

**Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves:
The Contrapuntal Rantings of a Halfbreed Girl**

**by
Allyson K. Anderson**

**A Thesis submitted to the Faculty of Graduate Studies
of The University of Manitoba**

**in partial fulfilment of the requirements of the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy**

Department of Native Studies

University of Manitoba

Winnipeg

Copyright © 2019 by Allyson Anderson

Abstract

This thesis investigates issues of representation and the social identity of the colonized by conducting a textual analysis of a fictive social construct that I dub the halfbreed girl, and of the ways in which selected metisse writers, poets, artists and performers respond to that stereotype in their respective works. Using methodologies in literature and the visual/performing arts, this thesis interrogates matters of social process: specifically, settler-colonialism's discursive management of the social identities – in effect, the social place – of metis women, and how metis women negotiate this highly raced and gendered identity space.

Emphasizing Canadian contexts, the images examined are drawn from North American settler-colonial pop-culture texts produced in the late nineteenth- through the early twenty-first centuries; the metisse responses to them are gathered from the same time period. The thesis includes American-produced images of the halfbreed girl due to the historic relationship between the two nations and the significant consumption of mass-produced American pop-culture media by Canadians – historically and currently.

The first tier of the study demonstrates how the figure of the halfbreed girl is rendered abject through textual strategies that situate her at the intersection of the dichotomies, civilization/savagery and Madonna/whore, generating the racialized Princess/squaw polemic. The logic of the Princess/squaw polemic further reticulates into three sub-binaries: White/Indian, mimesis/regression, and naturalness/degeneracy, compounding the abjection of the halfbreed girl, who oscillates along and between these binaries, relegating her to a state of perpetual liminality in the settler-colonial master narrative. The thesis also finds that these

textual strategies tend to reflect the processes of social abjection to which metis women were subjected in actuality, as exemplified by the deteriorating social status of historical metisses in nineteenth-century Canada.

The second tier of the study finds that metisse auteurs are indeed cognizant of this social construction—and subsequent abjection—of themselves as an Indigenous ‘other’ in settler-colonial pop-culture discourse, and incorporate this awareness, along with elements of the stereotypical halfbreed girl, into their respective embodiments of metisse-ness in their selected works. However, they do not respond uniformly to images of the halfbreed girl that situate them as a liminal entity, nor necessarily receive them uncritically. Rather, their works exhibit variegated reactions—from internalization to various modalities of resistance—as they grapple with aspects of the halfbreed girl in their own performances and/or texts.

Dedication

For all of my ancestors who came before me, who travelled far, who risked life and limb to simply *survive*, who literally carried the weight of Empire on their backs and/or in their bellies: your love and your lives and your journeys – far from easy - led to this moment. I am proud to walk in your footsteps.

For my beloved parents who gave me life and nurtured my body, mind, and soul, for their hard work, their unwavering moral support, their unconditional love, and for teaching me to extend that love to others, beyond human beings, to encompass the land that nurtures us, and to all of the beings who inhabit it along with us. I would not be who I am without you.

For cherished *Niwicewakan*, steadfast and true, without whose belief in me, along with his material sacrifice and practical support, this endeavour would not have been possible. My love and gratitude, always.

For my adored, and adoring children, and to my first-born grandson, who sacrificed time with me or for me in this academic pursuit, and for being my heart, my light, and my will to continue to better myself.

For B., life-long friend and soul sister, whose clear-sightedness, even temper, and moral support is, as always, both touchstone, and balm to the soul.

This is for you.

Acknowledgements

I give my thanks to the Snuneymux and to the Lyackson peoples, upon whose unceded territories I have been privileged to live and work for the last two decades, and to the Elders who worked alongside me, educating and advising me. Thanks to the many colleagues who have been part of the department of Indigenous/Xwulmuxw Studies at Vancouver Island University over the years, who have been my academic ‘family’, as well as fostered my intellectual ‘home’. Thanks to the many students who have graced my classroom over the years for comprising the ‘learning community’ that has educated me so well.

Thanks to Aunt Marge and Uncle Keith for embracing me into the bosom of their kinship, and for and facilitating my reconnection with the Winnipeg contingent of my large, extended Metis family. You were my, ‘soft place to fall’ when I was homesick, lonely, and stressed. You were there to share my joy and my accomplishments. Thank you for your unflagging love and support. Thank you for helping me to re-trace the steps of my ancestors on my ancestral home.

Thanks to my dissertation advisor, Emma LaRocque for your unflagging faith in my scholarship and for your advocacy, advice, and moral support. Thank you to Chris Trott for your practical guidance, and to Serenity Hee-Jung Joo for her incisive critique, and above all, the committee’s patience. Thanks to my external examiner Deanna Reder for your glowing review of my thesis.

Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Table of Contents	vi
List of Figures	viii
Preface: On Method, Terminology and Organization	ix
The Reflected and Storied Identity	ix
Textual Analysis	xiv
Research Design	xxi
tier 1: sample group & system of analysis	xxiv
tier 2: sample group & system of analysis	xxx
halfbreed', mixed-blood', "little m", "big": iterations of metissage	xxxii
Chapter Overviews	xxxv
I. Introduction: Seeing Through the Settler-Colonial Looking-Glass	1
Literature Review: Desperately Seeking the Halfbreed Girl	10
the eye of the beholder	15
"neither indian princess nor easy squaw"	17
hollywood horrors	21
returning the (three-eyed) gaze	30
II. Picturing the halfbreed girl:	31
III. Boundary Issues:	52
Post Red Resistance: Relocating the metisse in the Colonial Master Narrative	71
Nascent Nationhood: Reinforcing Perimeters and Parameters	76
IV. Placing Women of a "Pernicious Middle Race":	88
White/Indian: "Born of Sin and Savagery"	96
a fetish, by any other name	103
squaw man / law man / straw man	106
bestial beauties	110
Mimesis/Regression: You Can Dress Her up, but You Can't Take Her Anywhere	114
they say "money lightens" (dimly)	126
whitewashing the halfbreed girl.	130

Naturalness/Degeneracy: Miscegenous Monstrosities.....	134
mastering the miscreant halfbreed girl.	136
a dark lady.	145
dark lady, strange empire.....	150
V. Through a Glass, Darkly: Reflections of/on the Other/self.....	160
Seeing Double-Othering.....	165
Internalization: Dueling Dualities	171
Resistance: A Curious Hybrid.....	186
VI. The Observations of a Four-Eyed, Halfbreed Girl.....	202
Considerations for Further Research.....	206
Outstanding Issues.....	209
References	214
Appendix A : Dumont, (1996) <i>A Really Good Brown Girl</i> (selected poems)	225
The Red & White	225
‘Squaw Poems’	225
Blue Ribbon Children.....	227
Half/Human Half/Devil (Halfbreed) Muse	228
Appendix B: Lyrics to Menard’s, <i>Velvet Devil</i> (Selected Tracks)	229
The Velvet Devil	229
Halfbreed Blues.....	230

List of Figures

Figure 1: Diagram of Binary Oppositions	53
Figure 2: Squaw Men.....	78
Figure 3: The Bifurcated, White Squaw	99
Figure 4: Naza's Internal Conflict.....	102
Figure 5: Still Shot from Halfbreed - Official Video.....	105
Figure 6: Lupine Louvette	113
Figure 7: Photo Portrait, Pauline Johnson, From Moccasin Maker.....	128
Figure 8: The Metisse Who Gets Her Man.....	131
Figure 9: Naza, the Snake in the Grass	137
Figure 10: Apache Woman - Stripped, Raw, Fury	142
Figure 11: Mastering the Halfbreed Girl	144
Figure 12: Loving Kat Dancing	151
Figure 13: Strange Empire. Still Shot From Lead-In Sequence	154
Figure 14: Strange Empire DVD Cover Art	155
Figure 15: The Doubling of Pauline Johnson	166
Figure 16: Pauline Johnson's Indian Costume	168
Figure 17: From Velvet to Devil.....	180
Figure 18: Cyborg Hybrid Living Spaces (Adams, 2006).....	185
Figure 19: Disrupting the White Squaw	196
Figure 20: Halloween 2016 with 'Rey' & 'Cher'	209

Preface: On Method, Terminology and Organization

The Reflected and Storied Identity

The notion that individuals develop their identities in relationship to their socio-cultural contexts was first introduced in 1902 by Charles Cooley's theoretical construct, "The Looking-Glass Self." Cooley postulated that identity formation is a life-long formative process in which the individual develops a socially mediated, intersubjective, dialectical, multi-layered identity—a never-ending course of development in which a person must navigate complex social networks for as long as they are embedded within them. According to symbolic interactionist theorists like Cooley and, later, Mead and Goffman (1953), identity formation is ultimately a process consisting of an interchange between the individual and their society's metanarrative, and society's expectations of the individual within that narrative frame. It stands to reason, then, that one way of analyzing complex social processes that span both space and time—such as the development of social identities—would be to examine the narratives of individuals along with those of the larger society in which they are embedded.¹

For the purpose of this thesis, the term 'narrative' refers to the stories that individuals and societies tell about life, the universe and everything—"the primary scheme by means of which human existence is rendered meaningful" (Polkinghorne, 1988, p. 13). Narratives can also refer to "the process of making a story, to the cognitive scheme of the story, or to the result of the process—also called 'stories,' 'tales' or 'histories'" (13) including social histories (1). The

¹ Herbert Mead (American, 1863 – 1931) is regarded as one of the founders of the sociological theory, 'symbolic interactionism', which holds that action in and interaction with the social world is inseparable from the individual's consciousness, thus the development of the 'self'.

individuals in question here are women of mixed, North American Indigenous/European ancestry, and the narrative frame under scrutiny is that of settler-colonial pop culture in Canada and the U.S.A., specifically regarding its conversation about ‘racial hybridity’ and miscegenation.² This study interrogates not only the convoluted social construction of ‘racially hybrid’ women as marginal ‘others’ in these discourses, but also investigates the complicated ways that women of Indigenous/European ancestry form and negotiate their ethnic and gender identities with regard to this imposed framework.³

Predicated on long-established tenets of postcolonial studies that are grounded in Gramscian notions of hegemony, this thesis assumes a nation’s grand narrative to constitute the *mythos* of that society, representing not so much an empirical chronicle of events but an interpretation and revision of them that functions primarily as a rationale for structuring society to the advantage of the dominant group. In the West, these fictionalized historical narratives are then assimilated into popular culture and, through recursive storytelling, become taken for granted as ‘fact’ by audiences (Blaut, 1993; Crosby, 1991; Francis, 1992; Glass, 2006; Spurr, 1993), including those of colonized populations, who are vulnerable to internalizing them

² In this study, I use the term, ‘settler-colonialism’ to refer to: “an ongoing system of power that perpetuates the genocide and repression of indigenous peoples and cultures. Essentially hegemonic in scope, settler colonialism normalizes the continuous settler occupation, exploiting lands and resources to which indigenous peoples have genealogical relationships. Settler colonialism includes interlocking forms of oppression, including racism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and capitalism”. Source: Oxford Bibliographies (2018). <http://www.oxfordbibliographies.com/view/document/obo-9780190221911/obo-9780190221911-0029.xml> Retrieved: November 30, 2018, 8:51 P.T.

³ Within the context of my thesis, I use the term ‘marginal’, and ‘marginalization’ to encompass the following set of connotations defined in Merriam-Webster’s online dictionary (2019), as follows: “a: of relating to, or situated at a margin or border; b : not of central importance / limited in extent, significance, or stature. c(1): occupying the borderland of a relatively stable territorial or cultural area marginal tribes. (2): characterized by the incorporation of habits and values from two divergent cultures and by incomplete assimilation. (3): excluded from or existing outside the mainstream of society, a group, or a school of thought. 4: located at the fringe of consciousness. 4a: close to the lower limit of qualification, acceptability, or function: barely exceeding the minimum requirements.” In short, marginality refers to an abject group who occupies various abject zones and states, as described by Anne McKlintock (1995) in the introduction, “Seeing Through the Colonial Looking-Glass”. From: <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/marginal>. Retrieved: January 18, 2019, 2:26 p.m. PT.

(Fanon, 1952; Friere, 2012; Memmi, 1967). During the period covered in this study, the various textual modalities of mass media most often serve as the vehicle for such pop-culture narratives, with Western imperialist societies most often in control, owning the means of production and distribution, as well as any profit derived from their textual representations of Indigenous people(s).⁴

Consistent with this school of thought, American media theorist, Herbert Schiller (1973), considers all messages manufactured and purveyed by Western, corporate, mass media texts to be—to greater or lesser extent—fictive narratives. When examining such narratives in regard to Western imperialism, Schiller argues, the most salient aspect to consider is not so much that “the medium IS the message”, as posited by his Canadian contemporary, Marshall McLuhan, but rather—it is that “all media transmit the same message, each in its own form and style” (1973, p. 81).⁵

One central myth dominates the world of fabricated fantasy; the idea that entertainment and recreation are value-free, have no point of view and exist outside...the social process. An enormously diverse consciousness-processing apparatus, utilizing all the familiar forms of popular culture – comic books, animated cartoons, movies, TV and radio shows, sports events, newspapers and magazines – takes full advantage of this totally false

⁴ The term, ‘hegemony’ was coined by neo-Marxian scholar, Antonio Gramsci (1971) to describe the process by which the ideological/cultural domination of one class or group by another is achieved by “engineering consensus” through controlling the content of cultural forms and major institutions (e.g., education, law, and mass media). Hegemony is not an event: rather, it is a social, historical, and political process by which the interests and values of the dominant group become perceived by the larger society as ‘universal’ truths. See, Jary & Jary (1995) eds, *The Collins Dictionary of Sociology*. Harper and Collins.

⁵ This phrase was first introduced by Canadian media theorist Marshall McLuhan, in his (1964) work, *Understanding the Media: The Extensions of Man*. Canada: McGraw – Hill.

conception...[pumping] out value-laden recreation and entertainment, denying all the while any impact beyond momentary escapism... (Schiller, 1973, p. 80)

In other words, although the pop-culture texts produced and purveyed by the West may seem innocuous enough, “behind the baroque of the images hides the grey eminence of politics” (Baudrillard, 1983, p. 10). According to postcolonial scholars like Schiller, Baudrillard, and Giroux (2016), corporate-owned mass media is a vehicle for American—and by extension, Western—imperialism: not only extending its reach, but also by cultivating a discursive environment that is used to groom populations—at home and abroad—to consume what Schiller coined as a “packaged consciousness” (1970).

The true product for mass consumption, Schiller argues that this “packaged consciousness” is carefully constructed and controlled so as to ensure the success of the settler-colonial and larger imperialist project, designed to fabricate consensus among the populaces of ostensibly free and democratic societies in a way that promotes an outcome consistent with a corporatist agenda. Further, this manufactured consciousness is meant to operate not only at the *macro-social* level (global, socio-political, and economic structures), but also at the *micro-social* level, ‘trickling down’ *to shape people’s individual and interpersonal behaviours* (Fanon, 1952; Fanon, 1963; Stoler, 1995). After all, what is the endgame of colonization—whether direct or indirect—but to instill the values of the colonizer so deeply in the resident population that

eventually, having internalized the values of the colonizer, the colonized will govern *each other*, as well as their *selves* (Adams, 1989; Fanon, 1952; Fanon, 1963; Memmi, 1967)?⁶

While acknowledging this insidious agenda and exposing its practice is vital to the project of postcolonial studies as well as to Canada's movement toward Truth and Reconciliation, it is just as important to understand that the installation of this 'packaged consciousness' *en masse* is not as seamless, nor always as successful, as its originators might anticipate. Inherent to this hegemonic process is a dynamic tension between its messaging, and how people actually receive and respond to those messages. Although any colonial text may be encoded with meanings that rationalize and reinforce its hierarchies, along with the positional superiority of the West, such texts are not necessarily accepted *prima facie* nor homogenously by their receivers.⁷ In his writings on analyzing pop culture, critical social theorist, Stuart Hall (2004), argues that once it leaves its source of origin, even the simplest narrative is not as straightforward as it seems, having more nuanced connotations other than its original intent. According to Hall, people can respond to encoded messages by receiving their intended meaning, unquestioned and absorbed unconsciously, and/or by 'decoding' them in any number of ways, *including ways that question, challenge, resist, or dismiss the original meaning* intended by its creator. To this end, it is necessary to examine texts produced by metisses

⁶ Here I am subverting the usage of the populist economic notion of 'trickle down' economics, as embodied in the fiscal policies of the Republican Party of the U.S.A., most notoriously known as 'Reaganomics' during the Reagan administration in the 1980s.

⁷ The term, 'positional superiority' derives from Edward Said's (1978) postcolonial work, *Orientalism*, in which he describes the "flexible positional superiority" of the West over its imagined and constructed Orient, which he argues "puts the westerner in many variations of possible relationships with the Orient without ever losing him the upper hand" (p. 7). In other words, the West can preserve its domination and power over the Orient as circumstances and relationships change.

themselves as they construct their own identity narratives, to determine if or in what ways they perceive and/or cope with colonialist representations of their raced and gendered social place.⁸

Textual Analysis

Including much more than the written word, a ‘text’ in this usage refers to, cultural artifacts, material documentary evidence that is used to make sense out of our lives...from this perspective, texts are thought to provide traces of a socially constructed reality, which may be understood by considering the works, concepts, ideas, themes and issues that reside in texts as they are considered within a particular cultural context.

(Brennen, 2012; p. 193)

In this sense, a ‘text’ is any cultural artifact that is produced with the intent to communicate some sort of narrative, including those in audio and/or visual formats: advertisements, songs, music videos, films, television programs and works of visual and performing art also fall under this rubric.

Inspired by *Orientalism* (1978), Said’s vanguard work in postcolonial scholarship, subsequent postcolonial studies that used textual analysis in order to elucidate extant power relations in colonial societies—and imperialism generally—include McKlintock’s (1995) *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context* and Malchow’s (1996) *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-century Britain*. Examples specific to Canada include Monkman’s (1981) *A Native Heritage: Images of the Indian in English-Canadian literature*,

⁸ My usage of the terms ‘metis’ and ‘metisse’ is defined later in this preface

Valverde's (1991) *Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*, as well as Francis's (1992) *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*. These works are particularly relevant to my study because McKlintock and Malchow deconstruct British imperialist discourses around race and hybridity generally, while Monkman, Valverde and Francis apply similar methods to deconstruct related colonial discourses in Canada—with Monkman and Francis focusing on re-settler discourses about Indigenous peoples specifically.⁹

Textual analysis in its various forms comprises an effective form of social science and historical research methodology, shedding new light on socio-historical processes that may be missed by more traditional historical method. Mariana Valverde (1991) and Anne McKlintock (1995) were among the first postcolonial scholars to apply methodologies in art history to the study of social history and sociology, subjecting archival, graphic images to this approach. Both McKlintock's (1995) *Imperial Leather* and Valverde's first (1991) edition of *The Age of Light Soap and Water* push the boundaries of conventional historiography by incorporating methods in discourse analysis and applying them—not only to written and spoken texts—but also to the non-verbal forms of communication that are embedded and/or attached to cultural artefacts, such as consumer goods and the images that adorned and/or advertised them.

