the paper began to understand more questions about usage. These included questions related more to when to use these terms—if they must be spoken-written—and how to apply the terms.

### *The Southern Realm Naming and Belonging*

Pepper and Henry (1991) use a version of the Medicine Wheel to illustrate four interrelated aspects of self-esteem. These include Power (South), Uniqueness (West), Models (North), and Connectiveness (East). They characterize connectiveness as “belonging, sense of being accepted, accepting of others, feeling loved, helping, mutual respect, friendly, loyal, caring, trust[ing], important to others, comfortable with self, good communication, identity connected to heritage” (p. 147). Without this sense of connectivity, they assert that any child “will not develop spiritually, emotionally, or cognitively” (p. 151).

Although Pepper and Henry (1991) associate the characteristic of belongingness with the East, I place this aspect at the Southern Realm because I wish to focus here more on the emotional currents and undertows that churn when particular labels referring to Red and White people are applied in different contexts. Sometimes the terms empower (e.g., Red Power), and sometimes the various labels wound and scar.

When one is accepted as a First Nations or Canadian/Canadien, a sense of rootedness in nationhood may ensue. Citizenship can provide a feeling of acceptance, which may inspire the abilities to love, be helpful, respectful, friendly, loyal, and caring to other like citizens. A sense of solidarity may be strengthened. The two groupings are considered explicit, and who may or may not be included in a particular group is generally considered reasonable, although the discussion above shows that the two categories are not straightforward. In the case of Red-White relations in Canada, there is a sense that some can be members of one group, but not both; and that an inclusive label for both is unavailable. When issues of politically constructed nationhood arise, the terms *two-legeds* or *homo sapiens* seem inapplicable and disappear.

### *Names and Naming*

Before the discussion goes much further, I will daintily wade through a few terms. This is not meant to be a fully proportioned autopsy of the signs and their significations. I merely inventory, without full deconstruction and with apologies to legal and other experts who can hairsplit these terms to even finer widths.

*First Nations* is a term chosen and defined by the Assembly of First Nations, which is a geopolitical, spiritual, voluntary “nation”al organization, established in

1980, as representative of persons of First Nations ancestry. Not all First Nations accept the authority of this assembly. Nor do all Status Indians believe the Assembly of First Nations to be representative of themselves as membership in this Assembly is not compulsory. However, this term—First Nations—has come to be an acceptable substitute for previous terms, which include *Native* (usually capitalized), *Indian* (always capitalized), *Aboriginal* (sometimes capitalized) or *indigenous* (seldom capitalized). Some believe First Nations to be a more respectful substitution for the original terms used to focus on an uncivilized or less civilized status. These terms include, among others, *savages* (from the French, *les sauvages*), or *primitives*. In the United States, additional terms include *American Indian* and *Amerindian*.

Sometimes, the labeling redundantly duplicates categorization; for example, *Native Indians*—as opposed to, I suppose, *Foreign Indians*. Sometimes the adjective Canadian is linked to spawn *Canadian Native Indians*. In this term is an implied boundary of ownership distinguishing the autochthonous citizens of this Continent from, for example, *United States Native Aborigines* or *Cleveland Indians*. The problematic identification of ownership or location can be witnessed with further sensitivity in terms like *Saskatchewan Indians*, not to be confused with *Alberta Indians*. A phrase like *Saskatchewan Savages* would no longer be acceptable. Space limitations do not permit explanation to legislatively distinguish an *Alberta Status Indian* from an *Ontario non-Status Indian*<sup>4</sup> or an Urban(e) Indian, although the stature of dissimilarity can designate who is and who is not a full member of *Club Rez* (*C-31 Indians* are not always considered fully fledged Club Rez members).

In my desperation to locate an inclusive term for non-Canadian authorized terms for registered, nonregistered, Inuit, Treaty, non-Treaty, Status, non-Status, and my Metis Brothers and Sisters, I invented the term *Persons of First Nations Ancestry* (herein PFNA). However, I am greatly dissatisfied with this collapsed homogenization and my addiction to binary thinking.

Such a struggle to demarcate who is *us* and who is *them*: Why? What textual legacy do I replicate?

Fewer terms seem to be available to *our* Canadians/Canadiens. Numerous bifurcations emphasize either or both ancestral heritages, for example, *Jamaican-Canadian*, *Japanese Canadian*, and *Les Montreal Canadiens*.<sup>5</sup> However, in the literature one never spots terms like *Canadian Whites*, *Mohawk Canadians*, or *non-primitive Canadians*. A term of belonging seems fairly intact without need to wade through numerous historical legacies nor to legally distinguish *Status Canadians* from *non-Status Canadians*.

This multiplicity of terms indicates a desire to establish who belongs in which camp—cultural, geopolitical, or other. The highlighted text of this subsection illustrates how the labels can first project identity before ever meeting an individual of the collective.

### *Indian, Native, or First Nations?* *New Age Sensitivity Labeling*

In the case of *Canadian Indians* there is more often now the substitution of *First Nations*. Sometimes when I eavesdrop I can hear that the moniker switch is made without comprehending the geopolitical and spiritual agenda of switching labels.

What once was a Native basket is now a First Nations basket, without fussy attention to recognition of the “various governments of the aboriginal peoples of Canada” (Assembly of First Nations [AFN], 1988, p. 7). Curiously, the First Nations supplied definitions relies on the adjective *aboriginal* and the locatory designation of Canada; but the definition makes evident that *nationhood* is articulated through a recognition of the “inherent right of each sovereign First Nation” to utilize understood and unmistakable authority to develop “policies and laws and to control financial and other resources for its citizens” (p. 7). New language angles the merely curious gaze away from the cultural iconography of tipis, totem poles, and talismans toward the existence of sovereignty “long before the formation of Canada,” without relinquishment of inherent rights to “internally govern ... and to deal externally with other governments within Canada on a government-to-government basis without imposing [First Nations] authority or power over others” (p. 7). It is clearly the case that *les sauvages* do not want to be objects of cultural studies anymore.

Self-government has come out of the closet—again. Thus the term *First Nations basket* might actually translate to *sovereign basket* or *self-government basket*. I doubt that this is what collectors or the merely curious always mean.

Similar transformations in the term *Canadians* were not located. In this term there appears to be a presumed sense that self-government is understood as birthright and that such inherent right extends to the use of power and authority over/against (*non-*)*Canadian Indians*. For example, Canadian authority is cited as a causative factor in the decline of First Nations heritage languages. There is a “period in Canadian history during which past governments and Christian authorities suppressed the use” of heritage languages as a means to “assimilate First Nations people in *white society*” (AFN, 1988, p. 7). Here the use of the signifier *Canadian* outright puzzles me. The desire and actions to kill a language (linguicide?) is clearly a period in First Nations his/herstory too. The adjective *Canadian* obscures a shared his/herstory lesson. When we as First Nations author(ize) such statements, where do we direct the gaze to rest?