For example, compositional interpretation, a methodology in art history, involves a close study of the image as a work in and of itself. This method offers researchers in the social sciences a useful tool for deconstructing the graphic image's relation to “reception, meaning, and content” (Nigel Whitely, cited in Rose, 2012; p. 56), so much so that, “the successful deployment

⁹ The term ‘re-settler’ assumes that the Americas were already settled by Indigenous people before contact with Europeans (LaRocque, 2010).

of other methods...centrally concerned with questions of representation...rely on the detailed scrutiny of the image itself” (Rose, 2012, pp. 55-6).

Iconography, another branch of art history, is commonly used as a form of discourse analysis in that discipline, and likewise has been adopted by researchers in history and the social sciences (McKlintock, 1995; G. Rose, 2012; Valverde, 1991). Unlike compositional interpretation, however, iconography “concerns itself with the subject matter or meaning of works of art (*their intrinsic meaning*), as opposed to their form, and is apprehended by ascertaining those underlying principles that reveal the basic attitude of a nation, a period, a class, a religious or philosophical persuasion” (Panofsky, cited in Rose, 2012, p. 202). This method lends itself well to the study of pop culture discourses rendered in graphic formats—especially advertisements—which need to communicate broad, multi-layered connotations in as short and/or small amount of space/time possible, relying on intertextuality to achieve the desired effect, as well as on the context in which the message will appear (Valverde, 1991).¹⁰

Invaluable to textual analysis, semiotics “draws attention to the layers of meaning which may be embodied in a simple set of representations” (Jary & Jary 1995), referred to as signs. Signs represent the social relationships between the signifier and that which is being signified “laying bare the prejudices beneath the smooth surface of the beautiful” (Margaret Iverson, cited in Rose, 2012, p.107). In this capacity, “semiology offers a very full box of analytical tools for taking an image apart and tracing how it works in relation to broader systems of meaning,” and as such, “offers a certain kind of analytical precision” (Rose, 2012, pp. 105-6). Especially useful

¹⁰ The fundamental concept of intertextuality is that no text, much as it might like to appear so, is original and unique in itself; rather it is a tissue of inevitable, and to an extent unwitting, references to and quotations from other texts. These in turn condition its meaning; the text is an intervention in a cultural system. From: The Literary Encyclopedia. <http://www.litencyc.com/php/sttopics.php?rec=true&UID=1229>. Retrieved: August 10, 2018, 12:04 p.m. P.T.

to my line of inquiry is a social semiotic approach, which shifts its attention away from the ‘sign’ to “the way that people use semiotic ‘resources’ both to produce communicative artefacts and events and to interpret them—which is also a form of semiotic production—in the context of specific social situations and practices” (Theo van Leeuwen, cited in Rose, 2012, p. 108).¹¹

In the service of advancing our knowledge of social histories during the age of Western imperialism, Valverde (1991), Francis (1992), and McKlintock (1995) have used various combinations of semiotics, social semiotics, compositional interpretation, and iconography in their respective textual analyses as a means to expose the underlying (and exploitive) imperialist ideologies and power relationships that served to construct and advance agendas of the British Empire and its colonies. Both Valverde and McKlintock explicate how the West’s imperialist normative values of race, class, and gender were constructed and promulgated through discourses of ‘purity’ and ‘cleanliness’, while Francis debunks the representation of the North American “Indian” in Canadian popular culture as no more than a figment of the colonial imagination, bearing little factual resemblance to (in either contemporary or historical times) real, live, Indigenous people(s).

As I demonstrated in my M.A. thesis in sociology (Anderson, 1996), textual analysis can elucidate *emergent* social processes as well as historical ones. Inspired by Valverde’s (1991) then cutting-edge methodology, I applied a rhetorical analysis to the visual, textual and oral narratives of Vancouver’s urban Indigenous NGOs (as well as those of the Indigenous women and men who worked within them), in order to investigate the way that they ‘frame’ their

¹¹ Semiotic resources are ‘signifiers’ that are comprised of “observable actions and objects that have been drawn into the domain of social communication and that have a theoretical semiotic potential constituted by all their past uses and all their potential uses and an actual semiotic potential constituted by those past uses that are known to and considered relevant by the users of the resource and by such potential uses as might be uncovered by the users on the basis of their specific needs and interest (van Leeuwen, cited in Rose, 2012, p.138).”

organized efforts to end violence against women and girls in their community.¹² My research found that, at both the organizational and individual levels, the struggle to end gender-based violence was contextualized by the narrative frame of postcolonialism, rather than by feminist ones. In an unintended effect, this finding pointed to evidence that these government-funded, non-profit NGOs—under the guise of ‘social service delivery’—represented a latent phase of the larger, (then) more politicized, ‘Red Nationalist’ movement that began (for Canada) in Vancouver in the 1960s (Reece, 1999), and was experiencing a resurgence in Canada at the time I was conducting my research in the early 1990s.

Both discourse analysis and rhetorical analysis are methods apposite to conducting my current study as well. Discourse analyses enquire into how related groups of utterances “structure the way a thing is thought...shap[ing] how the world is understood and how things are done in it” (Rose, 2012, p. 190), ultimately informing our actions in the social world based on those assumptions. For example, in his discourse analysis, *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-century Britain* (1996), Malchow examines selected works in this literary genre; not as a literary analysis *per se*, but as a way of tracing the pervasiveness of ‘gothic’ sensibilities in nineteenth-century racial discourses in general, constituting a “language of panic” that expressed imperialist Britain’s deeply rooted anxieties and ambivalence regarding contact with, and ‘contamination’ by, the alluring, yet deviant “other” (p. 4).

While discourse analysis can be said to follow a conversation, rhetorical analysis offers an emanate examination of an individual message and concerns itself with the text’s internal cogency in its application of various modalities of persuasion (e.g. ethos, logos, pathos), as well

¹² non-governmental organizations

as with the immediate context of the message's production (audience, exigencies, constraints). For example, in her rhetorical analysis of images of 'Indians' in English-Canadian literature, Leslie Monkman (1981) discerns the rhetoric used by the writers she studies to be more about re-settler attempts to construct a 'Canadian' national identity *vis à vis* their anxieties concerning their relationship with the colonized, than it was any kind of accurate representation of Indigenous people(s).

Methods in textual analysis—when applied to inquiries regarding social processes—can discover and clarify discursive practices and trends in popular culture that could indicate broader, more pervasive patterns of social phenomena. For example, both Leslie Monkman—a literary scholar—and Daniel Francis, in a historical study—use methods in textual analysis to confront such issues in their work, although their questions are informed by their respective (yet separate) disciplinary perspectives. That this methodology is used across disciplines also demonstrates its versatility. Like the aforementioned works, my methodology can be considered to be an interdisciplinary, textual exploration that maps out a framework for further understanding: not just about the nuanced, construction of female metissage in Canada as it exists within the larger, imperial conversation on 'racial hybridity', but also, and just as importantly, by drawing our attention to patterns, both historical and emergent, of ways in which metisse auteurs might resist, mimic, destabilize, and/or internalize this conversation as they navigate their ethnic and gender identities.¹³

These previously cited studies are examples of methods of critical social research that have re-purposed mainstream, academic methodologies in ways that endeavor to subvert the

¹³ I use the term 'auteur' in this thesis to refer to those who use literature and the visual and performing arts to communicate their narratives to the public at large.

dominant paradigm, resulting in work that is both counter-colonial, and non-exploitive (if not emancipatory, in the strictest sense of praxis research). Taking their lead, and in the interest of the decolonizing project that is postcolonial studies—Native studies, in particular—I did not conduct interviews, or a focus group, or apply some other mode of standard social science methodology which, historically, have been used to quantify, objectify, dominate and eliminate Indigenous people(s) in an orgy of textual genocide (Baudrillard, 1983; Kovach, 2009; L. T. Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008). First, textual analysis is a form of unobtrusive research and second, I would argue, non-exploitive, as both tiers of my study draw from sample groups consisting of people who have already stepped into the field of public discourse, and are, *de facto*, volunteering to be heard, being no strangers to public critique and analysis of their works. In keeping with the principles of postcolonial methodologies, forms of discourse analysis are perceived by some scholars as being inherently emancipatory, arguing that “(a)cknowledging its constructed nature is what constitutes discourse analysis’s reflexivity” (Rose, 2012 p. 197).

Cultural studies author Douglas Kellner coins the term “multiperspectival” in his book, *Media Culture*, defining it as an approach that “draws on a wide range of textual and critical strategies to interpret, criticize, and deconstruct the artifact under scrutiny. ... The more perspectives one focuses on a text to do ideological analysis and critique ... the better one can grasp the full range of a text’s ideological dimensions and ramifications”. (Kneller, 1995, cited in Marsan, p. 5). The methodology I employ in this study offers such a postcolonial ‘feast-hall’, if you will, providing ample space to encounter an array of such tantalizing possibilities.

Research Design

It is not the intent of this study to conduct an analysis of how images of the halfbreed girl change over time, in historical context: consequently, it is not organized into chronological, socio-historical eras. Neither does this study contain a sustained, literary treatment of each text in its turn. With respect to how metisses form their ethnic/gender identities *vis-à-vis* images of the fictive halfbreed girl, this thesis is much more concerned with the latent aspects of that figure than with the manifest phases of her. Here, I refer to Said's distinction between the modes of *latent* and *manifest* orientalism, which parallels Schiller's (1973) charge that all mass-media texts produced by the imperial West transmit the same core message:

Latent Orientalism describes the dreams and fantasies about the Orient that...remain relatively constant over time. Manifest Orientalism refers to the myriad examples of Orientalist knowledge produced at different historical junctures. Said proposes that while the manifestations of Orientalism will inevitably be different, due to reasons of historical specificity and individual styles and perspectives, their underlying or latent premises will tend to be the same. (McLeod, 2010, p. 51-52).

To this end, my thesis represents, for the most part, a semiotic analysis of the image of the halfbreed girl, and is structured around the Manichean sub-binaries, **White/Indian**, **mimesis/regression**, and **naturalness/degeneracy**. Emerging time and again throughout the texts, these oppositions were chosen to configure my argument because they form a clear and

robust pattern, regardless of the era in which the texts were produced, or the subject position of their producers.¹⁴

This approach calls forth Derrida's assertion that any binary opposition is a "violent hierarchy [in which] one of the two terms controls the other (axiologically, logically, etc.), [and] holds the superior position", as well as his deduction that, "to deconstruct the opposition is first to overthrow the hierarchy" (2016, cited in, Translator's preface, p. c). In the settler-colonial, pop-culture texts studied here, the sub-binaries serve two functions. First, they form the lexis of three concurrent conversations whose common locus is the figure of 'the halfbreed girl'. Second, they serve to circumscribe the halfbreed girl's role in North America's settler-colonial mythos, operating to keep her hovering at its margins, rather than to ossify and/or vanish her completely. By doing so, these sub-binaries work to situate *actual* metis women in a particular way in the settler-colonial hierarchy. As such, the three sub-binaries structure part of a packaged consciousness with which metis women cannot avoid engaging in some way, as they form their self-image. Subsequently, these sub-binaries figure large in the included texts produced by metisses; however, they respond to them in complex ways, recalling Stuart Hall's (2004) caveat that audience reactions to encoded messages can consist of internalization, but also of ambiguity, resistance, and subversion.

This study is structured in a two-tier format, with the same methodologies applied to both tiers. The first tier conducts an analysis of images of women of mixed, North American Indigenous and European ancestry as they appear in pop-culture texts produced by the colonizing (Anglo) societies of Canada and the U.S.A. These representations are then examined in order to

¹⁴ In this thesis, I use the term *Manichean* to indicate a cosmology that views the world as dualistic, where the forces of light and dark, corresponding to good and evil, respectively, are in constant tension in a struggle for dominance.

discern how they are composed and arranged into narrative contexts so as to produce meanings intended to be read by audiences in particular ways: ways that are meant to create, delineate, and reinforce race, class and gender boundaries that render metisses abject in settler-colonial society. The second tier of the study also conducts a similar analysis, this time of selected works by metisse auteurs, assessing how they read and respond to the images examined in tier one, looking for instances in which they point to their own social construction as ‘other’, and analyzing whether or not, and if so, how, they internalize, resist, or adapt the figure of the halfbreed girl as they negotiate and articulate their ethnic and gender identities. In both tiers the data collection is purposive in its generation, rather than random. In order to achieve maximum breadth in my sample groups, I include textual data in print, audio/visual and graphic media formats, such as film, television, photographs, posters, advertisements, musical recordings, poetry, as well as short and long fiction.¹⁵

Some texts are excluded due to their lack of availability or accessibility at the time the sample was collected, such as dime novels containing images of ‘the halfbreed girl’, as well as films produced before WWII, many of which no longer exist in physical form. For the sake of manageability, I also exclude graphic novels, as well as social media such as *Facebook* and online gaming. Social networking and gaming represent new vistas of critical social research and theory, attendant with their own, innovate research methodologies, which exceed the practical limitations of this study.¹⁶

¹⁵ Throughout the thesis, I use the term, ‘abject’ and ‘abjection’ to refer to a *specific set of social processes* as defined by Julia Kristeva (1982) and Anne McKlinton (1995), described in the introduction.

¹⁶ For a comprehensive list of American films produced before WWII that contain images of mixed-blood women but have deteriorated beyond repair, see, Brégent-Heald, D. (2015). *Borderland Films: American Cinema, Mexico, and Canada During the Progressive Era*. U of Nebraska Press.

The primary exigencies of this study are also among its limitations, as I discuss in more detail in the literature review; even as the data plane of pop-culture images of the halfbreed girl is thin, that of metisse discourses responding directly to those images is thinner still.

Subsequently, the thesis is much more developed in tier one than tier two, focusing more on my own contrapuntal reading of the figure of the halfbreed girl than it does on whether or in what ways metis women engage with this figure as they negotiate their raced and gendered social identities. This particular limitation in itself demands further research that builds upon the findings of tier two, as I discuss in my conclusion.

tier 1: sample group & system of analysis.

This sample group consists of pop culture texts produced in Canada and the United States during the late nineteenth through the early twenty-first centuries. When choosing texts regarding Indigeneity, miscegenation, and ‘racial hybridity’, I included any and all, as representations of metisses are few and far between. American pop culture representations of ‘halfbreed’ and mixed-blood women are incorporated here for two compelling reasons. First, due to a significant disparity in the sheer volume of media production between Canada and the United States (true both historically and today), Canada has been saturated with American media products, most Canadians having been raised consuming a large daily dose of American media (Berton, 1975; Cooke, 1984). Second, given our physical proximity, our similar colonial histories, and our close social, economic, and cultural relationship with the United States, it is not unreasonable to assume that American-generated images of Indigenous people(s) might permeate, inform, and shape the sensibilities of Indigenous and non-Indigenous Canadians as well.

My case in point: the silent film, *Hiawatha* (1903)—the very first film to be produced entirely in Canada, by Canadians—was a screen adaptation of American poet Henry Wadsworth Longfellow’s 1855 popular sensation, “The Song of Hiawatha” (Morris, 1992).¹⁷ It appears that many Canadians find American-produced representations of Indigenous ‘others’ to be not only palatable but also easily accessible, ergo, their influence upon the Canadian imagination cannot be discounted. In fact, even in the nascent years of American film production, screenplays were produced with an international market, the domination of that market, and the export of American cultural products in mind (Brégant-Heald, 2015). Certain texts that are considered ‘canonical’ in Canadian literature are incorporated as well, such as selected works by D.C. Scott and Margaret Laurence—which I argue have found their way into the popular culture of Canada through the curricula of public education, taken root, and firmly naturalized themselves in Canada’s fertile, settler-colonial imagination.

For the most part, I have excluded representations of the “Indian Princess” and the “squaw” for two reasons. First, the extant pool of literature dealing with these images in colonial discourse, and their attendant socio-cultural outcomes, is substantial and comprehensive. Second, given that very little scholarly research exists regarding images of the halfbreed girl, she deserves to occupy centre stage for a moment. Rather, I approach images of Princesses and squaws in my study as a set of semiotic resources used to shape and delimit pop-culture representations of the halfbreed girl, who fluctuates between these two extremes. The Princess/squaw polemic (which I argue is itself a product of the intersecting civ/sav and Madonna/whore dichotomies), when contextualized by Western imperialist and settler-colonial

¹⁷ “*Hiawatha*,” *The Messiah of the Ojibways*. (1903). Directed and photographed by Joe Rosenthal, “conceived” by E. A. Armstrong of Montreal. (Length: 800 feet.)

discourses of miscegenation and ‘racial hybridity’, actuates several related colonial sub-binaries—White/Indian, mimesis/regression, and naturalness/degeneracy.¹⁸

Texts used.

Here, texts are listed according to categories based on the sub-binaries mentioned previously, focusing mainly on the latent ‘orientalisation’ of the figure of the halfbreed girl, rather than her various manifest stages. While each text appears in only one category in this section of the thesis, they are not confined to any one category throughout the argument itself, as all of these binaries tend to appear, to greater or lesser degree, in most of the works included in the sample. Throughout the thesis, the following texts will be read multiple times and in different ways, across categories, in order to illustrate how these intersecting binaries work to abject the figure of ‘the halfbreed girl’.

Regarding the sub-binary White/Indian, both Canada and the United States have long entertained national conversations regarding the efficacy (or not) of the practice of assimilation through miscegenation, exemplified in the title and lyrics of Cher’s hit song, “Halfbreed” (Capps & Dean, 1963, Track 3), which, having inspired this study, is included for examination here. This song is an exemplar of how the Manichean sensibilities of Anglo settler-colonialism and the larger imperial West are never able to resolve or bridge the seemingly incommensurate entities of White and Indian, resulting in a perpetual ambivalence toward the halfbreed girl, which they project onto her. Canadian Sir Gilbert Parker’s *Translation of a Savage*, first published in 1893, is the earliest example of this conversation included here, his story so popular

¹⁸ Describing the dichotomy between European notions of ‘civilization’ and savagery’, the neologism, ‘civ/sav’, first appears in the article, *The Metis in English Canadian Literature* (LaRocque, 1983).

it was made into a play titled, *Behold My Wife!*, which was then adapted twice to talking film, with Schulburg & Leison's 1934 screenplay appearing in this study. Parker's novel is included here, in its electronic (2017) format. The sub-binary White/Indian is also at the centre of American Edgar Milton Royle's (1905) stage play, *Squaw Man*, which gave rise to a novel (Royle and Faversham 1908), which in turn spawned its own inter-generational narrative genre—even becoming a staple sub-genre of 'westerns' films (Aleiss, 2005; Crolund-Anderson, 2007; Kilpatrick, 1999). The poster for the 1905 play is included here, informed by the narrative contained in the 1908 novel. Cecil B. DeMille made *Squaw Man* into a feature film three separate times (Lasky & De Mille, 1914; De Mille, 1918, and De Mille, 1931). Lasky & DeMille's first (1914) production, a silent film, is the only one from the early twentieth century that, at the time that the sample was collected, was still available for public viewing, in digital form online; it is included in this set, along with a poster advertising its theatrical release

A contemporary of both Parker and Royle, and also derived from, and speaking to, the White/Indian sub-binary, are the poems of Canadian bureaucrat Duncan Campbell Scott, "The Onondaga Madonna" (1898) and "The Half Breed Girl" (1906), which take a much more pessimistic view of the practice of miscegenation and 'racial hybridity'. The scrutiny of these fictive works is all the more important given Scott's day job, which was to oversee the dispossession and cultural genocide of Indigenous people(s). Also born out of, and into, this extant conversation is the fictive anti-heroine of American pulp-fiction, White Squaw, who occupies her own niche in the 'western' narrative genre, and is represented here in the promotional material for Ray Nazzaro's (1956) filmic version of her, as well as in the text and cover art of three volumes of E.J. Hunter's (1987) pulp-fiction series, *White Squaw*: "Track Tramp" (#13), "Red Top Tramp" (#14), and "Here Comes the Bride" (#15).