Can we conjure up a word to narrate inclusively a shared his/her/ourstory?

### *Emotional Responses*

#### *Which Otherwise Divide*

Memmi (1967), in *The Colonizer and the Colonized*, is often cited for his analysis of the artificially constructed portraiture of the Other as somehow lacking the attributes of the Euronorm persona, as somehow an object of inscrutable mystery, as somehow not true and deserving members of the *homo sapiens*. The First Nations agenda has been to resist an identity (take)(make)over, to remember original Names. Forgetting or denying the name of oneself or someone else is disrespectful. Remembering names is honoring. Somehow, somewhere members of the Maliseet, Oneida, Dakota, Ojibwe, Shuswap, Haisla, Musqueam—and other First Nations—have looked skyward and heard the Eagles call their true(r) names, reminding them of where they originate, where they belong, and where they will journey.

Names recall power.

Not everyone wishes to hear these names or their power. Hearing these names affects static comprehension about entitlement to identity, land, and resources, the

representation of (re)telling the story of interactions, and understandings about autonomy and privilege (see Figure 1). What's in a name engenders multiple emotional responses.

Some of the Gifts of the South, the Emotional Realm, include:

sense training, discipline of appetites and body, ability to express "bad" and "good" feelings, refining feelings, self-control, repulsion at senseless violence, anger at injustice, loyalty, love (Eros, agape), compassion, kindness, heart, idealism, and an ability to set aside "strong" feelings to provide community service. (Bopp, Bopp, Brown, & Lane, 1985, p. 72)

I have witnessed all these Gifts used well and badly when discussions about PFNA/us and non-PFNA/them issues emerge. Cross-cultural settings, particularly when engaged with cross-political purposes (historical and contemporary) create quite a murky energy. Dialogue (some days better than others) helps to hone appreciation of the self-discipline needed to express "bad" and "good" feelings while being respectful of an interwoven Living Force.

This is not always easy.

Participants experience a variety of strong(er) feelings as the story of contact (un)(en)fold. Compassion or cruelty, (un)disciplined anger, blind rage, or calmness rise, surge, and becalm. Discussions are flavored with denial of and entrenched self-justifications for enactment of *the will to colonize and the will not to be colonized*. The difficulty in setting aside overpowering emotional responses, with their unchecked affective reflexes influencing throughout time, keeps the sense of belonging and connectedness in a constant tension. The energy needed to sustain this tension debilitates all two-leggeds, because although material forms may appear distinct, Cree researcher, Walter Lightning (1992) reminds us that "you are I and I am you" (p. 246).

*Oh great, we took our own land away from ourselves?*

### *The Shock of Human Intimacy*

As my reading about this his/herstory progressed, I saw how tangled is this embrace of contact between Brothers and Sisters of one Family. The touching of our peoples is/was inevitable, with various results inspired. The first sensory reflectors of our emotions bring (in)to our consciousness a stimulus for reception and return of messages brought through meeting, communicating, touching. Touch need not be toxic, but our shared history bequeaths new stories about our stumbling foolishness, our lack of humility, our dizzyingly blinded capacity to forget our Original Instructions to love, to feel loved, to help, to respect, to care, and to connect with all members of our communities (Pepper & Henry, 1991, Figure 1, p. 147). These stories are not yet completely told.

Tough to (re)tell. Accepting *Others* as belonging members of a human family is tough love. Contact is never quite easy; intimacy even more difficult. As Freire (1989) asserts, transformation is neither authentic nor intimate when "the elites and the masses" are only engaged in the "depositing of 'communiqués,' whose contents are intended to exercise a domesticating influence" (p. 126). One cannot broadcast a his/herstory of transgressions in a "banking" mode, with rote memorization of the quantification of the body count. Exposure to facts should also invite questions: Who? Why? In our tottering toward answers, we must and will encounter the humbling shock of intimacy. We need to know the reasons for

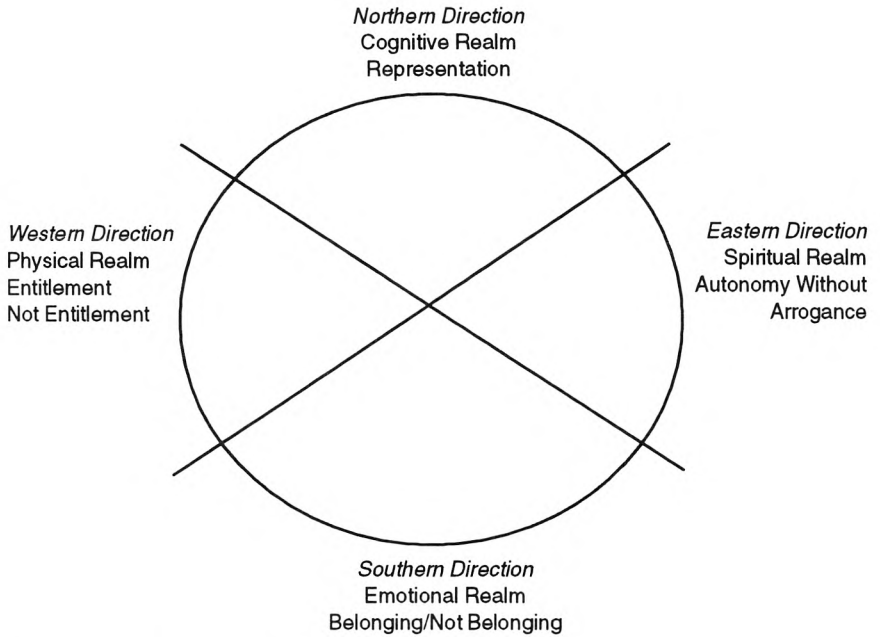


Figure 1. Consequences in the Four Realms.

naming that originates in racist attitudes and acts and sustains a perpetuation of naming that dishonors. We need time to process the emotions.

Intimacy intrudes on those Freire (1989) identified as domesticated; electrifies those numbed. Lack of authentic intimacy generates emotional dishonesty or denial, which might disable and silence the goodness of intent(ionality) to know ourselves in union with each other. Pelletier (1985) communicates that in "Indian country"

all subjects are spoken of freely, as there is nothing to hide. In English, some subjects are taboo. Native people speak freely to their past or their feelings, that is, they speak about having been in jail, or being drunk, etc. They know that other Native people will not make a judgment about them. There is seldom a statement telling him he is wrong. (p. 23)

[But, oh, the teasing if you need to be reminded that you are forgetting how to live a "good" human story!] But his words are reminders of an ideal, for as many Persons of First Nations Ancestry (PFNA) as non-PFNA chose silence rather than speaking, with both eaten up by swallowed words.

Pelletier (1985) teaches us without scolding, about the exigency for openness. Judgment blockades openness, makes us fearful of Truth. Some PFNA and non-PFNA individuals have equal difficulty starting out on a journey of articulation. Self-editing and self-censorship often inhibit speaking "true" feelings, and unearthing how to patiently practice and control the flow and strength of speaking "true" feelings is also part of the mutually educating journey. Learning how to share "good" and "bad" feelings is important for emotional (and physical, cognitive, spiritual) maturing.

In our classrooms we teach so much about analysis (critical pedagogy, critical thinking, critical theory), but lessons about learning how to excavate and to understand and to heal the emotional anguish are scarce. Even less often do teacher education programs teach the sequence of strategies to proceed beyond analysis and labeling in order to understand, practice, and comprehend the need to learn how to admit, to reconcile, to make reparation, to forgive, and to love. Even less are those who directly and indirectly manipulated power, continue to control power, or inherit an unfair advantage of power coached in ways to hear the silenced rage, anger, hurt, and sorrow of those victimized.

*Have we become deaf to all of our multiply formed selves?*

Often the lessons about being humane and inhumane are put on hold or forgotten as emotional hardware protects us from intimate self-knowledge where “you are I and I am you” (Lightning, 1992, p. 246). The time to see beyond darkness and to use the “capacity to see clearly with [our] inner eye [about] what we could become, or what the people could become together” (Bopp et al., 1985, p. 61) is omnipresent. How to waken this in any citizen? How do we need to view again the curricular experiences of life to enhance clear self-knowledge about acts of oppression, discrimination, and genocide? Where can we learn to discuss the interpenetrating events that demonstrate that it is as human to be kind as it is human to be cruel? All acts—deliberate or impulsive—have potential to teach everyone in a community about what intimacy means and to comprehend the fragile state of being humane, of be(com)ing of “compassionate mind” as Elder Louis Sunchild instructs (Lightning, 1992, p. 239).

Freire’s (1989) insight that no one individual or group is untouched in a cycle of violence as “functionally, oppression is domesticating” (p. 36) reminds us all that everyone is included in a Circle of Belonging—where skin color is a by-product of light refraction and not a genetic code for ideological standpoint or future actions.

### *The Disquietude Troubling Shared Mind*

The emotional disquietude roused by the term equivalents for Reds and Whites demonstrate the durability of this binary, where we see ourselves first as one and not the other, and only later remember that we are members of a human family. But violence continues in such dozens and dozens of ways daily, which extends deeply within and beyond the territories of these two terms. Perhaps the binary needs to discuss more our emotional separation and loneliness, with terms for those “Who Walk-Talk With Compassion” and those “Who Walk-Talk Without Compassion.” Elder Louis Sunchild, in sharing Cree understandings about connectedness explains that self-pollution (abuse of drugs, emotions, activities) will render us “no longer human because” we will no longer possess a “compassionate mind,” (Lightning, 1992, p. 237), a human mind “meant to be connected to others in compassion; love” (p. 237).

When terms are necessary to discuss collectives, then strong heart-minds are needed to speak the Truth of abuse, violence, and death, with the names spoken-written with a compassionate mind. Only then can binaries operate without division.

I must remember that.



## *Western Realm Naming and Entitlement*

The Western realm is associated with the materiality of existence. The physical world is a contested location of territory, rights, responsibilities, and entitlements to such. The materiality of existence can be seen in the forms of energy we enjoy: from kitchen appliance to favorite niece, from square footage of land to gas-consuming vehicle, from cherished couch to treasured seashell: the material world we inhabit and transform through the physicality of our feelings, thoughts, actions, and spiritus.

### *Us/Them*

#### *Questions of Ownership*

Material objects often create understandings and misunderstandings about entitlement. "That's mine, not yours" is often heard at the micro-level of the school playground and the macro-level of Nation-to-Nation unlevel playing fields. In the First Nations/non-First Nations binary, power has again been abused to privilege some and not others. However, not everyone has too much. As identity politics contextualize and reposition who has and has not political, economic, or other power, the binary of us/them is not sustainable.

Ideological differences related to acquisition and sustainable development contrast piercingly today. By 1991 34% of "Canadians" and 54% of PFNA garnered incomes of less than \$10,000 per annum (*Report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples*, Canada, 1996, p. 40). Somewhere living together became distorted, without understanding and practices to remember that "nothing may be taken from the universe unless something is given" (Bopp et al., 1985, p. 58). Although one may take from a Sister or Brother and gain in the short term, eventually there will be nothing left to take, for at some time we need to grapple with and "accept the reality of our finitude" (Deloria, 1995, p. 3). Not all Canadians live with a surplus of wealth.

Naming does not always truthfully locate who possesses and who does not possess enough material goods. However, to assume all non-PFNA have everything needed is myopic. Although enduring, how sturdy is the PFNA-non-PFNA binary? Questions of economic class and disempowerment need to be discussed. Just as some PFNA suggest we eschew Pan-Indianism (Chrisjohn, 1986), so too there is, I believe, need to (re)consider Pan-Whiteism when issues of class are awakened. For example, to argue *Other* on the basis of white and non-white sterilizes the economic disparity that some members of both communities endure as the legacy of an ideological sanction of uneven distribution of sustenance (adequate shelter, nutritious food, and affordable medicine) and profit. Some suffer economic disparity willingly for religious or spiritual reasons. However, in Canada, at the "top of the income distribution, an elite consisting of about 2% of the population holds nearly one-third of the total wealth, as well as the majority of significant decision-making positions in the economic institutions" (Marchak, 1988, p. 30). Marchak's attestation that 98% of the population of Canada cannot control significant economic decision-making shakes up solidified caricatures of the hierarchy extant. As well, an influx of Asian (also non-PFNA?) shifts economic capital concentration in terms of who-owns-what? and who-owns-whom? Many of

these inequitable conditions focus on the material conditions of living, including, for example, educational access, socioeconomic attainment, and political decision-making power. There seldom seems to be too much quibbling about who is more spiritually enlightened.