Related to cautionary discourses regarding ‘racial hybridity’ and miscegenation between White and Indian is the conversation regarding the halfbreed girls expected mimesis of European civility, along with her feared regression into Indian savagery, or worse: passing so well that she usurps the positional superiority of the settler-colonial hierarchy. Aptly illustrating this conundrum is a *living* text: that of Cher herself, both in her personal and public persona as the halfbreed girl. The sub-binary mimesis/regression is also found in the American films, Sam E. Rorke and J.F. Dillon’s *Call Her Savage* (1932) and David O. Selznick and King Vidor’s (1947) *Duel in the Sun*, which are incorporated here along with still shots from *Call Her Savage* and promotional material for *Duel in the Sun*.

Often, sexuality is an indicator of the halfbreed girl’s mimesis (adherence to heteronormative, European patriarchy) or regression (any deviance from that). Here, the halfbreed girl is bestialized, hyper-sexualized, masculinized, infantilized, or any combination thereof, which rationalizes overt misogyny and/or violence—sexual and otherwise—toward her. This attitude is evident in the official film trailer and advertisements for Roger Corman’s (1956) motion picture, *Apache Woman*, and De Mille’s *North West Mounted Police* (1940). Also scrutinized here is a canon of Canadian literature, Margaret Laurence’s much-loved and lauded short fiction, *The Loons* (1970), demonstrating that the halfbreed girl does not necessarily fare any better when subjected to a female Euro, re-settler’s gaze.

Standing alone here, and an anomaly among all of the images of the halfbreed girl that I have encountered thus far, is E. L. Marin’s 1949 film, *Canadian Pacific*, whose sympathetic treatment of miscegenation in general and of Metisse characters specifically hearkens back to

that of America's progressive-era 'borderland film' genre.¹⁹ Singular among films containing the figure of the halfbreed girl, *Canadian Pacific* features the historic Metis, and a Metisse as leading lady, making an attempt to place the film's diegesis in actual, historical, and socio-cultural (if not accurate) geographic context. In spite of these attempts, mimetic behaviour is still expected from Cecile, although it is depicted as a sincere, authentic, and ultimately successful pathway to assimilation.

Concomitant to discourses around the previous two sub-binaries is that of the tension between the 'naturalness' of unadulterated European 'blood' and culture, versus the 'degeneracy' of the halfbreed girl, and the deviants whose unwholesome sexual practices result in her miscreation. The sub-binary naturalness/degeneracy contextualizes the loose moral compass of the halfbreed girl, illustrated by her predisposition to nymphomania, adultery, petty larceny, irrational fits of violence including homicide and suicide, and even edging into the demonic. Representing an unfortunate collision between past and present, as well as a clash of cultures, the halfbreed girl tends to embody the social problems and vice imagined to be the inevitable outcome of colonization and its ongoing attempts to modernize and urbanize Indigenous populations. Two musical recordings are included here that aptly illustrate this sub-binary: Bob Stone's 1971 (Track 2) hit single, "Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves" and Durill's 1974 (Track 5) "Dark Lady", both vocalized by Cher, and, along with "Halfbreed" (Capps & Dean, 1973, Track 3), considered to be among her signature ballads.

This sub-binary is also at the centre of three television series that feature the halfbreed girl, either in discrete episodes or as the leading character. Sci-Fi channel's *Haven* introduces

¹⁹ See, Brégent-Heald, D. (2015). *Borderland Films: American Cinema, Mexico, and Canada During the Progressive Era*. U of Nebraska Press.

Jess Minion, a briefly recurring character, in season one, episodes six through eight, titled, “Fur”, “Sketchy” and “Ain't no Sunshine.”. “All That Glitters” (#11), a single episode from season eight of CBC’s long-running series, *Murdoch Mysteries*, is included for analysis, as well as another CBC production: Laurie Finstad-Knizhnik’s (2014) *Strange Empire* (Macdonald & Fitz, directors). A Canadian, revisionist, feminist, ‘period piece’, this text is of particular significance because not only is it the first television series to feature a Metisse in the lead role, but is also the first narrative since Marin’s *Canadian Pacific* (1949) that attempts to situate her correctly: historically, geographically, and culturally. The whole first season (the entirety of the series) is included for analysis in this study, along with the cover art for its (2015) DVD Release by EOne films U.S.

tier 2: sample group & system of analysis.

Tier two of my data analysis focuses on the responses of metisse auteurs to pop-culture representations of the halfbreed girl, examining the ways in which they recognize, incorporate, internalize, subvert, modify, resist, and salvage elements of this figure as they navigate their social identities as metisses in their respective works. When choosing texts for this sample group, I gave primacy to those originating in Canada and/or those who identify as ‘big M’ Metisses, but also included the work of one ‘American cousin’. Here, the textual samples are grouped together in a single set and organized thematically as they respond to the binaries examined in tier one.

Texts used.

In tandem to the first sample group, tier two also includes a living text in the form of one of the first contemporary metisses to speak to the centre of Canadian society from its margins.

The celebrated Pauline Johnson is also included here: in her stage persona as the halfbreed girl, in her lived experience as a mixed-blood woman, and in her two short fictions, “A Red Girl's Reasoning” and “As it Was in the Beginning,” originally published in her 1913 anthology, *Moccasin Maker*. Also included is her (1892) short editorial, “A Strong Race Opinion on the Indian Girl in Modern Fiction”, which appears here in its 2016 electronic format. In these works, Johnson—using ‘the master’s tools’ as it were—animates the image of the halfbreed girl, not to dismantle, but to deface the master’s house, carving out of its edifice the very spaces Bhabha (1994) identifies as sites of interstitial resistance.

The (2002) soundtrack to Andrea Menard’s 1998 one-woman musical, *The Velvet Devil*, is examined here, specifically the lyrics to “The Velvet Devil” (Track 1), “If I Were a Man” (Track 3), “It’s in the Bag” (Track 7), “Looking For a Mate” (Track 8), “Halfbreed Blues” (Track 14) and “A Pinch to Grow an Inch” (Track 17). The screenplay from the subsequent video production (Bauman, 2006) also informs this study’s analysis. As in tier 1 of the analysis, poetry is also examined here, represented by several works from Marilyn Dumont’s anthology, *Memoirs of a Really Good Brown Girl* (1996): “Squaw Poems,” “White Noise,” “Leather and Naugahyde,” “Half Human/Half Devil (Halfbreed) Muse,” “Circle the Wagons,” “The Red and White” and “Blue Ribbon Children.” Also appearing in this study are the works from Manitoba photographer KC Adams’s (2006) collections, *Cyborg Hybrids*, *Cyborg Hybrid Accessories*, and *Cyborg Hybrid Living Spaces*, along with her (2017) photograph, *Power*. An ‘American cousin’, artist Wendy Red Star, has the last word in a standoff with pulp-fiction novelist E.J. Hunter in her digital image series, *White Squaw*, from which I have selected images #13, #14, #15, those that respond directly to the cover art on Hunter’s novels.

halfbreed', mixed-blood', "little m", "big": iterations of metissage

The social construct of Indigenous/European 'racial hybridity' is most often imagined as a process known as 'Creolization'—or 'Metissage' in the Canadian context—where two or more cultures merge into a new and distinct cultural form: an "unconscious hybridity, whose pregnancy gives birth to new forms of amalgamation rather than contestation" (Young, 1995; p.21). By all accounts, however, this homogeneous cultural form did not and does not exist among the 'new people' that have come to be known and/or self-identify as metis, who have always been—and continue to be—ethnically, linguistically and geographically heterogeneous and, at times, at odds with each other politically and economically (McDougall, 2011; LaRocque, 2001; Dickason, 1985; Foster, 1985; Peterson, 1985).

The terminology that is used by both colonizer and colonized to classify Indigenous/European miscegenates reflects a fractured sense of social identity. The '*Halfbreed*' of Cher's iconic refrain belongs to a larger imperialist discourse around race and hybridity and has differing meanings depending on its use on either side of the 49th parallel, according to each colonial nation's social history. In America, where Indigenous/European miscegenate populations do not figure large in the master colonial narrative (Crolund-Anderson, 2007), the term *halfbreed* can be understood as a more derogatory version of *mixed-blood*, as illustrated in the song of that title (Capps & Dean, 1973, Track 3), in which the word 'halfbreed' was used by both dominant and Indigenous cultures—and interpreted by the protagonist—as a hateful (and hated) racial slur. The discrepancy between America's fictive and actual histories belies the polarized attitudes of Americans to Indigenous/European miscegenation: although the highly bastardized narrative of Pocahontas is a foundational legend in America's origin story, fourteen

of their states at some point criminalized intermarriage between Indigenous people and Euro settlers (Freeman, 2005).

In Canada, miscegenation between Indigenous women and European men received varying forms of imperialist response—running the gamut from being disallowed/discouraged by corporate policy or unrecognized by civil law, to being tolerated as a necessary evil, or even encouraged outright—but never officially criminalized, in either the pre or post-confederation eras (Van Kirk, 1980). In fact, Canada's nation-building narrative recognizes and acknowledges, if grudgingly, the progeny of Indigenous/European and Euro-settler marriages as forming a distinct Indigenous culture that had a formative role in the nation-building process (complete with an armed resistance, a flag, and a martyr) known as the 'big M' Metis of western Canada: here, the term takes on a different significance. In spite of the distinction between the Metis of French ancestry, and the Anglo, 'country-born', both Louis Riel and Cuthbert Grant, famous leaders of these respective populations, referred to themselves and their people as *halfbreeds*. This term—or the abbreviated *breed*—is still in use as a self-referent among some contemporary Metis (as exemplified by the title of Maria Campbell's (1973) autobiography, *Halfbreed*), and does not always *necessarily* carry a negative connotation; instead, it can refer to the ethnic nationalism of the 'big M' Metis that is grounded in this history.²⁰

Mixed-blood is a more clinical expression of racism in colonial discourses of hybridity, again used by both Canadians and Americans. In both contexts, the term is commonly used to

²⁰ Here, I refer to ethnic nationalism *vis à vis* the big M Metis as a form of nationalism wherein the "nation" is defined primarily in terms of ethnicity, which presumes an element of descent from previous generations. Key tenets of ethnic nationalism held by the big M Metis include the notions that: the ethnic group is entitled to self-determination; that the nation is defined by a shared heritage, historical and/or contemporary, which often includes common language, or a common faith, or a common ethnic ancestry, or a combination of these; that the nation includes ideas of a culture that was/is shared between members of the group and their ancestors.

refer to individuals of various mixed Indigenous-European ancestry who are perceived by self and others as belonging to no one identifiable group, which has implications for Aboriginal land title (Cook-Lynn, 2008; Lawrence, 2004). In Canada, non-status mixed-blood Indigenous people are also sometimes referred to, or self-identify as, “little m” metis; a category of Indigenous people who are non-status and of mixed-ancestry; a cohort distinct from those who have become known as the “Big M” Metis. Unlike the former, whose collective identity represents a broad category based on ethnicity and/or their exclusion from Canada’s *Indian Act* (1878), the latter’s identity is rooted in a particular shared historical, social, and cultural experience that may or may not be based in ethnicity (Brown, 1980; Chartrand & Giokas, 2002).²¹

Although there is some debate among scholars as to the specifics of when and where the collective entity now known as “*Big M*” Metis was born (Peterson, 1985), it is clear that its ethno-genesis was a latent product of the fur trade, as miscegenation occurred between European men and Indigenous women (Burley et al, 1992; Foster, 1985). The formation of the “Big M” Metis as a distinct, collective identity is an interactive and historically grounded process (Peterson & Brown, 1985), representing a singular intersection in time/space, where certain ethnicities, languages, and cultures play/ed a prominent role: “among the factors responsible for the origins of the Metis are those associated with a time (and a place) when a particular population saw itself as Metis and when outsiders shared this view” (Foster, 1985, p. 77).

How do I use these iterations going forward? Except when referring specifically to “big M” Metis/Metisses, whose name is capitalized, I use the designation, ‘metis’ or ‘metisse’, sans

²¹ Little m metis is sometimes used as a self-referent by individuals of mixed, Indigenous/European ancestry who have no legal status as an Indian under Canada’s *Indian Act*, nor have ancestral ties to the big M Metis. For a detailed discussion of the complexities of Metis identities, see Emma LaRocque (2001), “Native Identity and the Metis: *Otehpayimsuak* Peoples”. In, D. Taras & Rasporich, B. (Eds.), *A Passion for Identity: Canadian Studies for the 21st Century* (pp. 381–400). Ontario: Nelson Canada.

the French accent *aigu* to indicate a more general cohort of people(s) of mixed, Indigenous/European ancestry. This use of this terminology serves two purposes. First, it attempts to address issues of inclusivity by removing the accent over the ‘e’ in order to acknowledge a “patrilineal diversity beyond French-Canadian”. Second, using the lower-case ‘m’ includes ethnic and geographic diversity, not only within the big M Metis, but also of those who inhabit other spaces in Canada’s northwest. This usage is not meant to flatten and conflate varied and varying lived experiences of metissage, but to allow for inclusivity and greater breadth in my sample groups, making room for iterations of metissage in both Canadian and American contexts.²²

Chapter Overviews

Chapter One, “Seeing Through the Settler-Colonial Looking-Glass”, introduces the conceptual framework for the thesis, beginning with the notion of social abjection as defined by Julia Kristeva (1982) and Anne McLintock (1995) with respect to its relationship to the social place of actual metis women, and to the construction of the halfbreed girl of yore. This chapter then introduces Tobing-Rony’s (1996) construct, ‘the third eye’: a metaphor that describes the surreal experience of the colonized as they observe their own social construction as ‘other’. This realization can be followed by what Medina (2009) refers to as “brown ethnography,” a discursive practice in which the racialized ‘other’, cognizant of their own ‘othering’, incorporates both process and stereotype into their own embodiments of a ‘brown’ identity space. The chapter then goes on to review the body of extant scholarship most relevant to this study, introducing

²² For a more detailed discussion on terminology, inclusivity, and identity regarding this use of ‘metisse/metis’, see: Macdougall, B., Podruchny, Carolyn, & St-Onge, Nicole (2012). “Introduction: Cultural Mobility and the Contours of Difference.” In *Contours of a People: Metis Family, Mobility, and History* (pp. 3–21). Norman Oklahoma: University of Oklahoma Press. p. 6.

several concepts integral to my argument, such as the dichotomies civ/sav, Madonna/whore, and Princess/squaw.

Chapter Two, “Picturing the halfbreed girl,” contains the theoretical underpinnings for the thesis, providing an overview of the identity management of the colonized in Western imperialist discourses with respect to miscegenation and racial hybridity. This chapter links the (mis)representations of racial hybrids to the larger, imperialist project of mastering the ‘hearts and minds’ of both colonizer and colonized regarding their respective social ‘places’ in settler-colonial hierarchy. I discuss how these discourses inform Canadian and American re-settler-attitudes about its mixed-blood female ‘other’, which is characterized by ambivalence towards her.

Emphasizing Canadian contexts, chapter three, “Boundary Issues: Tracing the Discursive Management of Race, Class, and Gender in the Colonies”, unpacks the operationalization of discursive identity management as it renders historical metises an abject group: a process which I argue informs images of the fictive halfbreed girl in pop-culture texts. To this end, this chapter provides a semiotic analysis of the history of the big M Metis and Metisses, looking at social representations of them during critical points in Metis history, and introducing the set of intersecting binary oppositions that structure these representations. This chapter is divided into two parts. The first section, *Post Red Resistance: Relocating the metisse in the Colonial Master Narrative*, traces the deteriorating status of historical metisses from social enfranchisement to social abjection in pre and post-confederation Canada. The second part, *Nascent Nationhood: Reinforcing Perimeters and Parameters*, follows the continued defamation of metisses in both Canada and the United States in the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries: a campaign that concurrently manifests itself in the fictive halfbreed girl in its pop-culture discourse.

Chapter four, “Placing Women of ‘A Pernicious Middle Race’: The Abjection of the Halfbreed Girl”, presents the findings of tier one of the study. This chapter conducts a close reading and analysis of settler-colonial, pop-culture texts featuring images of the halfbreed girl, which I argue tend to reflect the process of social abjection suffered by historical metisses as described in chapter three. The textual halfbreed girl fluctuates along and between the Princess/squaw polemic (which itself is a product of the intersecting dichotomies, civ/sav, and Madonna/whore) and its sub-binaries, situating her as a marginal figure in Canada and America’s colonial master narrative. The chapter ends with a close reading of CBC’s *Strange Empire* (Macdonald & Fitz, 2014), because this work deserves its own analysis, being the only mainstream pop-culture narrative that features a historically, ethnically, and geographically situated metisse as its lead character (if anti-heroine).

Chapter Five, “Through a Glass, Darkly: Reflections on the ‘Other/Self’”, presents the findings of tier two of the study. This chapter examines moments when metisse auteurs, pointing to their own social construction as the halfbreed girl, respond to images of her as they negotiate their own embodiment of ‘metisse-ness’ in their textual works. We will see how images of the halfbreed girl, consumed by re-settler and metisse alike, colour both the public and private spaces in the lives of the metisse auteurs studied here; not only their notions of ‘metisse-ness’, but also their relationships to settler-colonial society. Consistent with Stuart Hall’s (2004) theories on audience reception of pop-culture discourse, as well as with research conducted by Richardson (2006) and Lundgren (1995) on the formation and expression of metis identities, rather than responding uniformly to, or being passive and uncritical receptors of, this imagery, the metisse women studied here respond to it in ways that range from ambivalence, ambiguity, internalization, subversion and co-option.