This brief dalliance with economic factors may seem perhaps a specious attempt to perforate supposedly bounded reductionisms of a dichotomy encoded by some as oppressors-oppressed. But class chasms do exist in PFNA and non-PFNA groupings. Identity politics enable subjects to recognize their multiply form(ed)(ing) selves, and to conceptualize

social subject and the relations of subjectivity to society in another way; a subject constituted in gender, to be sure, though not by sexual difference alone, but rather across languages and cultural representations; a subject engendered in the experiencing of race and class, as well as sexual relations; a subject, therefore, not unified but rather multiple, and not so much divided as contradicted. (de Lauretis, 1987, p. 2)

The fracturing, or perhaps more holistic, identity politics that de Lauretis (1987) tracks is also conspicuous in the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal dualism, conflicted across political, legislative, and legal means that have sharply divided who decides for whom, who makes laws for whom, and who polices and judges whom. The differences are often more than cultural. Economic materialism is enmeshed in negotiations regarding other planetary Beings, depersonalized as resources. Not all economic decisions are made by non-PFNA. Power in that half of the binary is restricted and cripples cruelly some non-PFNA citizens, consigning some of their own children to live in poverty.

*Well, actually that's all of our children  
if Lightning's (1992) "you are I and I am you" is recalled (p. 246).  
OK OK OK.*

*I mean if you were the last Mohawk-Cree Mom  
on the planet and there were only two Ukrainian-French children  
left to feed what would you—  
OK OK OK.*

### *Who Has and Has Not Masks Other Players Involved*

Who has and has not may not be understood as only about race or class. Teachings instruct about a different kind of binary. The binary of this disease is identified by Solomon (1991). He reminds us (everyone) that there are other Beings—greed, avarice, and lust—who participate in our human relationships, and that their influence can divide us. He states-prays,

The gods of greed and lust and avarice  
Finally they've gone too far.  
They took the cup, the Chalice of Life,  
And they've smashed it on the rocks,  
The rocks of hatred toward life.  
We, the people of the Earth  
We, the children of God  
must fashion a new cup  
A cup of life

From which all humanity can drink again  
 And be at peace with all Creation  
 For that is God's dream  
 For all his children.  
 Grandfather, Great Spirit, I pray. (p. 182)

There is an inclusivity in Solomon's words that reminds two-leggeds not to distinguish solely on the basis of the color of epidermal varnish. There are other dichotomous collectives that have names and need our attention: Greed and Generosity, Avaricious Self-Interest and Self-Sacrifice.

### *Secular Anthropocentrism*

In addition to the reductionistic ability of the terms to conceal the existence of other Beings and different conceptions of dichotomies interplaying (i.e., Greed and Generosity), the two terms enable forgetfulness about other communities. There is much talk about learning how to walk (function) in two worlds, with the strong implication that the two worlds are First Nations and non-First Nations based. The Two Worlds dichotomy of us/them is often about "material conditions and their relationships to questions of ideology and representation are at the heart of the vigorous debates in recent postcolonial theory" (Ashcroft, Griffiths, & Tiffin, 1995, p. 7).

Ashcroft et al. (1995) focus on the material world, the empirical physical realm of beingness. The spiritual realm is absented; hence the secular is predominant. The secular is also privileged with emphasis on the material *habitus*, when materiality is skeletal without introduction of the spiritual energy imbued within relationships. Figure 1 shows how the material and the spiritual realm are interconnected as the circle is unbroken. Replication of a secularized world view is only flesh and omits *spiritus*, what Solomon (1991) and other teachers remind patiently, that

We, [Meaning the two-leggeds] are spirit beings,  
 We have come from the spirit world,  
 We have taken on this human form  
 But we are only here for a short time  
 And we must return again to the spirit world  
 From where we have come. (p. 187)

The focus of entitlement on material form privileges a secularized material existence in a Sacred/Secular dichotomy. The Two Worlds dichotomy is also exclusionary.

In 1809 Red Jacket explained to a missionary that the Great Spirit had generously provided for all children of this Land, and in this spirit the Seneca shared with those who "told us they fled from their own country for fear of wicked men, and came here to enjoy their religion" (Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1971, p. 65). Red Jacket specifies the hunger, the fearful anxiety, of the displaced non-PFNA who, compelled to attain, leave the Seneca with "scarcely a place left to spread our blankets" (p. 65).

I often wonder about how material emphasis will make us blind. Imagine two groups watching the last Fish (or Caribou or Musk Oxen) Brothers and Sisters while discussing whose material entitlement is at stake.

*Member of Group #1:* Too bad about the fish, eh?

*Member of Group #2:* Yeah, but, sure looks like Oneida fish to me, rrrh?

*Member of Group #1:* Could be, but how can you be so sure, rh? I think-feel there's some Mohawk-Cree in those fish.

[Fish continue seething and flapping along the shoreline.]

*Member of Group #2:* Not so fast. We should renegotiate this entitlement, eh? What did we agree to before, eh?

*Member of Group #3:* Not so fast, I think we fish should have a [gasp, gurgle] in the negotiation this time.

*So, basically, we walk in three worlds, then ...*

*First Nations, Non-First Nations and Fish.*

*Well, it's a start.*

### *Moving Northward*

His/herstorically the binary, PFNA/us and non-PFNA/them, appears to assist description of who stole what and who wants what returned. However, late 20th-century economic situations illustrate that not all non-PFNA are boardroom powerbrokers in IBM, Eatons, or CIBC. To use the binary, without some attention to scarcity may well obscure larger binaries (e.g., Greed/Generosity), and the multiple worlds we walk-talk. Solomon (1991) also draws attention to an even larger binary: Those Who Love/Revere Life and Those Who Do Not.

Heavy or exclusive focus on the material world may incapacitate or paralyze our ability to understand with what power those Eagles fly.

One of the principles that is evident in [the text of Louis Sunchild] is that [he] consistently reiterates, but in an implicit way: the unity of the heart and mind. (Lightning, 1992, p. 243) Absolutely. (p. 243).

The things we give ourselves to, we become part of and they can own us. (p. 244).

### *The Northern Realm*

#### *Naming and Representation*

North can be associated with the intellectual realm. The Gifts of this realm are those that enable us to puzzle, comprehend, mull, assess, penetrate, and probe in order to make meaning of physical, emotional, intellectual, and spiritual events and conditions. As the heart and mind are not considered autonomously disparate, activities of the North can be considered those of thinking-feeling, an integration of heart and mind. Emotions, too, shape the material forms created and experienced. Thinking is also not separate from influences and effects from the physical and spiritual realm, the West and East Directions.

General connotations related to the word *cognition* relate to mental and intellectual activity. Bopp et al. (1985) list the obvious:

to think, to synthesize, to speculate, to predict, to discriminate [not on the basis of unfair privilege of power], to solve problems, to imagine, to analyze, to understand, to calculate, to organize, to criticize [not in destructive ways, with compassion], to remember, to interpret hidden meaning. (p. 64)

However, additional Gifts are given emphasis, which include the Gifts of perseverance, memory, struggle and completion, detachment, and balance. Although all these Gifts could be used to dissect and discuss the effects of naming and

representation, the two foci here are on detachment and balance after a brief recap of the problems with the standard account.

### *The Standard Accounts*

Readings texts can be heart-mind-wrenching experiences when PFNA issues appear distorted and/or absent. Newer texts illuminate understanding of issues of colonial brutality and fear and how the representations of such events have been textually constructed, servicing a falsely lopsided and homogeneous (re)telling (Crapanzano, 1994; Duchemin, 1990; Perry, 1995; Rose, 1992; Stiffarm & Lane, 1992; Weatherford, 1988), particularly where issues of entitlement are concerned. The exhumation and textual autopsy of what is now colloquially referred to as the Grand Narrative teaches us that the dichotomy of European and Other is necessary to exhume and discuss results of inequitable power and violent treatment between two groups. Intentions to domesticate PFNA are too well known, although some two-leggeds cling tightly to a cloak of denial.

The existence of Euroauthor(ized)(ed) accounts may well provide postcolonial and/or postmodern scholars with hours of employment. Deconstruction and destabilization of such narratives may also provide a means to enact a Freirean consciousness-raising experience for both oppressors and oppressed. However, although the energy focused here may transform through recognition of the horror and carnage, energy may be lost to begin to repair the evident damage, without opportunity to teach our children how to transform harm into ever-vulnerable states of reconciliation and integration. There exists comprehensive PFNA and non-PFNA-author(ized)(ed) reportage, with accompanying critique of the redundancy of the documentation and the frequent recommendations produced with great Gifts from the North. We learn these productions, come to know, and live this discursive script of Us/PFNA and Them/non-PFNA. These are learned inscriptions.

Yet interaction does not necessarily mean displacement or privilege, although some have come to erroneously conclude that this is so. George Erasmus, former Grand Chief of the Assembly of First Nations, delivered a remembrance of our pre-postcolonial centeredness at a self-government symposium held in 1990 in Toronto, Ontario. He asserts that for the

indigenous people of the Americas and in particular North America, our answers lay in the relationships we created with the European peoples that came here. We rely on our version of what happened, which is still kept alive in every indigenous community across Canada and North America. Our version of what happened is that we had an agreement that we would allow the Europeans to come to this part of the world. They would set up institutions. They would live amongst us. They would not have to live under our institutions of the indigenous nations. (Cassidy, 1990, p. 22)

Erasmus here makes the distinction on the basis of respect for the autonomy of other Beings who share this planet, not on the basis of a *will to colonize*.

What is inscribed can be reinscribed?

### *Going Beyond Standard Accounts*

Contact and collaboration or contact and colonialism continue, but imagine. *Poof!* Imagine, no more White *Thems* and *Theys*. *Oops*.

*So we get the land and resources all back then?*

Oops indeed! The learned, framed discourse involving PFNA and non-PFNA continues today as shown by these inscriptions from the recent summary of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Canada, 1996). "Before 1500, Aboriginal societies in the Americas and non-Aboriginal societies in Europe developed along separate paths, in ignorance of one another" (p. 5). Or this statement from further on in the same report:

In the 1800s, the relationship between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people began to tilt on its foundation of rough equality. The number of settlers was swelling, and so was their power. As *they* dominated the land, so *they* came to dominate the original inhabitants [my emphasis]. (p. 11)

Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal: a persistent dichotomy. By 1997 we all seem held hostage to this his/herstorical inheritance, particularly when issues of (dis)entitlement surface. This dichotomy suggests that PFNA must view themselves as dominated, colonized, oppressed, or question whether or not they are actually agents with autonomy to live a day outside of the binary. What if our textbooks read as follows:

*In the 1800s the relationships among the members of this human family became unbalanced. Some members abused their power and stole from the Cree in the area of the big mountains. Some members resisted the theft. Some members believed they dominated the Land. Some remembered to honor the lands, to share and to be generous, understanding that each hurt needed to be admitted and lovingly reconciled. Since that time many members of the two-leggeds have worked to restore together a good way to live, to return the items and land stolen and to restore a sense of communal health, sharing, trust and openness because they instinctively remembered that "you are I and I am you" (Lightning, 1992, p. 246).*

In the above passage, perhaps there is need to name those who stole and those who did admit their thefts and worked hard to gain forgiveness. I don't know, but I do know that the emphasis is often exclusively political, without attention to other aspects of interactions—including those who assisted the rightness of justice-making. Representational text teaches much about the oppressors, generally generically grouped; but the role models (e.g., former Justice Berger, former Justice Alf Scow) who modeled and nurtured truth-telling and collaboration are lesser known.

When we don't know our heroes we become impotent.

The intent and function of the Aboriginal/non-Aboriginal dichotomy is obvious. The reminder of the acute need to equitably reconcile geopolitical questions is evident daily in the media.

### *Detachment From the (Mis)Representational Politics of Naming*

The products of thinking-feeling are made manifest in products of representation (text, print, media, AV, dance, story) of events, experiences, and conditions. Names represent. The binary PFNA /non-PFNA is a product of representational thinking. Thought must be given to when this binary can be effectively and accurately utilized. There is not adequate space to document the unfair privilege given to non-PFNA documentation of events and conditions. Nor is there need to restate facts. There is now some familiarity that language, particularly published text,



constructs beliefs. For example, careful research has observed that texts that confidently report that North America was “discovered” is a perspective that obscures the truth of invasion, forced resettlement, and genocidal intentions. Another example is the rethinking of “schooling” provided for Status Indian children in residential schools. Labels like *school* and *schooling* are being deconstructed, and the wall hiding the genocidal brutality to (un)(re)name individuals is being dismantled (Chrisjohn & Young, 1994). The emotional responses to such spoken and written text and the deconstruction of falsities and half-truths are evident. As well, the material effects of representation on the daily lives of individuals, named in a particular way as Status Indians, is evident in the daily administration of the *Indian Act*. Representations of thinking-feeling have material force.

The North does not imply we use our intellectual Gifts just to become whiz-kid thinkers. Rather, a primary goal of these Gifts is to make meaning in order fearlessly to seek truthfulness. As Truth is found, individuals need also to consider detachment and attempt to see “as one the past, the present and the future,” in order to experience “freedom from hate, jealousy, desire, anger and hate.”