Chapter Six, “The Observations of a Four-Eyed Halfbreed Girl”, concludes the thesis by pointing to the relationship between settler-colonial images of its halfbreed girl and the socialization of actual metisses by way of textual abjection. I offer my own final responses to the halfbreed girl’s most notorious iterations, urging Canadian re-settlers to set aside their ‘eurosubjectivism’ (LaRocque, 1999) in order to re-consider and re-examine images of the halfbreed girl from the perspective of the metisses who must live with them.

I. Introduction: Seeing Through the Settler-Colonial Looking-Glass

Calling attention to Canadian contexts, this study conducts a textual analysis of images in settler-colonial pop-culture of a figure that I dub the halfbreed girl, and of the ways that *metis*se *auteurs* respond to said imagery—and by extension, to the colonialist sensibilities and practices that inform and shape those images. This study concerns itself with the socialization of the colonized through the colonizer's discursive management of raced and gendered identities, identifying certain underlying social processes regarding colonization, hegemony, and the socialization of the colonized using methodologies in literature and the visual/performing arts, rather than the standard tools of social science, such as interviews, focus groups, and surveys.²³

My argument is twofold. First, unlike the noble Indian Princess and the ignominious squaw, who, in settler-colonial pop-culture narratives, are characterized as belonging to a distant past, I argue that the figure of the halfbreed girl is not. Being integral to the ongoing project of assimilating Indigenous people(s) through miscegenation, and subsequently, Indigenizing European re-settlers themselves (thus eliminating, at least in theory, the Indigenous land question), the halfbreed girl is instead relegated to a state of permanent marginality, returning sporadically to trouble re-settler boundaries: a motif that tends to reflect the processes by which her historic *metis*se predecessors were rendered abject by Euro, settler-colonialism. Second, I contend that *metis*se artists, poets, and performers are not only aware of this social construction of their identities, but in fact incorporate characteristics of the halfbreed girl into their own

²³ Reprised from my Master's thesis in Sociology (UBC, 1996), the rationale for this methodology, along with its well-established scholarly precedents (most notably, M. Valverde, 1991, and A. McKlintock, 1995), appear in the preface in the section titled, "Textual Analysis."

embodiments of metisse-ness as expressed in their respective works. However, they do not simply assimilate or reject these images, but respond to them in variegated ways, and in varying degrees, as they internalize, engage, absorb, mimic, subvert, and recuperate images of the halfbreed girl.

This study employs the terms “abject,” and “abjection” to refer to a set of specific social processes posited by Kristeva (1982) and McKlinton (1995) to be integral to the formation of the social self, at both the individual and collective levels. Abjection, as hypothesized by Julia Kristeva (1982), is a process by which the boundaries of the individual’s social self are formed, in part, by an attempt to expunge those elements that are considered by one’s society to be undesirable or impure, although “it is...not lack of cleanliness or health that causes abjection but what disturbs identity, system, order. What does not respect borders, positions, rules. The in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). These elements can never truly be eradicated, however, creating an internal dissonance and ambiguity that threaten the very identity—thus the cohesion and integrity—of the social self.

Anne McKlinton (1995) shifts Kristeva’s theory from its focus on the formation of the individual’s social self, to that of the formation of the social identity of the collective: specifically, that of the imperial West, through whose discursive abjection,

certain groups are expelled and obliged to inhabit the impossible edges of modernity: the slum, the ghetto, the garret, the brothel, the convent, the colonial bantustan...Abject peoples are those whom industrial imperialism rejects but cannot do without: slaves, prostitutes, the colonized, domestic workers, the insane, the unemployed...Certain threshold zones become abject zones and are policed with vigor: the Arab Casbah, the Jewish ghetto, the Irish slum, the Victorian garret and kitchen, the squatter camp, the

mental asylum, the red light district, and the bedroom. Inhabiting the cusp of domesticity and market, industry and empire, the abject returns to haunt modernity as its constitutive, inner repudiation: *the rejected from which one does not part* (italics added). (McKlintock, 1995, p. 72)

McKlintock's application of the concept of abjection to the collective consciousness of Empire is particularly apropos to the study of the treatment of metis women in Canada's master narrative, since the metisse cannot be summarily "disappeared." They were of vital importance to the imperial projects of exploration and trade (most notably, the fur trade) (Van Kirk, 1989) and were often positioned in colonialist discourse as instrumental to the re-settlement of Indigenous territories, not to mention the Indigenization of Euro re-settlers themselves, through miscegenation (Brégant - Heald, 2010; Brégent-Heald, 2015; Crolund - Anderson, 2007). It is for this very reason that the metisse is reviled where she cannot be ignored, forming the "representational destiny" (Prats, 2002, p. 4) of the fictive halfbreed girl, which is not so much to disappear entirely, but to orbit the periphery of North America's settler-colonial setting in perpetuity, returning occasionally whenever a rogue is required to test and secure its physical and social boundaries.

Moreover, her abjection assumes various modalities:

With respect to abjection, distinctions can be made, for example, between abject *objects* (the clitoris, domestic dirt, menstrual blood) and abject *states* (bulimia, the masturbatory imagination, hysteria), which are not the same as abject *zones* (the Israeli Occupied Territories, prisons, battered women's shelters). Socially appointed *agents* of abjection (soldiers, domestic workers, nurses) are not the same as socially abjected *groups*

(prostitutes, Palestinians, lesbians). *Psychic* processes of abjection (fetishism, disavowal, the uncanny) are not the same as *political* processes of abjection (ethnic genocide, mass removals, prostitute "clean ups"). (McKlintock, 1995, p. 72)

Images of the halfbreed girl are representations of an abject group (metis) whose social place has become an abject zone, and who, both fetishized and disavowed (subjected to psychic abjection), is “policed with vigor” in both fictive texts and in legal ones. For example, Canada’s political abjection of metis women (among other Indigenous women) is codified in section 12.1.b. of its *Indian Act*, an article of pernicious legislation designed to reduce the population of legally acknowledged ‘Indians’—if not physically, then textually—in an intergenerational project of numerical attrition (read: genocide). Defining an Indian as a “male person,” section 12.1.b. instantly excludes the vast majority of metis (whose Indigeneity originates primarily through their female ancestors) from the legal category of “status” Indians, having profound, intergenerational effects for this population in terms of their legal and social identities. This is not to say that the metis/Metis are a result of 12.1(b), but that this article is an example of the discursive erasure of them in Canadian law itself, representing a threshold space that has become an abject zone. The repercussions of this, and other forms of abjection, have been felt in my family, by our women, for generations.²⁴

The origin of this study is rooted in my own lived experience as a young, female, big M, Metisse ‘tween’ who was coming of age in the 1970s and ‘80s, and in the process of forming both gender and ethnic identities.²⁵ During that era, women of Indigenous/European ancestry

²⁴ For a comprehensive discussion of the inter-generational implications of section 12.1.(b) for the social identities of metis people, see Bonita Lawrence (2004). *Real Indians and Others: Mixed-Blood Urban Native People and Indigenous Nationhood*. USA: University of Nebraska.

²⁵ The differences between what are known as “Big M” Metis, “little m” metis, and ‘mixed-blood’ are discussed in the last section of the preface.

were seldom represented in the political, social, historical, and popular discourse of either Canada or the United States. Those that were available were unpalatable to me, even when I was too young to have the language for why that was. I recall that the first, and most ubiquitous images of women of my kind that were promulgated—in the standard curriculum of both public and post-secondary schools in the Canada of my era—were those fabricated by lauded poet and notorious bureaucrat, Duncan Campbell Scott, whose works had become a canon in Canadian literature, as well as a fixture in the Canadian popular imagination.

Scott's role as head of Canada's (then) Department of Indian Affairs was to author and oversee the federal policies meant to effect the subjugation and dispossession of Indigenous people(s), in part through the political abjection of metis people, effected through the racist and misogynist provisions of the *Indian Act*. However, far less attention is paid to Scott's work toward the psychic abjection of metis women as carried out through his poetry, which is "often accorded uncritical acclaim" (Titley, 1994, p. 36) and, strangely enough, regarded as separate from and unrelated to his bureaucratic role as a socially appointed agent of abjection. While others around me considered his works, "Onondaga Madonna" (1898) and "The Half-Breed Girl" (1906) to be examples of Canada's finest "confederation literature," I, a young adolescent Metisse, found them defamatory and deeply disturbing. Although I lacked the knowledge, the lexicon, and the self-assurance to voice my objections then, I am capable of doing so now, a brief, contrapuntal reading elucidating the source of my trepidation.²⁶

²⁶ Initially used in music to contrast thematic movements, the term, 'contrapuntal' is re-purposed by Edward Said in *Culture and Imperialism* (1993) as a method for opening the narratives produced by Western imperialism to explorations of its underlying structural dependency and exploitation of the colonized, and to "read the forgotten other back into the text." Cited in <http://www.oxfordreference.com/view/10.1093/oi/authority.20110803095635664>. Retrieved: Nov.-13 2018, 1:14 P.T.

I begin with the text I find most egregious in its overt racism and misogyny, Scott's poem, "Onondaga Madonna," in which his representation of his mixed-blood female character is simultaneously sexually titillating and morally repulsive. In the first stanza, we are introduced to a female figure who "stands full-throated and in careless pose." When I first encountered this poem in grade nine English class, I was taught that in the vernacular of Scott's day, to say that a woman's appearance was "full-throated" meant that she was wearing attire that fully exposed her décolletage in varying degrees—perhaps even her cleavage—and/or her upper arms as well. In other words, Scott imagines his Onondaga Madonna half-naked by all measures of Victorian middle-class decency: a detail more revealing of Scott's inner life than that of the figure he describes. So she is scandalously attired, according to the normative values of Scott's society, and not only that, she is shamefully/shamelessly un-scandalized by her state of (un)dress, standing "in careless pose," her "rebel lips" painted red—a colour attributed overtly to the stain of the blood of her enemies, while alluding to the bold, brash proposition of the whore.²⁷

Throughout the poem, Scott makes liberal use of similar sado-erotic imagery to render his mixed-blood character a jezebel—and one dangerous to Western patriarchy at that. Scott subjects his Onondaga Madonna to a history of intergenerational rape and subsequent impregnation at the will of male enemies—a textual ambiguity implying sexual violence and/or coercion by both Indigenous and European men in the stanza, "her blood is mingled with that of her ancient foes". By way of the latter connotation, Scott textually asserts White men's—and by extension, his own—sexual mastery of both the dread Indian Queen of European lore, and the mixed-blood Magdalene in one creepily potent utterance. By further extension, I could not,

²⁷ A simple Google 'image' search under the term "full-throated women's attire" seems to confirm that this sartorial definition endures in contemporary fashion discourse.

cannot, help but feel Scott trying to reach out beyond the grave to extend similar mastery of *me*, his malevolence toward metis women very much alive in the legacy of his poetry and in his political policy. This analysis by no means represents the totality of my critique of both Scott and his work, to which we will return later in this thesis. Indeed, denouncing Scott and his anti-metisse propaganda loudly and repeatedly led to more than one schoolyard showdown between my lonely self and juvenile (always Anglo male) would-be storm-troopers of Empire.²⁸

Also standing alone in that era, and seeming to counter such disparaging representations, was the personage and performance of Cher. Like Scott's Onondaga Madonna, Cher was also highly sexualized: but unlike that fictive figure, the petite entertainer appeared glamorous and larger-than-life in her fabulous, highly stylized, Bob Maki creations of glitter, beads, feathers and fringe. Each week, *The Sonny and Cher Comedy Hour* (Fisher, 1971) was a television staple in our household, featuring a charismatic and quick-witted Cher delivering all the best lines, appearing to master, dominate, and make a mockery of the white man, embodied in her even more diminutive husband, Sonny Bono. Cher's, halfbreed girl persona—stained by “off-white” origins in the bottom strata of North America's class, race, and gender hierarchy (Negra, 2001)—certainly retained shades of the squaw, and yet, although Cher was not born a princess, she managed to achieve a simulation of it in her pop-celebrity, in her socio-economic status and in her ostensible transgression of her raced and gendered social place.

It is no surprise that I, being in the adolescent throes of developing an adult identity and sexuality, chose to identify with the dazzling, indomitable Cher, whose Indigenized Cinderella narrative offered the only palatable option available to metises during my era: a personal

²⁸ The figure of The Indian Queen appeared in European exploration literature as metonymic of their imagined, ‘new world’ and its strange and barbaric inhabitants, and was in common usage in Western imperialist discourses by the end of the sixteenth century. See, Rayna Green, *The Pocahontas Perplex*. (1975).

dilemma echoed in the poetry of Metisse Marilyn Dumont, who deliberates, “I would become the Indian princess, not the squaw/ dragging her soul /after laundry, meals, needy kids/ and abusive husbands/ These were my choices” (1996, p. 19). I cannot say for certain how many other metis women of my generation share this experience, but these stanzas in Dumont’s “Squaw Poems” resonate profoundly with me on a gut level, unsettling in their familiarity. Its echo inspired the question: is my experience of race/gender socialization unique to me, anomalous to a few—or could it be representative of much broader, socio-historical and political processes?

As it happens, it is not at all uncommon for the colonized individual to become aware that they are being constructed as a ‘brown’ subject in colonial discourses (Crosby, 1991; Medina, 2009): “for a person of color growing up in the United States, the experience of viewing oneself is profoundly formative” (Tobing-Rony, 2004, p. 4). This epiphany leads to the development of a ‘double consciousness’ in which one has the “sense of always looking at one’s self through the eyes of others...or as darkly through a veil” (Dubois, cited in Tobing-Rony, 2004, p. 4): a splitting of the consciousness which “allow(s) for a clarity of vision even as it marks the site of socially mediated self-alienation” (p. 4). Informing my examination of representations of metisses in pop-culture discourse, this peculiar, prismatic gaze is characterized by Tobing-Rony as “the third eye.”

This unsettling experience is the impetus for Hope Marie Medina’s (2009) work, *Brown Ethnography: Dirty Girls and Other Pop Culture Identities*, which inspires my examination of how metisses respond to said images of themselves. Contextualized by her own “embodiment of brown (p.ii),” Medina examines the conscious and unconscious tactics that are used by Chicano/a and Latino/a American performers as they “recuperate the construction of ‘brown’

embodiment in their performances,” being “engaged in a type of ‘brown’ ethnography that not only gestures to the artists themselves, but also establishes the concept of ‘brown’ as a site of knowledge and discursive practice instantiated by attendant social, cultural, and historical factors” (p. 7).

For me and, I strongly suspect, for other metisses of my generation as well, Cher was one of the few embodiments of our particular sort of ‘brown’ that was reflected back to us through the looking-glass of settler-colonial pop-culture, the twisted irony being that Cher herself exploited the very voids left by the elision of the historical metisse in order to cross the border to occupy a more desirable (then) space of social identity. By Cher’s own admission, she inherited her dark-pigmented phenotype not from any Native American ancestor, but from her Armenian-born father. Yet Cher’s popularity endures, her ‘halfbreed’ persona still endearing her to generations of every iteration of female metissage, her trespass against us forgiven. What is it about her specific embodiment of ‘brown’ that both irks and appeals to the Metisse in me, and to many like me?

These observations would not be possible without the prismatic vantage of Tobing-Rony’s “third eye,” making visible this particular “site of socially mediated self-alienation” (1996, p. 4). A fractured image in itself, this metaphorical oculus evokes sublime vision, while simultaneously—and conversely—conjuring strange phantasms of Western Empire, especially those regarding the exotic, the mysterious—yet monstrous—Indigenous ‘others’, and their miscreant, miscegenous offspring.

Literature Review: Desperately Seeking the Halfbreed Girl

Regarding images of the Indigenous people(s) of North America, Metisse scholar Emma LaRocque contends that “Native peoples are perhaps the most debased and misrepresented peoples anywhere, if not in archival and scholarly sources, certainly in popular culture” (2010, p. 65). LaRocque is not alone in her observation that Indigenous people(s) are defamed and marginalized in settler-colonial discourses, popular culture and otherwise. *Au contraire*—the representation of Indigenous ‘others’ in the discourse of both Canada and the U.S.A. has been a topic much visited by scholars on both sides of the 49th parallel: far too many to cite here.

By the late twentieth century, the (mis)representation of ‘The Indian’ in re-settler Canadian society could no longer be ignored. The Canadian federal government, under the portfolio of the Minister of (then) Indian and Northern Affairs Canada, commissioned a study to investigate how these images might influence the attitudes of non-Indigenous Canadians toward Indigenous people(s), and what significance these attitudes have to Canadian society at large (Cooke, 1984). The study found that although possessed of a duality that evoked a certain amount of contradiction and ambivalence among non-native Canadians,

the image is, on balance, negative...(t)aken as a whole, the stereotypic Indian is ‘different’, a being outside the ordinary daily lives of non-Indians, having less than desirable habits and values, and unimportant except as a symbol of part of Canadian heritage. (Cooke, 1984, p. 65)

Just as troubling, and corroborating Schiller’s (1973) assertion that, regardless of modality, all Western media repeat the same message, “each in its own form and style” (p. 81), Cooke finds that “this negative image...has been reinforced because it has come from a number of sources”

(Cooke, 1984, p. 65), pervading not only fictive screenplays of films and pulp fiction plots, but also the content of ostensibly non-fiction texts such as magazine articles, documentaries and various mainstream news media. Even more disturbing, and again consistent with Schiller's argument, Cooke's "stereotypic Indian" is not uncommon in academic works (especially in the areas of history and the social sciences), eventually finding its way into school textbooks, and the Canadian public-school curriculum (Cooke, 1984; LaRocque, 2010; LaRocque, 1975).

That such a prejudicial image has become ubiquitous to Canada's lexicon is particularly disconcerting since as with any stereotype, 'The Indian' of conventional wisdom bears little factual resemblance to real Indigenous people(s)—whether historic or contemporary—anywhere in North America. Rather, this widespread image exists only as a figment of the settler-colonial imagination, functioning to homogenize the vast heterogeneity of Indigenous societies, cultures, histories and languages, ultimately conflating and flattening them into a single, monolithic caricature (G. M. Bataille, 2001; Baudrillard, 1983; Berkhefor, 1978; Crosby, 1991; Forbes, 1964; Francis, 1992; Friar & Friar, 1972; Pearce, 1988) of its signified 'other'.²⁹ Also frustrating is that, like grist for any gossip mill, this fictive image of Indigenous people(s) was, and continues to be, largely recursive in nature, assuming greater and greater verisimilitude with each subsequent repetition in the latest narrative, rather than producing any 'new' or 'true' knowledge about Indigenous peoples (Crosby, 1991; Francis, 1992; Glass, 2006; LaRocque, 1975).