Thus knowledge, created by intelligence, needs to be set aside as knowledge “itself can become a burden too heavy to carry” (*Indian Act*). This does not mean that knowledge is thrown away, but that there are times when individuals are invited to stand outside of what one believes to be true and to divorce oneself from the too strong emotions contained within the belief that what one knows is true(est). As emotions support thought forms, there is need also to release from these emotions, or thinking can become unclear, illogical, poorly constructed, and static. Static thinking-feeling cannot allow transformations to occur fully. Thus the Gifts of the North instruct individuals to detach from learning that solidifies one’s perceptions and beliefs too firmly. To become too solid inhibits fluidity and may prevent a necessary understanding that the “human capacity to develop never stops” (Bopp et al., 1985, p. 73).

### *Balance and Letting Go of (Mis)Representations*

*Yah, but they got it all wrong.*

*“You are I and I am you” (Lightning, 1992, p. 246).*

*OK OK OK. We got it all ... wrong.*

So just keep telling the Truth until some begin to hear and (re)integrate more than the Truth publicized now?

Why not?

Except: A sense of perspective-balance is needed.

In Deloria’s (1996) book *God is Red, A Native View of Religion*, in an enlightening chapter titled “The Concept of History,” he discusses the dependency of non-PFNA church and state on print-recorded history. Whereas non-PFNA become chronologically fixated, striving for objective and linear documentation, PFNA recall the significant importance of the story of events, and leave the meaning-making, lesson-finding to the audience. Deloria describes the winter count robes as a record of the “psychic life of the community” in terms of what collectives selected and believed as “important to that group of people as a group” (p. 99). Thus he narrates some winter count robes may appear to strangely absent key “Western”

events (e.g., the famed Sioux skirmish with non-PFNA), but the “chances of a series of political or military events being recorded year after year as in the Western concept of history was so remote as to preclude the origination of history as a subject matter” of significance (p. 99). What is important is that one knows first one’s own his/herstory—from origin of name to names of grandparents, great-grandparents, key places (work, play sacred)—and humbly respects one’s place in a truly Grand Narrative unfolding.

### *Post-Indian Warriors*

Vizenor (1994) pounces on the signifier *Indians* with a tremendous amount of energetic fun because the “word, *Indian*, is a colonial enactment, not a loan word, and the dominance is sustained by the simulation that has superseded the real tribal names” (p. 11). He deconstructs and denudes so many simulations (books, movies) of the “bankable” Indian (p. 11) and invites us to become “postindian” beyond and “in the absence of the invention, and the end of representation in literature; the closure of that evasive melancholy of dominance” for “manifest manners are the simulations of bourgeois decadence and melancholy” (p. 11).

*Not balanced? Right.*

### *The Eastern Realm*

#### *Naming With Autonomy, Without Arrogance*

The East can be associated with spirituality. Many Gifts appear from the East. Some of these include beginning, innocence, joy, faith in that unseen, trustfulness, hopefulness, truthfulness, and autonomy (Bopp et al., 1985, p. 74). Cultural studies and identity politics may again overprivilege the already privileged diasporic Euronarrative if PFNA neglect to consider the harm created by themselves in their own communities. In time, self-governing PFNA collectives will need to abandon the crutch of *Them* because autonomy is a recognition more of one’s own weakness and power than judgment of others’ abuses. Restoration of the Power in the Land of the Eagles suggests that reprivileging of the Canadian partner of the pair may disable self-autonomy.

#### *Autonomy and Absenting the Norm*

Absenting the non-PFNA/they, however, for a time, might remove discursive moves of comparison and justification, which may contribute to inhibition of self-determination of cultural community (or First *National*) standards of behavior, including goals for economic (re)construction, education, language strengthening, and other areas of self-government. Comparison operates freely, and perhaps not always to advantage. The summary report of the Royal Commission on Aboriginal Peoples (Canada, 1996) uses Anglo-Red distinctions to substantiate researched claims. For example, the report alerts readers that approximately 80,000 employment positions will “raise Aboriginal people’s employment rate to the overall Canadian rate” (pp. 43-44); or housing for Aboriginal is “twice as likely to be in need of major repairs as those of other Canadians” (p. 78); or in “1990, only 43 per cent of Aboriginal people over age 15 had jobs, compared to [sic] 61 per cent of all Canadians” (p. 137). This globalizing comparison tactic fails to enunciate cross-community comparisons among the First Nations themselves; that is, Cree and

Mohawk or Sliammon and Labrador communities. As well, the extraglobal community, coded as First Nations, continues culturally to reproduce EuroCanadians' standards of attainment as a desirable goal for economic progress.

If full employment is a desirable cultural, political, spiritual, or other goal for a *First Nations* sovereign cultural-community, then rather than a comparative standard, a within-community standard and justification must evolve as an act of self-determination with complementary respect for Original Instructions, or Teachings present from time immemorial. Simply to have to work because "Canadians" are working is not a completely adequate self-justification for further socio-economic development, especially if there is a failure to discuss the spiritual, environmental, social, and other problems of capitalist-based economics, which can tempt any individual to be a member of the camp that Solomon (1991) identifies as Greed and Avarice.

Justifications that progress as a compare-contrast journey, with an I-wonder-how-the-Joneses-are-doing? ideology, may clog self-governing capacity to see the falsity of claims, promises, and proposals of late 20th-century capitalism, which is ideologically not a system of economic distributive justice or a system of environmental respect. It's not supposed to work that way; capitalism is about profit, not egalitarian benefit. As an axiomatic theory of supply, demand, market correction, and perfect competition, the assumptions of "magic of the marketplace" on examination "do not apply to the real world," and can be as much a threat to open society as any other ideology becoming a totalitarian overlord (Soros, 1997, pp. 45-48). The excavation of the his/herstory of entitlement has unearthed the basis of capitalist, industrialist, and other economic growth (too often wildly unrestrained), growth often undertaken without understanding that resources are viewed as Gifts by some First Nations caretakers/protectors of particular territories of Mother Earth. There may be more to getting an education in order to "earn" a living; more than being subsumed to a Eurobased ideology of economic growth and prosperity. Without non-PFNA/them what will be the economic standards from within PFNA communities?

Robertson (1970), speaking about the emergent fur-trade slaughter, depicts nascent capitalism as one where the "Indians entered an economy which was not different from that functioning in the rest of Canada," with PFNA linked "as a labourer and consumer" within a "world-wide market" (p. 17). Participation in such economically exploitive ideology and practices, which commodify any Brother or Sister, raises questions about who is Other. How did furbearing animals become otherized? What was the function of this otherization but to depersonalize these Beings in order to understand them as commodity objects with a pricetag on their heads. Granted PFNA did not hold board of directorships with The Bay (earlier, the Hudson's Bay, an early multinational commodity-based entrepreneurship); nonetheless, there are actions and ideological turning points here that strengthened the agendas of the Beings with strong names like Colonialism, Imperialism, and Capitalism.

The resultant economic disparity is too well documented. However, PFNA or not, we support commodification and capitalist imperialism as we drive ozone-depleting vehicles as much as the next Other, purchase word-processing machines

or television sets made by Third World children's fingers, and shop for coffees grown on the exploited lands of Brothers and Sisters.

Often the reportage serves to reinforce Pan-Indian and Pan-White oppositional standpoints, actions, consequences, flavored with Anti-Indianness and Anti-Whiteness. Granted (long)(out)standing his/her/historical issues remain unresolved. British Columbia is a province just beginning a widespread treaty process, and the surfacing racism, fearfulness, neediness, and backlash are draining vast amounts of energy from communities, reawakening the slash between us/them. Perhaps we can learn to vision and create encounters that will speak more of how we reconciled the ugliness, hurt, and misery rather than celebrate the arrogant disrespect. For if we forget how to write a future, we only suffer longer.

### *Autonomy Without Arrogance*

Autonomy is misused when arrogance is the motivation. Solomon (1991) observes that there are always

those children of the Creator  
Who were not content  
With the way that God made things.  
And in their arrogance they set out  
To improve on "His-Her" work;  
They plant trees in straight rows, etc.,  
Everything is done in straight lines  
And rights angles. (p. 183)

We are children until we are mature enough to live this life story with humility, unwilling to alter or harm the many gifts we have been given to live. Thus, in the end, living becomes a life of self-discipline to monitor words, thoughts, feelings, and actions for their ability to honor or dishonor. This too is part of our identity politics for

There were other empires before this one  
But they are not here any more  
Because each of them came to their highest point  
of arrogance  
And were each consigned  
To oblivion.  
(Solomon, 1991, p. 184)

Humility, arrogance, respect, violence, cruelty, and compassion are not genetically encoded with a complementary skin color. We must teach this al(l)ways.

*In other words they are no longer human because they do not possess the compassionate mind.*  
(Teacher/Chief Louis Sunchild, Lightning, 1992, p. 225)

At a dedication of a George Littlechild painting of the White Buffalo at the First Nations House of Learning (University of British Columbia, Canada), Elder Margaret White reminded a multilingual, multiethnic, multipolitical, and multi-spiritual audience that sometimes PFNA think-believe that the sun shines only on them, that the rain falls only on them. The reminder temporarily punctures distinctions of Other. The epistemic arrogance (and spiritual and physical and cognitive acts of arrogance-violence) of Otherization is a transformation PFNA and non-

PFNA are not unfamiliar with throughout time-place. This knowledge may give both PFNA and non-PFNA the wisdom to consider who is specifically *Other* before guilt, shame, and blame are assigned. Moreover, this knowledge may give PFNA and non-PFNA the strength of wisdom to consider the potential of homologous relationality as all children first of this place, the land, our Mother and that the manifestation of illnesses like arrogance, colonialism, greed, avarice, and lust are global. Teacher/Chief Louis Sunchild states-instructs:

This concern I have, of this being a global problem, is certainly evident in the physical manifestations of the abuse of the mind.

There are diseases that have developed because of this, and some of them are diseases of the bones, loss of hearing, insanity, blindness.<sup>6</sup>

One should not feel that these are meant for any specific individual but rather that this is a concern that affects all humanity. (Lightning, 1992, p. 227)

In 1834 Black Hawk similarly instructs us all about the actions of those who possess the *arrogance of the will to colonize*.

An Indian who is as bad as the white man, could not live in our nation; he would be put to death, and eaten up by the wolves. The white men are bad schoolmasters; they carry false looks and deal in false actions; they smile in the face of the poor Indian to cheat him; they shake them by the hand to gain their confidence, to make them drunk, to deceive them, and ruin our wives. We told them to let us alone, and keep away from us; but they followed on and beset our paths, and they coiled themselves among us like the snake. They poisoned us by their touch. We were not safe. We lived in danger. We were becoming like them, hypocrites and liars, adulterers, lazy drones, all talkers, and no workers. (Council on Interracial Books for Children, 1971, p. 109)

These words pull no punches about thoughts, feelings, and actions that transgress standards of behavior necessary to honor Original Instructions given to those who inhabit this land, live because of our Mother, for Mother Earth does not discriminate who to love, who to subjugate and who to feed.

As well, Black Hawk's *je t'accuse* invites PFNA to consider their level of self-delusion, making comparison and justification not always entirely possible. Becoming like those with *the arrogance of a will to colonize* means that the illnesses of these Beings—Colonialism, Imperialism, Greed, Avarice—can easily infect anyone. The will to violate, subjugate, dominate is color-blind. The *will to (de)(post)colonize* must also be color-blind.

Black Hawk reminds us about the self-discipline needed to interrogate one's intentions to respect Other. The *will to colonize* wobbles any sharply delineated binary. Black Hawk charges members of his community, including himself with the pronoun *we*, with acts that are invasive, subordinating, violating, dominating. The classic victim may in fact become the oppressor or the bearer of retribution. Thus who (de)(un)(post)colonizes whom? Anyone. Who shall wear the badge of oppressor in a lifetime? Anyone.

### *There Is No Excuse*

Autonomy, a Gift of the East, means there is always a moment for application of free will and volition (Bopp et al., 1985, p. 16). "Good" thinking means we'll think-feel-act for ourselves, without harm to those ill, but also without further

harm to our Mother Earth and our Father within the interconnected flux-of-time-place.

The anguish of harming another is a lesson of arrogance, that is, to be without humility. I hear that lesson in the powerful and sorrowful words of Chief Joseph.