According to this codex, the image of 'The Indian' is by default male and heterosexual (G. Bataille & Silet, 1980; Bird, 1996; Francis, 1992; Friar & Friar, 1972), but not limited to this

²⁹ The term, signified 'other' is a play on the terminology in psychology, in which the 'signified other' refers to the set of norms and values with which an individual has been socialized, eventually forming an internalized dialogue between the individual and the normative expectations of that society.

singular incarnation. Indigenous females—although occurring less often than their male counterparts—are also stock characters in these colonialist and/or nationalist sagas, appearing most often as the Indian Princess, and less often as the squaw. Also a perennial figure in colonial narratives (both historical and fictitious), although emerging far less frequently than images of Indians (female or male), is “the halfbreed”—The Indian’s creepy cousin—who has been subjected to a similar process of transmogrification, in order to fit his role as boogeyman in the epic nation-building mythos of both Canada and the United States. (Berton, 1975; LaRocque, 1983; Forbes, 1964; Friar & Friar, 1972).

Outside of America’s borderland film genre produced during America’s progressive era, images of his female counterpart, the halfbreed girl, appears the least often of all stereotypes of Indigenous people(s) and tends to be even more vilified than her halfbreed brother, adding the elements of hyper-sexuality, sexual deviance, degeneracy and promiscuity to the mix (Berton, 1975; Forbes, 1964; Friar & Friar, 1972; Marubbio, 2009; Steadman, 1982).³⁰ Likewise, the body of scholarly work regarding these images is directly proportionate to the frequency with which they appear in settler-colonial pop-culture discourse. Although scholarly literature examining images of the Indian (male or female, ‘noble’ or ‘savage’) abounds, works that study images of metisse, mixed-blood or halfbreed women are few.

For example, one of the earliest ripostes to (mis)representations of Indigenous women in Canadian popular literature appears in the late nineteenth century in E. Pauline Johnson’s editorial, “A Strong Race Opinion on The Indian Girl in Modern Fiction” (1892). Prime among Johnson’s grievances is that although a seemingly ubiquitous character in the narratives written

³⁰ This films of this genre are produced during a very short span in American history, from 1908 – 1922. See, Brégant-Heald, 2015.

by her contemporaries, the *The Indian Girl* serves as little more than a foil for White characters. Consequently, she tends to be rendered in such broad strokes that she is in fact a caricature, and there is only one of her to be had amongst the volume of pages in which she can be found: a two-dimensional monolith lacking any sort of socio-cultural, geographical, or historical context. We will return to this essay later in the thesis, as well as discuss the performative aspects of the works of Pauline Johnson, who was of mixed Mohawk/English ancestry and legally a status Indian under Canada's (1878) *Indian Act*. For now, consider that Johnson's rebuke focuses on the 'Indian girl', and not the halfbreed or mixed-blood girl, even though, in some of the works she critiques (such as Helen Jackson Hunt's 1884 *Ramona*), the character is of mixed Indigenous/European ancestry.

Although there are studies that concern themselves with how images of the stereotypic Indian influence the attitudes of non-Indigenous re-settlers toward Indigenous people(s) (Cooke, 1984; Hao, 2012; Matz, 1988), few works address what effects those images might have on the social identities of Indigenous people themselves, much less ponder how metis women might respond to such images with respect to their social identities *vis à vis* the settler-colonial society in which they are embedded.³¹ Here LaRocque's work is unique among extant scholarly literature regarding representations of Indigenous people(s), if simply for being the first Metis woman to depose those images. Measuring their (in)authenticity against her actual, lived experience as a Metis woman, LaRocque's *Defeathering the Indian* (1975) is one of the first in a series of works dedicated to disabusing Canada of its national mythos (and by extension, that of the imperial West) regarding its fabrication of the simulacrum that Marcia Crosby later dubs

³¹ One exception is a case study conducted among nine Hopi communities (Ritva Levo-Henriksson & Levo-Henriksson, 2007), which surveys how the Hopi might or might not incorporate some aspects of these representations into their own sense and/or embodiment of 'Hopi-ness'.

"The Imaginary Indian" (1991). Similarly, in her article, *The Metis in English Canadian Literature* (1983), LaRocque is the first scholar—Indigenous or otherwise—to focus specifically on images of the Metis in that genre, using them to illustrate what she calls the civ/sav dichotomy, a central logical fallacy that, as she frames it, 'undergirds' all of settler-colonial, and by extension, Western imperialist discourses. In this dichotomy, the 'savage' occupies the position opposite the 'civilized' in a polemic endemic to the Western, Judeo-Christian worldview: a set of logical fallacies that has existed in the West since its earliest imperialist nation-state—the Romans—was extant in Greek discourses, and permeated European pre-feudal history, reaching deep into antiquity. More of a moral judgement than any kind of measure of 'civility' or 'savagery,' the civ/sav dichotomy applies a myriad of differing criteria to Indigenous peoples and can be manipulated to suit the colonizer's social, historical, economic, and political situation at the time (Dickason, 1984). 'Speaking back' to the imagery of Empire, LaRocque further critiques, challenges, and counters its (mis)representations of Indigenous people(s) generally in her scholarly work: her (2010) text, *When the Other is Me*, is one of few significant studies authored by a Metis woman that addresses the ways in which Indigenous writers in Canada respond to and resist defamatory images of themselves in settler-colonial literatures.³²

The following is a review and analysis of scholarly literature that addresses images of metissage and metis women—along with her cousins, the Indian Princess and the squaw—in Canada and the United States. Also included is literature, either written by metisses or about them, that examines how they respond to those images. This review is not exhaustive, nor does

³² See also: Jennings, Francis (1975), *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonization, and the Cant of Conquest*. Virginia: U of North Carolina P., and Pearce, R. H. (1953) *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization*. Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins Press.

it aspire to be: rather, this literature review represents a survey of the most substantive works that are relevant to my thesis and/or significant in a related area of research.

the eye of the beholder

Far from functioning merely as innocuous and apolitical forms of entertainment, popular culture's (mis)representations of Indigenous people(s) have profound—and very real, very lived—social, cultural and political consequences (Acoose, 1995; Churchill, 1992; V. Deloria, 1980; Doxtador, 1992; LaRocque, 1975). The following works in this section are particularly germane to my thesis in that they concern themselves with what happens to a group's social identity when that definition comes from outside itself, and is continually reinforced through images long, and deeply entrenched in popular culture—especially as those images are made ubiquitous through mass media.

Pierre Berton was among the first Canadian authors to interrogate the cultural imperialism of American cinema in *Hollywood's Canada: the Americanization of Our National Image* (1975). Interestingly, Berton found that (like the Metis) Canada was habitually elided in American cinematic narratives, never being explicitly acknowledged by name, as a nation. Instead, there were a number of euphemisms that substituted as code that the average American viewer would understand to signify Canada, such as "the Great North," "the North Woods," etc. (Berton, 1975), prompting Berton to question the cultural milieu in which Canada forms its collective identity or its social self within the international community.

Of further interest to my study is that Berton includes a chapter on the representation of Indigenous people(s) that complains of many of the issues already identified by American scholars Roy Harvey Pearce (1953) and Friar & Friar (1972), but with particular respect to

American filmic representations of Indigenous people(s) in its nebulous “Great White North.”³³ Here, Berton observes that America’s cinematic versions of the Indigenous people(s) of Canada are reductive, lacking any geographical, historical, or socio-cultural specificity, and limited to two types: either the ‘noble’ or the ‘bloodthirsty’ savage, and that these representations say more about the settler-colonial psyche than they do about actual, Indigenous people(s). More notable still, this chapter is one of the first Canadian works to mention representations of the Metis, and Metis women specifically, regarding their (mis)representation in pop-culture discourse—a discussion to which we will return in the segment, “Hollywood Horrors.” For now, consider that although Berton justifiably takes great umbrage with the ways that American cinema depicts the Indigenous people(s) of Canada, his critique does little to acknowledge Canada’s own complicity in the same project of parsing out, defining and managing the Indigenous other by way of manipulating the imagery of them that is purveyed in its national and pop culture discourses, or what effects that this process might have on the social identities of the Indigenous people(s) that these images purport to represent.

That discussion, preceding both Berton (1975) and Edward Said’s postcolonial canon, *Orientalism* (1978), was initiated in Canada by Emma LaRocque’s *Defeathering the Indian* (1975). Originally intended as a pedagogical handbook for educators in the then-emergent field of Native Studies, LaRocque’s preliminary study pesters the colonial master narrative in similar

³³ The moniker, “Great White North” was popularized by Canadian comedians Rick Moranis and Dave Thomas with reference to this cinematic history and is the title of a recurring sketch (1980-82) that appears on the Canadian television series, *SCTV* (Global, 1976-1984). The sketch features the characters, the McKenzie brothers, who were intended to spoof American stereotypes of Canadians and Canadian culture. Here, ‘white’ signifies not only the snow and ice of Canada’s wintry geography, but could also refer to the ethnic make-up of its dominant settler-colonial society.

disposition to Pearce (1953) and Berton (1975), raising what she sees as the central issue with which contemporary Indigenous people(s) must contend:

One of the most severe problems the native person is faced with today is that he is defined outside himself. That is, other cultures and other people have denied who he is supposed to be as well as what he was supposed to have been. He has been categorized and mythologized by books, movies, missionaries, educators, anthropologists—and every other “-ologist.” He has been set apart by legality and even by economic status. And within most of these existing categorizations of Indianness is a disturbing confusion between the past and present, or between heritage and culture. (LaRocque, 1975, p. 8)³⁴

Once again, this state of affairs raises the question: what are the consequences for the social identity of a group of individuals if that identity is continually being defined outside of themselves?

“neither indian princess nor easy squaw”.³⁵

Two sides of the same coin, the virtuous Indian Princess and the ignominious squaw occupy a curious position at the intersection of the Madonna/whore and civ/sav dichotomies (Green, 1975; LaRocque, 2010): a uniquely colonialist space that is highly raced, classed and gendered, and—for Indigenous women—a location of triple jeopardy in the patri-colonial landscape. A feminine counterpart to her brother—the romanticized image of the Indian brave—the lauded Princess is imbued with many of the qualities salient to a Eurocentric view of femininity and propriety. In keeping with colonialist yearnings regarding people(s) who are

³⁴ Notwithstanding her use of androcentric pronouns to describe Indigenous people(s).

³⁵ The title of a work by Acoose, Janice (1995)

considered to be in the way, The Princess is fiercely loyal to European explorers, colonists and re-settlers, usually betraying her own people and/or sacrificing her own life to advance the colonial agenda (Aleiss, 2005; Green, 1975; Kilpatrick, 1999; Marubbio, 2009). Whereas at least the regal Princess is imagined as an ennobled savage, her sister—the degraded and silent squaw—is simply a savage. The squaw is represented primarily as a beast of burden, and is usually accompanied by numerous “papooses”. The role of the squaw in colonialist narratives, it seems, is to be ready and available to fulfill the material, emotional, and sexual needs of men (be they red or white) and to function as a literal whipping post for all manner of abuses—including rape and/or murder (Acoose, 1995; Bird, 1999; Coward, 2014; Parezo, 2009; Stedman, 1982b).

Rayna Green’s *The Pocahontas Perplex* (1975) was the first study to subject European and European re-settler images of Indigenous women of the Americas to rigorous interrogation, tracing the genealogy of both the now-ubiquitous Indian Princess and the slatternly squaw in the western imperial, and later, the American colonial imagination, debunking them as self-serving rationalizations and apologia to the real exploitation of Indigenous females, the oppression of their peoples and the expropriation of their territories. Many similar studies have followed suit (Buescher & Ono, 1996; Coward, 2014; Finley, 2012; Oshana, 1981; Portman & Herring, 2001; Marubbio, 2009; Preda, 2001; Parekh, 2003), each conducting similar critical cross-examinations of the Indian Princess and/or the squaw across Western Imperialist and settler-colonial discourses to find, like metisse Pauline Johnson before them (1892), that the role of the Indigenous woman in America’s grand colonial narrative is based on the narcissistic assumption that the only ‘good’ Indian woman is one sycophantic to white male colonizers, aiding and abetting them in a masochistic martyrdom of suicidal—even genocidal—proportions.

Chiming in, but not quite following through on this discussion is Stedman's *Shadows of the Indian* (1982), also noteworthy in this genre for drawing attention to the way that images of Indigenous people(s) are subject to hyper-sexualization and/or exploitation in American pop culture narratives, devoting the entirety of three chapters to examining the issue in its various incarnations. In chapter two, *La Belle Savage*, Stedman introduces the image of the Indian Princess by recounting one of Hollywood's most iconic and memorable moments: the year that Marlon Brando sent Sacheen Littlefeather to the Academy Awards in his stead—not to accept the award on his behalf, but to decline it, delivering a scathing admonition to America and its entertainment industry, for its treatment of actual and cinematic Native Americans.

Here, Stedman takes a moment to savour the bitter irony of a rich and influential White male sending an Indigenous woman to suffer the 'slings and arrows' that were in fact meant for him. Disappointingly, this, and his succeeding anecdote about Littlefeather's subsequent *Playboy* photoshoot, are the sum of his ponderings on the relationship between the hypersexualized image of "La Belle Sauvage" and the actual exploitation of North American Indigenous women. Despite his (for his time) unusually astute observations, Stedman seems much more affronted by the sexualization and sexual defamation of Indigenous men than women (which he naturalizes in his rhetoric), devoting two chapters to the sexual degradation and exploitation of Indigenous males in "Lust Between the Bookends," and "You Know What They do to White Women."

Long before Canada's social consciousness had been raised enough to acknowledge its racist, misogynist, re-settler problem, Cree scholar Janice Acoose's *Neither Indian Princess Nor Easy Squaw* (1995) initiated an investigation of images of Indigenous women in mainstream Canadian literature and their relationship to Indigenous women's unique vulnerability to

oppression, exploitation and violence within a racist, patriarchal system. Invoking the memory of Helen Betty Osbourne, Acoose's brutal and unflinching examination of images of Indigenous women makes a strong and clear argument for the causal relationship between the defamatory imagery purveyed in Canadian literature and Osbourne's sexual assault, murder, and subsequent cover-up by certain Euro re-settler townsfolk of The Pas, Manitoba. Acoose's fearless and edgy audit of Canada's re-settler literati represented, at the time of its publication, a radical challenge to the discipline of Canadian literature, as well as essential shifts in perspective within Indigenous and feminist studies in Canada, proving to be quite unsettling to mainstream Canadian and Indigenous readers alike. Currently, this text is experiencing a resurgence in Canadian academia in light of the national conversation regarding the social status of Indigenous women and girls, and the national inquiry into missing and murdered Indigenous women (MMIW).³⁶

Taking a much softer and more oblique approach are Buress & Valaskakis in their artistic installation, *Indian Princesses and Cowgirls* (1997). This work reflects on how the seemingly opposite images, The Indian Princess and The Cowgirl are in reality two sides of the same ideological coin, juxtaposed against one another in ways designed to serve Canada's colonial, heteronormative patriarchy. Like Acoose, Buress & Valaskakis also treat the intersectional civ/sav and Madonna/whore polemics as inherent to Western imperialism and patriarchy, but do so by way of focusing on the romantic incarnations (not to mention more aesthetically pleasing) of Indigenous women as ennobled (whitewashed) Princesses and Euro re-settler feminists as productive and self-reliant (masculinized) cowgirls. As in similar works by their American counterparts, neither the works of Acoose nor Buress & Valaskakis concern themselves with

³⁶ to be differentiated from legal status as 'Indians' under Canada's *Indian Act*.

issues of miscegenation, nor the representation of its mixed-race progeny, focusing instead on a broader discussion around Euro-centric and patriarchal representations of the quintessential Indian Princess and/or squaw of Canada's settler-colonial discourse.

hollywood horrors.

When it comes to the (mis)representation of North American Indigenous people(s), there is no narrative genre more widely studied than Hollywood's westerns, and their trafficking in filmic images of Indians and halfbreeds, which began circulating even before the dawn of the twentieth century, hot on the heels of the invention of the modern camera and Edison's kinetoscope. (Francis, 1999; Kilpatrick, 1999; Stedman, 1977). The subject matter to which this new technology was first applied speaks to the centrality of the spectre of these stereotypes to the colonial imagination (Stedman, 1982).

In an era when America's nascent film industry was preoccupied with the colonialist fetish of conquest and domination of Indigenous populations as well as the heroic 'taming' of the west by European re-settlers (Aleiss, 2005; G. Bataille & Silet, 1980; CrolundAnderson, 2007; Hilger, 1995; Kilpatrick, 1999; Stedman, 1982), it may come as some surprise—if not some relief—that there were (a scant few) viewers who received filmic images of the Indian neither passively nor uncritically, as documented in Gretchen Bataille and Charles Silet's edited volume, *The Pretend Indians: Images of Native Americans in the Movies* (1980), a collation of re-published critiques of cinematic Indians that hearken to the earliest years of commercial film production.

In fact, the very first public challenges to filmic stereotypes of Indians begin to appear in entertainment magazines and newspaper editorials *alongside* the first generation of filmic

productions in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries (G. Bataille & Silet, 1980; Hilger, 1995). Such was the opinion of one W. Stephen Bush, writing an editorial in 1911 for the periodical, *Moving Picture World* 9, entitled, “Moving Picture Absurdities”:

The greatest of them all is the Indian. We have him in every variety but one. We have Indians á la Français, “red” men, recruited from the Bowery and upper West End Avenue. We have licensed Indians and Independent Indians—all we lack are the real Indians...Enter “The Wicked Halfbreed.” He is dear to the heart of the filmmaker dealing with western stuff...(and) may be divided into two grand classes, the Canadian and the Mexican.³⁷

In this respect, argue some, the halfbreed is even more unfairly misrepresented than is the Indian, (Friar & Friar, 1972; Berton, 1975; Brégant-Heald, 2015; Cooke, 1984)—at least at the hands of American filmmakers, who, “(p)referring to hold ‘breeds and such’ to minor and generally unredeeming roles...apparently felt more comfortable with casual denigration of a partial Indian-ness than they did with the glorification seemingly required for sympathetic central characters”(Stedman, 1984, pp. 199-200). In Hollywood films, the halfbreed male is customarily tarred as a “sneaky, untrustworthy degenerate(s)” (Berton, 1975, p. 87), regardless of his ethnic and/or national origins. The Metis of the Canadian west are perhaps the most defamed among cinematic halfbreeds; Pierre Berton, Canadian writer and pundit admonishes, “Nobody—not the blacks, not the Indians—has suffered as badly at the hands of the film makers

³⁷ September 16, 1911. Cited in Bataille and Silet, 1980, p.60.

as have the Metis,” who, in Berton’s estimation, had done “nothing to deserve the stigma with which the movies branded them” (p. 87).

Also defying both natural and historical reality is the near-absence of women of Indigenous/European descent in ‘Hollywood’s Gospel’ (Friar & Friar, 1972), materializing only sporadically, compared to their ‘purebred’ cousins: “very few films have been made about halfbreed women. It is easier to use a full-blooded Indian woman in order to avoid the additional complications presented by a half-white woman which would have to result in a half-happy ending” (p. 245). When the halfbreed girl does appear, the only roles available to her are those of “sex objects...brazen hussies, or hell-cats” (p. 245). Innately carnal, duplicitous, violent—and often, homicidal and/or suicidal—the debased image of the halfbreed girl embodies all of the social problems assumed to be the inevitable outcome of racial hybridity, as well as that of the modernization and urbanization of Indigenous people(s) (Aleiss, 2005; G. Bataille & Silet, 1980; Berton, 1975; Brégant-Heald, 2015; Brégant-Heald, 2010; Crolund-Anderson, 2007; Harrington, 2013; Hilger, 1995; Kilpatrick, 1999; Marubbio, 2009).

Elsie Marubbio found similar depictions of metis women in her work, *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film* (2009), one of the most substantial works so far, focusing on such images in American pop-culture discourse. Marubbio (2009) was the first to document the collation of elements of both the Princess and the squaw, into a hybrid stock character in American cinema that she dubs “The Celluloid Maiden.” Unsurprisingly, this representation, as defined by Marubbio, recapitulates the very pan-Indian Girl that raised the ire of Pauline Johnson (1892), replete with the supposed fetish for Euro re-settler men and

suicidal—even homicidal—mania regarding the same.³⁸ Marubbio’s portrait of The Celluloid Maiden of American cinema is nearly identical to the libelous representation of the “Indian Girl” to which Johnson objected more than a century earlier.

In this analysis of thirty-nine American filmic texts, Marubbio devotes a significant segment of her argument to the detailed exposition of a stock character that she identifies as the “The Sexualized Maiden”. This prototype, she contends, is one predecessor of a more contemporary image of Native American women, The Celluloid Maiden: a stock character that possesses a set of select traits drawn from images of what she calls “The Celluloid Princess” and “The Sexualized Maiden”, the latter being somehow ‘whitewashed’ (being racially and/or culturally ‘hybridized’) by her alliance and/or romance with Euro re-settler men, which condemns her to an inevitably violent and untimely demise. However, Marubbio determines The Sexualized Maiden’s ethnicity to be “off-Indian”; any questions concerning her ethnic and/or racial hybridity are subsumed within and sublimated to Marubbio’s larger scope and intent, which is to trace the genealogy of the Native American Celluloid Maiden, effecting the sublimation of the metisse as an ethnic and/or social entity in and of herself in the title of the work as well as in its focus.³⁹

Consistent with her hypothesis, Marubbio’s (2009) segment on The Sexualized Maiden is unconcerned with the social, political, cultural, or social-psychological ramifications of

³⁸ Here, Marubbio refers to a hybridity of character traits into a single, fictive persona, rather than a hybridity of race or ethnicity.

³⁹ This is a play on Diane Negra’s concept of “off-white” ethnic identities in *Off-White Hollywood: American Culture and Ethnic Female Stardom* (2001). Negra posits that EuroAmerican female celebrities’ performativity of “ethnic” has less to do with expressions of non-white, Anglo ethnicity and/or racial hybridity than it does with their capacity to challenge and disrupt heteronormative patriarchy, and its gendered expectations for women’s social roles and behaviour. Instead, Negra categorizes such performativity as transgressive iterations of sub-whiteness (i.e., white trash), that she describes as “off-white.”

miscegenation for those Indigenous people(s) that also carry European ancestry, or about what effect these images have on metis women themselves; rather, her main focus is the point of contact and the moment immediately thereafter (as embodied by the mixed-blood or culturally hybrid woman) and its implications for the American, Anglo-Protestant psyche. Indeed, the metisse in Marubbio's work is negated even as she calls Canada's historic Red River Metis by name in her close reading of DeMille's (1940) *North West Mounted Police*. For Marubbio, Louvette Corbeau—situated in a highly specific, socio-political, ethnic, geographic and historical context—functions primarily as a flattened, conflated, re-iteration of Indianness that appears as part and parcel of the “vanishing Indian” motif that Marubbio considers requisite to images of *The Sexualized Maiden*.

Central to Marubbio's construct of, *The Celluloid Maiden* is Frederick Jackson Turner's ‘frontier thesis’, as presented in his essay, “The Significance of the Frontier in American History” (1873). Here, Turner advances the theory that American democracy is a natural evolution of Euro/re-settlers' relationship with the frontier, which he imagines as a fire that has forged all of the traits that make American culture “unique, exceptional, and superior”. Part of forging a new, American masculinity and national identity entailed the ‘Indigenization’ of the Euro, re-settler male through miscegenation with Indigenous women (Crolund-Anderson, 2007, 20). Marubbio uses her construct, *The Sexualized Maiden*, in service of advancing her key construct, *The Celluloid Maiden*, which she uses to illustrate a broader discussion about a certain image of *Native American* women in American filmic texts that, Marubbio argues, operates as a synecdoche for its national mythos of Manifest Destiny, as well as its sub-narrative, Turner's “frontier thesis.” As a progenitor of *The Celluloid Maiden*, Marubbio's *Sexualized Maiden* also shares her representational destiny (to facilitate colonization and then get out of the picture), but

unlike the previous, Celluloid (Indian) Princess who remains pure, the Sexualized Maiden must first perform another essential function: that of the sexual surrogate that facilitates (through colonization and settlement of Indigenous territories and the conquest of Indigenous women) the liberation and hyper-masculinization of the Anglo-Protestant, heterosexual, American re-settler male. This thematic configuration is important to my own interrogation of images of the halfbreed girl, insofar as she is imagined to be a transitory force that is at once necessary to the project of settler-colonialism, but fraught with danger, containing the potential not only to ‘invigorate’ the Anglo, re-settler male, but also to disrupt his positional superiority in the colonial hierarchy.

These two themes (Manifest Destiny and Turner’s frontier thesis), foundational to the American master narrative, are also the focus of Brégant-Heald’s short, comparative analysis of two American films, D.W. Griffith’s *Ramona* (1910), and Edgar Lewis’s, *The Barrier* (1917), that, set in California and the Yukon, respectively, examine images of “*metissage and metisazje*” (p.145) and their function within America’s master narrative. Placing the filmic texts in thoughtfully constructed socio-political and historical context, Brégant-Heald illustrates how their images of halfbreed women articulate American anxieties about maintaining its supposed traditional social boundaries during the social flux of its progressive era. At the same time, Brégant-Heald reads American filmic discourse concerning miscegenation as fantasies that enable Turner’s ‘all-American’ male to transgress certain barriers: barriers to Indigenous land title, to Indigenous women, and to his own rebirth as the new Indigenous American.

This thesis is reprised as part of Brégant-Heald’s larger work, *Borderland Films: American Cinema, Mexico, and Canada During the Progressive Era* (2015). In this, much more substantial study, Brégant-Heald examines what she calls the “borderland film” genre in order to

illuminate “the ways that the American cinema, its critics, and its audiences functioned in circuits of meaning-making in which all participants helped to shape perceptions of North America’s border regions” (p. 4).⁴⁰ In this era and genre, themes of miscegenation and racial hybridity figure large in American filmic narratives; mixed-race unions and/or characters appeared frequently (p. 92), reflecting current American discourses around assimilation vs. annihilation, as well as well as the actual, ongoing “racialization in the borderlands” (p. 14) to America’s North and South.

Similar to Marubbio’s (2009) work, as well as to my own study in its intent and in its methodology, Brégant-Heald’s objective is to examine filmic narratives as a reflection of the American psyche during a proscribed period of time/space, using film as “cultural artifacts” in ways that “help to re-create how popular understandings of North America’s border regions have changed over time and the role that film culture has played in shaping attitudes toward nation-states neighboring the United States” (Brégant-Heald, 2015, p. 9). Moreover, her research finds a solution to a conundrum common to both of our studies: that most films produced during this era no longer exist in physical form, and/or are not accessible for direct analysis. Instead, Brégant-Heald relies on the discourse produced around the films, employing film history, film reviews, promotional materials, and ‘grey literature’ (such as production notes) of studios regarding specific films. I also utilize these strategies here where films were/are not accessible for viewing. Brégant-Heald’s work also serves to fill the gaps in my study where original texts regarding films produced in this era were not available to me at the time my sample was collected.

⁴⁰ The films studied were produced over a twelve year span, between 1908 and 1920.

Brégant-Heald's research finds that Canada is favourably juxtaposed against a violent, confrontational Mexico: the Great White North tends to be characterized as a "backward" "fur-trade frontier" populated by denizens of French-Canadian, Indian, and mixed-race ancestry (p. 92) that eventually evolves into a "peaceful" and "efficient" Anglo re-settler expansion westward (p. 19). Accordingly, female mixed-race characters are similarly juxtaposed, with mestizas positioned as harbingers of chaos, death and destruction, while in "a number of Northwest melodramas exotic mixed-race women appear as both an erotic symbol of colonialism and a vehicle for the regeneration of the Anglo-Saxon male outsider" (Brégant-Heald, 2015, p. 78).

Although images of *metissage/metisazje*—being a central motif in the borderland film genre—are introduced throughout the text, Brégant-Heald's primary focus is on how the notions of miscegenation and racial hybridity that these images function as foils to the Anglo male protagonist in America's master narrative. Certainly, Brégant-Heald's exposition of Turner's frontier thesis with respect to the Indigenization of Anglo, re-settler males, and its expression in the images of *metis/mestiza* women is most useful in informing my study. However, any scrutiny dedicated solely to representations of *metis* is confined to one sub-section of one chapter, 'Racialized Borderlands'. While this section represents a valuable and comprehensive list of cinematic texts containing images of *metissage/metisazje*, discussions about the Canadian *metis* and filmic images of them comprise only a brief mention in one part of this chapter, in which an examination of *metisse* characters is even further subsumed under Brégant-Heald's broader, American-centred rubric, which is not at all concerned with how these representations might affect/be received by *metis* themselves.

Again, as appears to be the trend among scholarly works that entertain this particular topic, both the film genre and the study that examines it are more about the (Anglo-American)

re-settler than they are about the metisse. It is important to note that following the twelve-year span that saw the height of popularity for Brégant-Heald's borderland films, representations of mixed-blood women declined in both frequency and in clemency, corresponding to the closing of the frontiers of both Canada and the United States, to the extent that two generations later, the caricature decried by Friar & Friar (1972), Berton (1975), and Stedman (1982) is typical, if sporadic, in American cinema.

If Hollywood's neglect of and/or "unrelenting libel" against the metis—and for the purposes of this study, metisses— "can neither be excused by pointing to the tenor of the times in which it occurred, nor explained away by the essential naiveté of the silent films, nor condoned by the need of screenwriters and directors to infect drama and conflict into their stories" (Berton, 1975, p. 99), then what can explain anti-metis bias—at least as it appears in American cinema?⁴¹

LaRocque argues that such defamation campaigns against Indigenous people(s) serve a larger narrative: one that fabricates and promulgates the unequal and exploitive power structures crucial to the project of colonization in North America, while simultaneously operating to legitimize and rationalize its own existence (2010). Consequently, the marginalization and misrepresentation of the actual, real, live, metis women (who were essential to building colonial economies) in Canada's master narrative underlines the importance of examining the treatment of Indigenous others in pop culture, especially in the late nineteenth century and into the mid

⁴¹ That mixed-blood, and specifically, metis characters were subject to a deliberate character assassination in Hollywood films has been not just an accusation leveled by critics such as Pierre Berton (1975) and Friar & Friar (1972) but was also openly acknowledged as common practice by legendary film-maker, Cecil B. DeMille himself. See Berton (1975, p.99).

twentieth, at a time when the nascent nations that produced it pushed hardest to eradicate Indigenous peoples, in order to facilitate westward expansion and re-settlement.

returning the (three-eyed) gaze

More than a century later, the dearth of scholarly literature regarding images of metis women continues, with the exception of four works: those of Emma LaRocque (1983) Marubbio (2009), and the studies by Dominique Brégant-Heald (2010) and (2015). Beyond these works, the body of literature that focuses specifically on the representation of metisses in settler-colonial discourse – much less, popular culture – is scant. Those that do subsume the examination of such imagery to larger queries regarding the national identity of settler-colonial societies and are American in their focus. Even less is written about how actual metisses might respond to those images. In this area, Jodi Lundgren's (1995) paper, *Being a HalfBreed: Discourses of Race and Cultural Syncreticity in the Works of Three Metis Women Writers*, stands alone in its analysis of the writings of three metisse women, especially with respect to their responses to (mis)representations of themselves. In this respect, regarding the second tier of investigation, only Lundgren's (1995) short paper comes close to my study in intent, focus, and method. Here, Lundgren investigates the process of ethnic identity formation via textual analysis, searching for moments at which the authors recognize or mis-recognize themselves in the discourse of the dominant culture, and adopt identity positions *vis à vis* representations of themselves. The representation of metis women (or perhaps more telling, the lack thereof) in pop culture discourses, as well as their responses to it, warrants study far greater in breadth and depth than currently exists in postcolonial research. Certainly, this sad state of affairs, represents a call to textual action: surely, the metisse deserves her turn in the spotlight, at last.

II. Picturing the halfbreed girl:

An Overview of Discursive Identity Management

Whether the image is printed word or spoken, moving or static, large or small, silver or technicolor, painted or pixelated, for North America's "99%", it has the (seemingly) astonishing ability to grant admission to the lands, stories, and customs of others that would be otherwise inaccessible: in short, the North American masses have often looked to mass media (especially the screen, whatever its size) as a "window on the world" (Kilpatrick, 1999). Unfortunately, this sort of pop epistemology offers a view of Indigenous others that is nothing like gazing through a window; rather, it proffers a counterfeit spectacle, mirroring little else but the outward manifestation of the in(e)ternal angst that unsettles re-settler sensibilities. Following Edward Said's (1978) proposition that representations reveal more about the perceiver than they do about the perceived, this chapter will lay down the theoretical foundation for my argument, providing an overview of how Western imperialist discourses on miscegenation and racial hybridity seek to manage the identities of both colonizer and colonized, as well as tracing how these discourses shape colonialist attitudes about Canada's and America's mixed-blood female other, which are characterized primarily by ambivalence.

When subjected to a contrapuntal reading, images of the halfbreed girl are revealed to be little more than an artefact of the dystopic delusions of Western Empire: a textual glamour whose deceptive charm can be dispelled under the withering stare of the subaltern, "third eye":

Literature written ... on native subjects by non-native, Eurocentric writers...is likely to hold little interest for the Aboriginal or Indian reader. Such literature, irrespective of its imaginative power, is likely to have the smell of conquest. It is likely to have a narrative arrogance, one which subjugates Amerindian or Aboriginal space to the master narrative—social political ideological—of the dominant culture. (J.J. Healy, cited in Dragland 1994, p. 264)

One such example of this narrative arrogance is Western imperialism's propensity to flatten and homogenize the social, cultural and historic heterogeneity of Indigenous populations, reducing them to simulacra, effectively subordinating and mastering them (Baudrillard, 1983). Certainly, the stock, hackneyed images of the halfbreed girl circulated in mainstream, pop-culture discourse bear little to no resemblance to the women who dedicated their lives to their families and communities, women from whose unrelenting productive and reproductive labour emerged a new people that went on to populate, fabricate, and negotiate the very infrastructure that made colonial expansion possible in the northern and western regions of Canada, if not to the same extent in the United States (Macdougall, 2010; Van Kirk, 1980).

Emma LaRocque, identifies such attempts to re-define and subordinate Indigenous people(s) as nothing less than “textual warfare” (2010, p. 38), the battleground of which includes the terrain of mainstream “Canadian historiography and literature that is replete with incendiary writing against Native cultures, peoples, and persons...” (2010, p. 60). Similar to Schiller's (1973) conceptualization of the packaged consciousness, LaRocque argues that representations of Indigenous people(s) in settler-colonial discourses inform and shape the nature of the relationship between colonizer and colonized at the public, *macro* level of society (Acoose,

1995; Stoler, 1995; Stoler, 2002). As part of this packaged consciousness, such representations also function at the *micro* level, forming Cooley's (1902) proverbial 'looking-glass' through which we metisses must, to some extent, develop and negotiate our gendered and ethnic selves, the imperatives of empire insinuating themselves into the most (ostensibly) private spaces of our lives in intensely personal ways (Anderson, 2000; LaRocque, 1975; Lawrence, 2004): influencing our choices in fashion, romantic partners and even toothpaste.⁴²

LaRocque is far from alone in her observations. Ann Laura Stoler, building upon Michel Foucault's (1985) work in *History of Sexuality*, maintains that in the larger nationalist discourses in Britain and Europe, "the disciplining of individual bodies and the regulation of life processes of aggregate human populations" (Stoler, 1995, p. 4) were strategies of Empire designed to impose its mastery over the lives of the masses, including how those individual lives were/are organized in the most intimate and visceral ways. These tactics,

drew on and gave force to a wider politics of difference, but with the relationship between visible characteristics and invisible properties, outer form and inner essence. Assessment of these untraceable identity markers could seal economic, political, and social fates... These discourses provided the working categories in which imperial division of labor was clarified, legitimated—and when under threat—restored. (Stoler, 1995, p. 8)

⁴²See, LaRocque, E. (1975). *Defeathering the Indian*. Agincourt, Canada: The Book Society of Canada Ltd. A reference to the childhood experience of Emma LaRocque, whose first exposure to pop culture in public school "educated her desire" for a particular brand of toothpaste that she associated then with "cleanliness" and "modernity" (mimetic of "white-ness"): an ethos in direct opposition to popular images of the "black-toothed squaw," such as the one imagined by Parker's English matriarchs of empire in *Translation of a Savage* (1893).

For example, Malchow's (1996) discourse analysis of selected texts in the gothic genre illustrates how a "literature of terror" informed a "popular culture of fear and fantasy" among nineteenth-century British audiences: one articulated in a "language of blind revulsion" (p. 5) and preoccupied with the "unnatural-ness" of racial difference, miscegenation, and its dreaded consequence—a hybrid population that might be able to infiltrate, occupy, and supplant Whites in their own (identity, geographic, social, political, economic) spaces.

Rather than interpreting such inflammatory discourse as merely a product of the time in which the ignorance of its European authors inevitably bred the racist assumptions that shaped their works, LaRocque reproves,

It is neither 'inevitable' nor by happenstance that much White intellectual and literary tradition is founded on name-calling...deprecating terms indicate political intentions, not to mention bias, slander, and just plain hatred. Terms or techniques construct, as well as express, hatred...especially in the demonization (and animalization) of Native characters. (LaRocque, 2010, p. 60)

In fact, "(r)acism required a...demonization of difference" (Malchow, 1996, p. 2), a rhetorical strategy that was part of a popular lexicon in the 'high age' of Western imperialism, in which racial and cultural difference was characterized as inhuman and placed in textual opposition to the normative values and socio-cultural practices of the imperial West (Dickason, 1984; Malchow, 1996; Marubbio, 2009; Pearce, 1958; Stoler, 1995). This practice, consistent with the West's Manichean world view, is operationalized by an "apparatus" of knowledge production whose primary function at "a given historical moment [is] that of responding to an urgent need...[such as] the assimilation of a floating population found to be burdensome for an

essentially mercantilist economy” (Foucault, cited in Gordon, 1980, p. 195). Such was the socio-political position of the metis in early Canada (Freeman, 2005).