I knew I had never sold my country, and that I had no land in Lapwai; but I did not want bloodshed. I did not want my people killed. I did not want anybody killed. Some of my people had been murdered by white men, and, the white murderers were never punished for it. I told General Howard about this, and again said I wanted no war. I wanted the people who lived upon the lands I was to occupy at Lapwai to have time to gather their harvest. I said in my heart that, rather than have war, I would give up my country. I would give up my father's grave. I would give up everything rather than have the blood of white men upon the hands of my people. (Council of Interracial Books for Children, 1971, pp. 244-245)

### *Finish What We Begin*

Another Gift of the East is to “complete what we begin” (Bopp et al., 1985, p. 73). In the “Big Picture Manifesting,” what is here started before a non-PFNA off-continent diaspora began. This time of PFNA / non-PFNA is very brief compared with Time Immemorial. Our stories and further research instruct us about events and conditions resulting from before contact and after, where at one time almost 85% of the Earth Mother seemed overrun with one or more families. Our stories teach about this too. Yes, the cruelest of Beings become the best of teachers. Their actions and subsequent events test and teach us about our aspirations to honor and protect our Original Instructions: not better or worse instructions, just different instructions about what transformation is harmful and what transformation is reverential. There is a vision implanted there, described in our Creation stories, about a vision to complete, for all Beings are always subject to Natural Law. This fearful disharmony we feel, we practice, we savor, we reject, we embrace, we react to: this energy we create we are responsible for ultimately. The material manifestation of vision is shared by all Beings; the story does not have to be(come) a story of our shared self-destruction. Instead, with extreme humility and forgiveness, for the “human being is not superior,” we can remember that

there is always natural law. The natural law is the all governing law. It is the law that everyone is ruled by and all things in the creation. It is an absolute law. It's a law that you cannot violate. It's a law that has retributive powers. It's a law, that has no mercy. It's a law that will always prevail. It's a law that unless you recognize it and deal with it in the beginning, it will destroy you. It's absolute—there is no mercy to it. (Lyons, 1981, p. 14)

Here-now al(l)ways the vision, perhaps ethnocentrically Oneida, Haisla, Kwa'kwakawaq, or Cree, has instructions given as teachings to honor in every moment, which is flux and transforming, the Gifts of Life evident and not evident.

*The things we give ourselves to, we become part of and they can own us.* (Lightning, 1992, p. 244).

Gayle High Pine (1973) nudges me to recall that the teachings-learnings about our Old Ways apply throughout time and we arrogantly, perhaps misguidedly, have come to believe that “we seem to think that we must protect the Old Ways, rather than allowing the Old Ways to protect us” (p. 38). No matter the name of the



epoch or era, an identical story of two-legged greed, perversion, atrocity, kindness, unconditional love, courage, and transformation can be read; for there is

no “modern” world. There is not even a white world—there is the world of the Great Spirit and the world of Mother Earth. It is through the old sacred ways that we know this always, and only through these old ways can we survive as a people, (High Pine, 1973, p. 39)

those equally given Life by the Sun and Cleansed by the Rain.

### Conclusion

In the case of Persons of First Nations Ancestry and Persons not of First Nations Ancestry, some rather sharp lines are discursively etched into descriptions of one species. To return to 1985, Pelletier provided this reconnaissance

of a group of people known as Native, and a group of people from Western European countries known as Whites [and] each group seems to have totally different lifestyles. One of the most important ways of looking at the discovery of the Americas is that it brought together a people dedicated to attaining and owning and a people devoted to growing and living as a tribal entity. This has separated each of these people so widely that, to this day, neither one understands the other. (p. 20)

Fortunately, Pelletier’s use of a form of the copular verb *be*, that is, *seems*, indicates that this was the status quo in 1985. His words do not freeze our division. Transformations to melt and merge the elements of an artificial dichotomy of species are al(l)ways possibilities.

Transformations occur al(l)ways, from granite eroding under the press of glaciers to rivers overflowing, from caterpillars weaving to butterflies emerging, from dominions forming to empires receding. Transformations occur so abruptly they can surprise, perplex, or frustrate; or so slowly they might remain unobserved. Omnipresent and deliberate metamorphosis affects each being imbued with life force in flux. Thus all actions, within continuously interconnected change, become cautionary tales, for those who listen hard, about the effects of the one on the many, or the many on one. Attentiveness, prudence, humor, and humility are needed to comprehend that actions produce effects. However, some believe they cannot produce effects. Some deny the transformation they have created. Some know they have the power to create life out of love or death out of selfishness. How to learn to understand comprehensively that actions—purposive or not—produce ever-shifting effects of simultaneous and paradoxical similarity and difference?

Naming can be both a precious inheritance to honor and a condemnation of fixity. Use and reuse of the Us/PFNA and Them/non-PFNA binary may enable unthinking-unfeeling, which blockades transformations in how we think-feel about belonging, entitlement, representation, and autonomy.

Such transformations do occur within that finitude, Deloria (1995) observed. From above, the Eagle’s vision while soaring can only see Mother Earth as an interconnected circle-cycle, within many other interlocking circle-cycles—the moon’s orbit around the Mother, the planet Brothers and Sisters orbits around the Sun. What names must we conceive and teach our children and our children’s children to demonstrate-enact the power of Eagle’s vision into the materiality of feeling, action, thought, and spiritus?

Thank you for reading-hearing these few words. I know little. I learnt much thinking-feeling my way through a binary that speaks to our acts of naming and the effects on a shared sense of belonging and not belonging to a human family; about our beliefs about material entitlement; about the effects of putting names into representation and about learning how to name through the Gift of autonomy, but without arrogance.

For my parents, thank you; for my Ancestors, thank you.

#### Notes

<sup>1</sup>Although this illustration does borrow from Medicine Wheel understandings, this paper is not intended to explicate the holistic nature of this heuristic. For explanatory descriptions, see, for example, Bopp et al. (1985); Calliou (1995); Hampton (1995).

<sup>2</sup>The use of the term *spiritual* is not here intended to denote any particular religious dogma. The growth of one's spiritual being(ness) is considered as integral as one's emotional, intellectual, and physical.

<sup>3</sup>For one description of this sense of holistic intactness, and the effects of broken completeness, see Pepper and Henry (1991).

<sup>4</sup>Status Indians are those Indians recognized pursuant to the definition provided in the Indian Act (Canada, R.S.C., 1985, c1-5, s. 2(1)). In this particular case, "Indians" are those registered or entitled to be registered as "Indian" (s. 2(1)). The distinction is an act of a foreign government.

<sup>5</sup>These references to sports teams are meant as levity in an otherwise too serious discussion. I know the Cleveland Indians are not really registered Treaty PFNA, so please don't write to me with lengthy explanations. Ditto Les Montréal Canadiens.

<sup>6</sup>These illnesses need to be considered literally and metaphorically, for example, loss of hearing, blindness (Lightning (1992): "Metaphor is used in a system of mnemonics (memory symbols), so that implications of the metaphor can be seen to be appropriate in several different spheres or domains. The metaphors fit at every level of interpretation. This text is full of metaphors" (p. 231).

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