Entangled as they are within the West’s imperialist, patriarchal, and racist discourses of nation-building, European and settler-colonial representations of European women positioned them as both producers and protectors of civilization and culture, since “(t)he possession of a tangible place of production in the womb situates the woman as an agent in any theory of production” (Spivak, cited in Young, 1995; p. 19). As part of such a campaign, both Canada and the United States relied on virulent misogyny as a core tool of oppressing Indigenous populations, aptly summarized in the Cheyenne adage, “a people are not conquered until the hearts of the women are on the ground”.⁴³

One of the most effective demoralizing weapons in any war chest is to sexually degrade the females of the enemy population. Extending his notion of “Empire as machine,” Robert C. Young (1995) notes that the predilection of Western imperialism is to objectify Indigenous others sexually, “not just as a form of fantasy, but also as a form of ambivalent desire” (p. 167) in which the subject, instead of being at the centre, is “produced as mere residuum of the processes of the desiring machines, the nomadic offshoot of striated mental spaces and of the body defined as longitude and latitude” (p. 168). This particular form of desire dehumanizes the Indigenous other by way of fragmenting them into various segments (body parts, qualities)—an effect that is both product and goal of objectification, making sexual degradation all the more possible and palatable to the settler-colonial imagination.

⁴³ From, Jaimes, Annette and Halsey, Theresa. (1992) “American Indian Women: at the Center of Indigenous Resistance in North America” in Jaimes and Halsey, eds. *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance*. Boston: South End Press. pp 311-44.

The ‘residuum’ produced by the intersection of the Judeo-Christian Madonna/whore complex and the civ/sav dichotomy manifests itself as the Princess/squaw polemic, forming a semiotic lexis vital to rationalizing Western imperialism’s more lascivious (not to mention economic) interests: the sexual objectification and exploitation of Indigenous women in general (Green, 1975; McKlintock, 1995; Malchow, 1996; Stoler, 1995). This new lexicon is employed to re-define and re-locate the social place of actual metisses in the master narrative. Rayna Green observes that, consistent with the faulty logic of the Madonna/whore complex, both Pocahontas’s “nobility as a ‘princess’ and her savagery as a ‘squaw’ are defined in terms of...relationships with male figures” (1975, p. 703), pointing out that, “even [the American construction of the image of] Pocahontas...is motivated by lust” (p.703), however ambivalent it may be. In fact, Green asserts, sexual activity (or abstinence from it) is the key defining factor in determining which women qualify as princess or squaw.

Just as importantly,

Discourses of sexuality do more than define the distinctions of the bourgeois self; in identifying marginal members of the body politic, they have mapped the moral parameters of European nations. These nationalist discourses were predicated on exclusionary cultural principles that did more than divide the middle class from the poor. They marked out those whose claims to property rights, citizenship, and public relief were worthy of recognition and whose were not. (Stoler, 1995, p. 8)

For example, in her (1997) work, *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Imagery in Canada’s Prairie West*, historian Sarah Carter documents how metis and Indian women were targets of a deliberate campaign of hate speech, in which defamatory representations of them were, as Carter reproaches, “assiduously” fabricated in Canadian discourse, juxtaposed against angelic

representations of European re-settler women, and then widely circulated: in part, to deter miscegenation and to undermine the legitimacy of those marital unions and the families that were generated by them.

How did the very existence of metis people become a site of such social, political, and cultural contest? In Canada, as in colonies abroad, “(ethnographies of empire) may show that sexual control was both an instrumental image for the body politic—a salient part standing for the whole—and itself fundamental to how racial policies were secured and how colonial projects were carried out” (Stoler, 2002, p. 78). Western imperialist discourse tends to view the racialized body as problematic, positioning Indigenous figures as sites of collision between past and present (Tobing-Rony, 1996). In the colonial imagination, miscegenation between Indigenous people and Euro re-settlers represents a liminal but factual frontier: especially here in Canada, where metis populations are also very physical reminders of the very space and time that saw a mixing of cultures that gave birth to a nation—literally. This “brute reality” is one reason why “metissage was first a name and then made a thing. It was so heavily politicized because it was understood to destabilize both national identity and the Manichean categories of ruler and ruled” (Stoler, 2002, p. 110).⁴⁴

Such postcolonial discourses on miscegenation and hybridity move beyond biological frameworks and the pseudo-scientific assumptions underpinning them to examine the ways in which racial hybridity represents various intersections of race, class, and gender that comprise the unequal power relationships endemic to imperialism. Bakhtin posits that an analysis of the language of racial hybridity in colonial discourses reveals that the term—whose manifest

⁴⁴ “Brute reality” is a phrase used by Said in his (1978) work, *Orientalism*.

function as a boundary was to divide the races from one another—also contains an inherent, contradictory dialogic whose underlying function is to challenge and transgress those very boundaries. For Bakhtin, the irony here is that the different races joined in hybridity are not separate entities but are two sides of the same ideological coin: a “doubleness that fuses, but also maintains separation” (cited in Young 1995, p. 22).

Derrida describes this doubleness as a form of *brisure*:

a breaking and joining at the same time, in the same place: difference and sameness in apparently impossible simultaneity...consist(ing) of a bizarre binate operation, in which each impulse is qualified against the other, forcing momentary forms of dislocation and displacement into complex economies of agonistic reticulation. (Cited in Young, 1995, pp. 26-7)

This *brisure* is not endemic to the hybrid psyche, as imperialist wisdom suggests, but rather represents a dissonance in the Western imperialist psyche itself, which struggles internally with the brute reality of its own conflicted attitudes toward the enticing, but bothersome other: a neurosis that first is denied and is then projected onto those they perceive as mixed-race. The troubled process of socially constructing racial hybridity in the colonies reflects the set of complex and sophisticated intellectual/emotional contortions that were necessary for the imperial imagination to erect and maintain the artificial boundary between civility and savagery, all the while denying its permeability—and just as importantly—their yearning to transgress it: “colonial discourse of whatever kind operated not only an instrumental construction of knowledge but also according to the ambivalent protocols of fantasy and desire” (Young 1995, p. 161).

In Canada and the United States, suppositions regarding the causal relationship between miscegenation and the contamination—not to mention the subsequent degeneration of both citizen and Western civilization itself—ran both ways. In the anti-miscegenation discourses of the imperial West, it was believed that not only could liaisons with Indigenous women corrupt Euro re-settler men, those same colonial men (especially those of the lower classes), if left to the savage influences of the colonies for too long, themselves become degenerate. They, in turn, defile *la belle sauvage* (Stoler, 1995), despoiling even the most noble-born Indian Princess, who then becomes the squalid squaw. Subsequently, the textual figure of the halfbreed girl, a product of this sexual deviance that introduces both racial and cultural cross-contamination, is imagined to be the very embodiment of the worst attributes of both races in this respect. Images of this mixed-blood vixen simultaneously destroy any romantic notions of the noble savage while maintaining a clear and ever-present danger to the carefully constructed parameters of a Euro patriarchal bourgeoisie and its established order of things (Marubbio, 2009; Stoler, 1995).

Thus, *metisses* had three strikes against them: they were of the dark, non-Euro other, they were women, and they were miscegenates. Perceived as abominations of nature—a vexation to the taxonomic fetish of social Darwinism specifically and empire generally—mixed-blood women fit uneasily into settler-colonialism's sub-narratives of the frontier (especially Turner's American, frontier thesis) and America's manifest destiny. Evidently, the relationship between the colonial imagination and its resultant racially hybrid progeny is one of ambivalence, wavering between repulsion and desire (Young, 1995); further, it labours under the narcissistic assumption that its halfbreed progeny feel the same way about themselves (Stoler, 2002; Stoler, 2006; Young, 1995).

This projected sense of ambivalence resonates clearly in the lyrics of Cher's hit single, "Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves" (Stone, 1971, Track 2) and even more explicitly in the song, "Halfbreed" (Cap & Dean, 1973, Track 3), both expositions of larger socio-political processes of colonization as well as the inner anxieties of the settler-colonial psyche. In "Halfbreed" (Cap & Dean, 1973, Track 3), the project, assimilation through miscegenation, as well as the belief in its inevitable failure, are given voice by way of the supposed personal testimony of the fictive, tragic figure immortalized in Cher's repeated performances.⁴⁵ Composed using imperialist tropes familiar to generations of Canadian and American re-settlers, this tragic tale presumes the Indigenous/European racial hybrid as not belonging to a legitimate place or people (Hurd, 1997; Malchow, 1996; Young, 1995), constituting "neither flesh, fowl, nor good salt herring".⁴⁶

This constructed marginality, along with the Western imperial ambivalence that predicates the notion, is apparent in the poetics of the opening sequence to post-WWII western, *Duel in the Sun* (Selznick & Vidor, 1947). Assuming the authority of an ethnographic documentarian, the disembodied voice of the Anglo male narrator proclaims:

And this is what the legend says: a flower—known nowhere else—grows from out of the desperate crags where Pearl vanished. Pearl—who was herself a wild flower sprung from the hard clay, quick to blossom and early to die. (Selznick & Vidor, 1947)

Nicknamed "Lust in the Dust" by Hollywood critics (Marubbio, 2006), this film production by David O Selznick tells the tragic tale of the ill-fated Mestiza girl, Pearl Chavez, who is orphaned

⁴⁵ A close reading of Cap and Dean's lyrics to "Halfbreed" (1973) appears later in the thesis.

⁴⁶ According to Grandmother McLeod, a character in Canadian author Margaret Laurence's short story, "The Loons" (1970) in *A Bird in the House*. Canada: McClelland and Stewart (p.106).

and then sent to live with well-to-do White relatives, only to find her ruin in relationships with White men. *Duel in the Sun* is as much about Pearl's internal, Manichean battle as it is about the film's fatal finale, in which she murders her abuser/stalker/lover in a classic western showdown at his desert hideout, "Squaw's Head Rock." Pearl represents the quintessential halfbreed girl in the settler-colonial imagination: a hybrid being who is conflicted by her very nature, doomed to suffer an eternal struggle between her White (coded as civilized) and Indigenous (coded as savage) selves, with savagery ultimately winning out in the end.

Apparently, similar to the process that creates the pearl, the progeny of Indigenous/European sexual liaisons are a source of acute vexation from which colonial sensibilities must protect and insulate themselves: in this sense, Pearl(s) represent(s) Bhabha's "third space": places that destabilize colonial binaries with "radical heterogeneity," discontinuity, and the "permanent revolution of forms" (cited in Young, 1995, p. 25). The very name of Selznick & Vidor's (1947) anti-heroine is metaphorical of her status in North American, settler-colonial societies—for what is a pearl but an exquisite by-product of an irritated oyster? I'd say that in the world of an oyster, a pearl is a fairly permanent and revolutionary form, embodied in pretty irritant.

That is exactly how racially hybrid women—whether they are referred to as halfbreed, half-caste, half-blood, mixed-blood, mestiza or metisse—appear to the imperial (Euro-patriarchal) gaze: alluring but also irritating, causing it no small discomfort on a number of different levels. Western imperialist and settler-colonial discourses about the female progeny of Indigenous/European sexual unions demonstrate clearly that while these women were considered to be physically appealing and highly desired sexually by European men (Marubbio, 2006; Van

Kirk, 1989; Young, 1995), paradoxically, they also represented at best “unnecessary and expensive appendages”, and at worst, “the snare which has ruined many of our countrymen”.⁴⁷

The slippage produced by this ambivalence, Homi Bhabha’s “third space”, becomes visible when Pearl is likened to a desert wildflower, acknowledging a hardiness that is sprung from hard clay and yet quick to blossom, even in the most harsh and unforgiving of environments. Though she was destined, as a miscegenate, to be early to die, it is important to note that wildflowers are perennial, a metaphor intoning a periodic and fleeting, but predictable return: not of Pearl, herself, but of her kind, emerging from the desperate crags of settler-colonialism’s margins, only to serve as its own, internal, condemnation. This process of abjection is the foundation of the popular textual construction, the halfbreed girl.

At first glance, Pearl’s fate might seem to typify what Prats (2002) argues is the “representational destiny” of the textual halfbreed, who, like her/his Indian cousins, is pre-ordained to disappear, as a “representation of self-subversion” (Prats, 2002, p. 4), in which, similar to images of the “Imaginary Indian,” a mock metis is subject to an “omitted gaze”; one in which “deliberate representations of Otherness...at once require and confirm, looking without seeing” (p. 97). For example, Prats argues that thematic motifs of the sexual assault of White women by Indian males (or the threat thereof) is in fact subtext articulating Euro re-settler fears of miscegenation and its perceived threat to their positional superiority in their raced hierarchy.

And yet, informed by Turner’s frontier thesis—a foundational ideology in the American master narrative—the Euro re-settler requires miscegenation with an Indigenizing (female) host

⁴⁷ The first slur is attributed to Governor George Simpson, cited in Van Kirk, (1989), 161. The second is attributed to Reverend Cockran, 1835, cited in Van Kirk, (1989), p. 172.

(Crolund-Anderson, 2007) in order to affect their inter-generational transmutation from immigrant to “true” American. The inherent contradiction contained within this ambivalent desire creates a form of omitted gaze that does not necessarily conflate the representational destiny of the halfbreed girl with that of the Indian who vanishes into McKlintock’s anachronistic space (1996). “Looking so as not to see” (Prats, 2002, p. 97), her existence is simultaneously desired and disavowed, while repeatedly summoning her into view as a persistent danger to settler-colonial society.

While images of non-consensual, inter-racial sex speak to the desire to prevent miscegenation or to deliberately overlook such unions where they were consensual, images of the already extant halfbreed girl also speak to fears of social and economic usurpation. Once the brute reality of miscegenation can no longer be denied, anxieties turn to eliminating the progeny, who cannot be allowed to inherit either the social place of their European patriarchs, nor the real property appropriated from their Indigenous ancestors.⁴⁸ Textually, these demons are sometimes exorcised by way of the halfbreed girl’s untimely demise, but more often, by preventing the conception of any mixed-blood children who may stand to inherit, or failing that, their death. When they are not whitewashed, any infants produced by the halfbreed girl and her Euro re-settler mate are pictured as dead and/or dying, a thematic motif that recurs across generations of colonial, pop-culture discourse.

Even Pauline Johnson similarly eschewed any notions of the metisse living happily ever after with their Euro re-settler male suitors, rejecting the colonialist “education of (her) desire”⁴⁹

⁴⁸ A theme very much in keeping with the trope of the “tragic mulatto” in African American literature See, <https://ferris.edu/HTMLS/news/jimcrow/mulatto/homepage.htm>. Retrieved: November 20, 2018, 9:51 PT.

⁴⁹ From Stoler’s (1995) work, *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault’s History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. U.S.A.: Duke University Press.

both in her fiction and in her life.⁵⁰ Both Pauline Johnson's short fictions, *A Red Girl's Reasoning* (1893) and *As it Was in the Beginning* (1913), feature failed romances between Johnson's big M, Metisse protagonists and Euro re-settler men; in the former, Christine leaves her Euro re-settler society husband to return to her mother and her homeland; in the latter, Esther murders her Euro re-settler fiancée. Johnson's treatment of mixed-race marriages in her fiction may have been influenced by (or in protest of) the "exploration literature" of the day, in which negative attitudes towards miscegenation, and the European men who engaged in it, are evident:

Many of the woodcutters who supply fuel to steamboats on the upper Missouri marry, or rather buy, Indian wives; but they do not form part of the tribal family, as does the squaw man. Often it is policy for them to take wives from tribes which are dangerous to their safety. A wife insures protection from the depredations of her tribe; and when her lord and master is tired of her, or wishes to form other business relations, he simply tells her and her progeny to go home. (Booth, 1880, pp. 39-40)

Booth's travelogue represents a colonial artefact in which the disreputable "squaw man" emerges as a social type: one that goes on to populate the pages of fictive frontier narratives. From the covetous John Wynnagate of Royle's (1905) stage play to the anonymous pedophile in Stone's lyrics to "Gypsies, Tramps, and Thieves" (1971, Track 2), in narratives featuring the halfbreed girl, the tendency of her male, Euro, re-settler love interest is to abuse and/or leave her. With the exception of Parker's (1893) *Lali Eye-Of-The-Moon*, Lasky, Zukor, & Melford's (1934) filmic interpretation of her, *Tonita Stormcloud*, and Marin's (1949) *Cecile Gautier*, the halfbreed girl—

⁵⁰ Despite entertaining several Euro, re-settler, male suitors, Johnson married none of them, remaining a 'spinster' until her death.

as she appears in the texts studied here—almost never gets her man, and if she does, she must date to her own level.

While the Indian Princess is sought after by European aristocrats and their champions, the squalid squaw—as well as her halfbreed cousin—is bound to end up with the riff-raff. Although the leading man in Parker's (1893) novel is born into English aristocracy, he exhibits none of the nobility denoted by his rank. Frank Armour marries Lali not out of love, or even out of political or economic pragmatics, but in a fit of retaliation against his family for preventing his marriage to his true (read: race-appropriate) love. Armour relocates his new wife to England to live with his family on their estate and then returns to Canada, effectively abandoning and rejecting a newly pregnant Lali, but not outright divorcing her, in a transparent act of abjection. Remaining in Rupert's Land for five years, Frank does not return to his wife in England, nor take their marriage seriously until Lali surrenders her Indigenous identity in favour of a memetic one that is successfully internalized (read: whitewashed). The eponymous "Squaw Man" of Royle's (1905) play, American John Wynnegate, although nobly taking the fall for the economic disaster wrought by his brother's wastrel ways, nonetheless covets his brother's wife, a transgression of Biblical proportions. He, too, marries his Indigenous wife, Naut-ur-ritch, for mercenary reasons (as a peace treaty between her people and his) only to reject her in the end, resulting in her suicide: a cinematic fate shared a half-century later by Selznick & Vidor's (1947) Pearl Sanchez.

This similarity is no small wonder, as Pearl's squaw man, Lewt, subjects her to similar treatment. First he rapes her, then alternately woos and rejects her, refusing to marry her, while sabotaging her efforts to marry well—or at all—elsewhere. Similarly, Piquette Tonnerre, the Metisse character in Margaret Laurence's short fiction, "The Loons" (1970), is described as emphatically unappealing in visage and in temperament, offering the suggestion that this might

be the reason why her Anglo-Canadian husband ultimately abandons her, along with the mixed-blood children he helps to procreate. Miscegenation must not be allowed to occur, it seems, even in abstract.

This conflicted attitude toward women of mixed Indigenous-European ancestry, rather than being a spontaneous response to their lived, authentic embodiments, is instead derived from the internal struggle of the imperial West to cope with its intimate relationships with the new peoples it encountered with a combination of fear and fascination. This ambivalence resolves itself in North American settler-colonial discourses by way of a defamation campaign to marginalize actual metisses, as well as their significance to the colonial project within the grand narratives that are the sibling origin stories of Canada and the United States. These strategies are grounded in, and inextricably co-dependent with, the political, social, and economic agendas that comprise the foundation of these societies, and Western Empire generally (LaRocque, 2010).

Part of the West's ambivalence regarding its miscegenate, hybrid progeny lies in the fear that the halfbreed girl will mimic the dominant culture all too well. According to Euro re-settler sensibilities, the consequences of such an individual passing as a member of the dominant group, rather than being easily identifiable as a member of the socially abject one, are dire—not only introducing racial and cultural contaminants into western civilization, leading to its degeneracy, but also upsetting its “natural” economic hierarchy, in which race is a criteria for stratification (Stoler, 1995; Young, 1995). These apprehensions are clearly illustrated in the films, *Call Her Savage* (Rork & Dillon, 1932), *Behold My Wife!* (Schulburg & Leison, 1934), *Duel in the Sun* (Selznick & Vidor, 1947), and in the episode, All That Glitters, from the Canadian television series, *Murdoch Mysteries* (Meyboom, Lacey, Harbin, Kinnear & Crossland 2015).

That the establishment does not want her to pass is evident in Canadian author Sir Gilbert Parker's novel, *Translation of a Savage* (1893). Contrary to the historical practice in which European men left their "country wives" when their employment contracts were fulfilled, Parker's leading man relocates his metisse wife to England, expecting her to acculturate herself to English high society, which she does (mostly) with aplomb. Although Parker's attitude toward the argument for assimilation through miscegenation, along with his depiction of the halfbreed girl seems rather optimistic, Lali's true role in Parker's morality tale is belied by her close association with the "Yellow Swan": a character at the centre of a traditional Indian song from her homelands. At first blush, the fable made famous by Hans Christian Andersen about the Pygmalion-like transformation of the ugly cygnet into the lovely swan seems allegorical of successful assimilation in Parker's text, but the swan symbolizes much more than an outward transformation from ugliness to a state of sublime beauty. Upon closer examination, this state of transcendence is stained by its colour—yellow. Lali's relationship to the yellow swan is allegorical of the relationship of the metisse to Canadian expansion, assimilation, and its propensity to abject her as a bona fide sexual, social, and legal entity.

In reality, swans come in either white or black: yellow swans do not exist in nature. On the surface, yellow is reminiscent of the prairies, often used in Parker's day to signify the frontier of the Canadian West (Monkman, 1981) as well as the sunrise: the 'Yellow Swan' of Lali's song resides in the east, which is often associated in Western literatures with spiritual and intellectual enlightenment. However, in Victorian discourses, the colour yellow has conflicting significance, often used to indicate racial hybridity, emotional instability, and mental or physical illness: for example, to have a "yellow streak" down one's back indicates cowardice. The metaphor, "yellow with age," represents decay and decrepitude, a recurring motif in Victorian discourse, in

which the colour yellow was used to signify the break-down, dissolution, and ultimate death of traditional societies (including their own) in the face of modern social forms—along with its morals, norms, values, and cultural practices (Khanna, 2010). The depiction of Lali as a yellow swan is a deliberate use of semiotic resources that, while appearing to ennoble her, actually reinforce Western imperialist attitudes about its racially hybrid progeny whose innate savagery needs to give way to civilization: a transformation that will ultimately fall short. In other words, Lali is irrevocably tainted.

This “yellowness” illustrates Diane Negra’s claim that “Native American identity constitutes a particular form of ‘off-white’ ethnicity in American culture, operating as a kind of ‘white borderland’ from forms of European ethnicity” (2001, p. 167). It is this “peripheral version of whiteness” that makes space for, and sense of, contemporary rock-icon Cher’s “blunt speech, unruly behavior and vacillation between high and low modes of stardom,” as well as for the seeming contradiction of her economic wealth (Negra, 2001, p. 180): in effect, rationalizing the oscillation of her persona between Princess and squaw. In this sense, Cher’s performance of the halfbreed girl is not as emancipatory or as subversive as it might seem initially, in many ways recapitulating and reinforcing—even celebrating—settler-colonial social hierarchies based on race, class and gender. Further obfuscating the integrity of non-European ethnic identities, “Cher’s persona works to thematize ethnic chameleonism by referencing assimilation imperatives that have historically impacted both ethnic immigrants and persons of color” (Negra, 2001, p. 166).⁵¹ However, in attributing Cher’s “residual traces” (p. 180) of Native American identity to an off-white ethnicity, Negra ignores the very notion of racial hybridity and

⁵¹ Note that here Negra conflates America’s “assimilation imperatives” applied to “immigrants” to those of all “persons of colour,” lumping Indigenous Americans into the amorphous state of “brown” identified by Medina (2009), eliding the unique status of Indigenous people(s), and metisses specifically, within America’s national genesis and as the foundation of its assimilationist practices and policies.

metissage, which I submit is the central concept that demarcates the boundaries of the White borderland, as well as enables Cher's ability to transverse them into the identity-scape of the halfbreed girl, which is one of her most enduring personas. This aspect of Cher's ethnic mobility exemplifies how, failing efforts (both conscious and not) to vanish actual metisses into anachronistic space, it becomes necessary to banish her in some other way. The elision of actual metisses, and the subsequent replacement of them by an elusive and transmogrified (trans-mock-reified) metisse—of which (trans-Maki-fied) Cher is one embodiment—is a typical practice in colonial discourses of both Canada, the United States, and Europe, where playing Indian is a long-standing tradition (Deloria, 1998; Green, 1988; Huhndorff, 2001), and a particularly useful one for re-settlers who can use that supposedly vacated space as a means to claim some sort of Indigeneity.

For all of settler-colonialism's insistence to the contrary, however, the halfbreed girl seldom goes "gentle into that good night"; instead, she is reincarnated every generation as a femme fatale who returns to trouble its master narrative.⁵² For example, although the Indigenous society of D.C. Scott's (1898) ghoulish "Onondaga Madonna" is prophesied to doom, she does not appear to be in imminent danger of dying herself, her genetic continuation ensured by the child to whom she has just given birth. In fact, Scott fears that she and her innate savagery may never die out, believing that its taint will be carried on through the blood, however diluted, in her descendants *ad infinitum*. Even the suicidal Pearl Sanchez's death is subverted by picturing her, and her kind, as hardy, wild perennials. It would appear that the representational destiny of the

⁵² The phrase, "gentle into that good night" From the title of the poem by that name by Dylan Thomas, (1951). First publication: *Botteghe Oscure*, Italy.

textual halfbreed girl is not so much to disappear entirely from settler-colonial society, but to hover at its margins, returning only when a varlet is required to test and re-affirm its boundaries.

Sporadic appearances of the halfbreed girl continue into the new millennium, but have been granted a partial upgrade in the settler-colonial imagination, which no longer dismisses her as categorically iniquitous. Rather, the millennial halfbreed girl is pictured more as an Eastwood-esque anti-heroine: a sexy, albeit mercenary, ally. As exemplified in *Haven's* Jess Minion (Samples & Pillar, 2010) and *Strange Empire's* Kat Loving (Finstad-Knizhnik & Macdonald & Fitz, 2014), the halfbreed girl now represents a morally ambiguous wild card who follows her own code of ethics, rendering her loyalty conditional and her trustworthiness erratic. She is still prone to regressing into her Indigenous self, replete with fits of violence, but this is now contextualized as somewhat justified, especially when useful to the (Euro re-settler) hero's agenda. She is good to have around in a gunfight, because she'll bring a gun—AND a knife. And explosives. Or whatever. However, her reputation remains “sketchy”: until the dominant society can shed its ambivalence toward the halfbreed girl, she cannot shed her reputation as a fringe-dwelling subversive, always running her own hidden agenda, of which her Euro-settler companions can never be certain.⁵³

The longevity of these pejorative images of the halfbreed girl—generated 150 years ago—speaks both to their appeal to the settler-colonial imagination and to their successful naturalization within it, explaining why such works as Duncan Campbell Scott's (1898) “The Onondaga Madonna” and—a half century later—Selznick and Vidor's (1947) *Duel in the Sun*, are still classic frontier narratives, remaining essentially unconsidered regarding their systemic

⁵³ “Sketchy” is the title of an episode in *Haven* that features Jess Minion.

imperialist function by the public at large. The verisimilitude of these images in the public mind may also explain why 1970s re-settler audiences readily accepted Cher's halfbreed girl persona, both on stage and off. Consistent with the quintessential halfbreed girl of yore, Cher was not only beautiful, but also tough and tarnished: a stage persona further reinforced at the time by articles written in celebrity gossip news about the alcoholic and abusive side of her Euro-American husband, Sonny Bono. Cher's lived reality in a dysfunctional and tumultuous marriage—themes so recursive in fictive narratives about the halfbreed girl—may account for the persistence of popular belief in, and uncritical acceptance of her metissage, even in academic discourses, despite her later public renunciation of any Indigenous ancestry.⁵⁴

As a hegemonic process, one of colonization's prime objectives is to have the colonized internalize the normative values of the oppressor, ultimately governing themselves. In order for this process to unfold, the colonized must first internalize and accept—or at least perform—the social identities assigned to them by the colonial society (Memmi, 1965), and to mimic what they see reflected back to them, even if the new, colonial-approved identity is perceived/received with ambivalence by both colonizer and colonized (Bhabha, 1994). This concern, also expressed by LaRocque (1975) and others regarding the ways pop culture and other colonialist practices have shaped the self-image of the colonized, underlines the importance of examining pop-culture distortion, erasure and outright misrepresentations of them.

⁵⁴ See Marsan (2010) and Negra (2001), who accept Cher's indigeneity credulously, although it was established as fact in the late 1990s that neither Cher nor her Irish-American mother appear on any band roll in the United States.

III. Boundary Issues:

Constructing and Managing Race, Class, and Gender Hierarchies in the Colonies

Contrary to their protestations otherwise, the first few generations of Euro re-settler bourgeoisie were anything but secure about the stability and durability of their supposed positional superiority within their respective settler-colonial societies (McKlintock, 1995; Malchow, 1996; Stoler, 1995; Valverde, 1991). As a measure of control, settler-colonialism in the Victorian era was, by and large, a bourgeoisie project coded by discourses on race and managed by discourses on sexuality (Carter 1997; McKlintock 1995; Stoler 1995; Stoler, 2002; Young 1995), not just with the agenda of importing “middle-class sensibilities to the colonies, but also about the making of them” (Stoler, 1995, p. 99).

By way of semiotic analysis, this chapter traces this project through its social abjection of historical Metisses in late nineteenth and early twentieth-century Canada: an actuality that I argue informs the textual abjection of the fictive halfbreed girl of settler-colonial lore. To this end, this chapter examines social representations of Metis/Metisses during key historical periods, constituting a history of the semiotics of the Metis/Metisses, as opposed to providing a history of the Metis *per se*. Rooted in Euro, re-settlers’ increasing ambivalence towards Metisses and in a concomitant complex of anxieties about them, the process by which historical Metisses were rendered abject was operationalized, in part, through identity boundaries created and maintained through the discourses of miscegenation and racial hybridity favoured by Western empire, and its aspiring settler-colonial bourgeoisie.

These discourses use tropes grounded in Europe's ancient and familiar civ/sav and Madonna/Whore dichotomies, whose juncture produces a raced, gendered, and classed expression in the Princess/squaw polemic, the colonial yardstick by which Indigenous women are measured (Acoose, 1995; Green, 1975; A. Smith, 2005). This intersection further reticulates into a set of sub-binaries that provide scaffolding for Euro, re-settler anxieties about, along with the appropriate placement of, female metissage (of all iterations) on the settler-colonial landscape. The relationship between these oppositional binaries is illustrated below (figure 1), in which the, archaic, 'parent' European dichotomies, civ/sav and Madonna/Whore, are rendered by the blue lines, while the Princess/squaw polemic is represented by the red line. In order to place Metisses more specifically along the Princess/squaw polemic, a sub-set of qualifiers, in the form of three more related colonial binaries (White/Indian, mimesis/regression, and naturalness/degeneracy), are called into play, as represented by the purple lines.

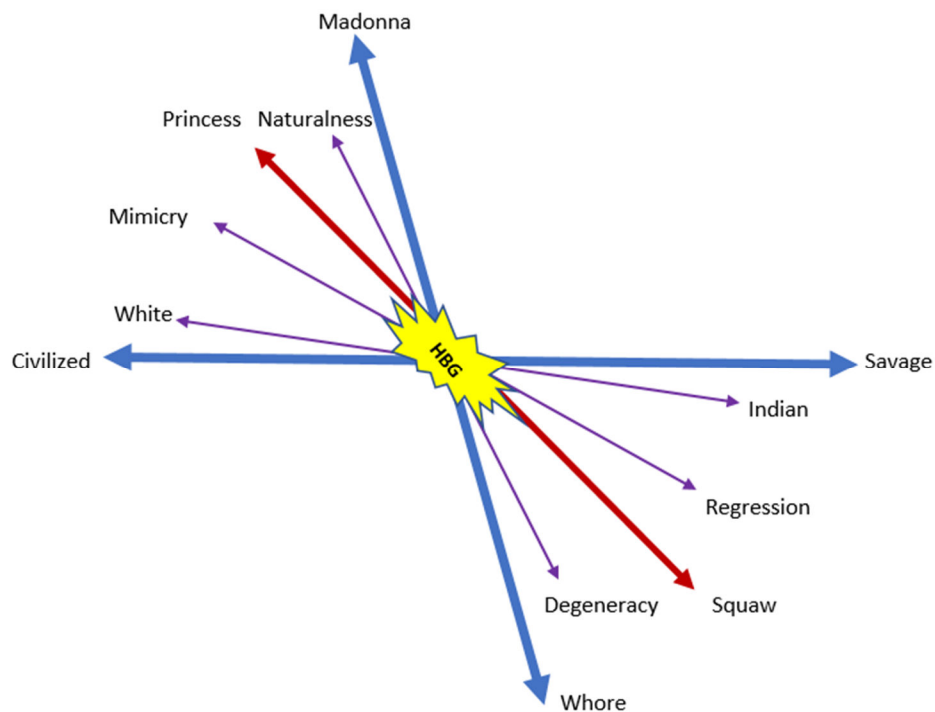


Figure 1: Diagram of Binary Oppositions

This configuration provides a structure for discourses about miscegenation and racial hybridity specific to Metis/metis women, which often begin with misgivings about their dubious morality, which is linked to notions of race, and the sexual mores, gender roles, and women's social status attributed to that race (do they live more akin to Princesses or to squaws?). This binary opposition is accompanied by another that belies apprehensions regarding the brute reality of the origins of historic Metis/metis women, and of European men's dependence on them, expressed in the conflict regarding the 'naturalness' vs. the 'degeneracy' of the social practices of inter-racial sex and miscegenation, and by extension, that of the resultant, racially hybrid progeny. This sub-binary speaks to the torment generated by the mere existence of these racially hybrid women, which is preoccupied with where their racial predilections, and subsequently, their loyalties ultimately lie (White or Indian?). This sub-binary in turn begs the question of their ability and/or willingness to assimilate to colonial satisfaction: can/will they mimic White civility, or are they prone to regress to Indian savagery?

The angst suffered by Victorian-era Europeans over these boundary issues is evident in the semiotics of the popular culture of the day:

a characteristic feature of the Victorian middle class was its peculiarly intense preoccupation with rigid boundaries. In imperial fiction and commodity kitsch, boundary objects and liminal scenes recur ritualistically. As colonials traveled back and forth across the thresholds of their known world, crisis and boundary confusion were warded off and contained by fetishes, absolution rituals and liminal scenes. (McKlintock, 1995, p. 33)

Illusion, perhaps, but a reassuring one built on racism, an ideology fundamental to Western imperialism and the boundaries that define Euro, re-settlers', collective sense of self (LaRocque,

2010; Stoler, 1995; Young, 1995). The ‘liminal scenes’ to which McKlintock refers are images in which the dominance of the imperial West is at once both challenged and reinforced, its physical and conceptual borders being crossed, or in danger of being crossed, by the ‘other’. The ritual and fetish noted by McKlintock are devised to protect these boundaries, along with the positional superiority of Western empire, and by extension, settler-colonialism, which is threatened by its actual dependence on the Indigenous ‘other’ to meet its real, physical needs: material, sexual, and survival.

A common form of fetish in the Freudian sense, according to postcolonial theorist Homi Bhabha, is the stereotype, which he considers to be, the “primary point of subjugation” of the colonized, through which, “the fetish or stereotype gives access to an ‘identity’ which is predicated as much on mastery as it is on anxiety and defence” (1985, p. 25). Similarly drawing on Freudian constructs, Laura Ann Stoler, in her work, *Race and the Education of Desire* (1995), suggests that racism is a by-product of a process of “reaction-formation” generated by the Western psyche when, in the imperial age, contact with unfamiliar peoples in unfamiliar lands challenged and destabilized established European sexual mores, and with them, their collective identities, making “the discursive management of the sexual practices of colonizer and colonized ... fundamental” to imperial organization (Stoler, 1995, p. 4).

Within the lexicon of bourgeois civility, self-control, self-discipline, and self-determination were defining features of bourgeois selves in the colonies. These features, affirmed in the ideal family milieu, were often transgressed by sexual, moral, and racial contaminations in those same European colonial homes...these discourses on self-mastery were productive of racial distinctions, and what it meant to be truly European. (Stoler, 1995, p. 4)

In these discourses, sexuality acts as a “third mediating term” linking nineteenth-century theories of race with notions of culture that were, in actuality, “covert theories of desire” (Young, 1995, p. 9). The Western imperialist theory of race, “which ostensibly seeks to keep races forever apart, transmutes into expressions of the clandestine, furtive forms of what can be called ‘colonial desire’ a covert but insistent obsession with transgressive, inter-racial sex, hybridity and miscegenation” (Young, 1995, p. xii).

This obsession is clear in the story of Pocahontas, a foundational legend in America’s origin story. Implicit in the Pocahontas myth is the expectation of the European re-settler Indigenizing themselves through intermarriage between Anglo males and Indigenous females, specifically, creating a new, hybrid population (Brégant-Heald, 2010; Brégant-Heald, 2015; Marubbio 2009; Crolund-Anderson, 2007; Green; 1975), yet 14 of their states have at some point criminalized intermarriage between Indigenous people and European re-settlers (Freeman, 2005). It is indeed the very worst sort of self-serving delusion that enables the colonial imagination to place the sexual exploitation of Indigenous women at the centre of its androcentric, imperial mythology and yet views them as their biggest sexual threat – an internal contradiction that expresses itself in the racial theories that inform settler-colonial practice towards Metis/metis women.

In nineteenth-century North American colonies, the ambient conversation regarding what to do with the bothersome Indigenous other concerned itself with the merits of annihilation versus miscegenation (Crolund-Anderson, 2010; Brégant-Heald, 2015; Marubbio, 2009), but discourses that favoured the practice of assimilation through miscegenation begged too many questions as to how it would work, and not just in the sphere of public administration (e.g. law and education). Just as importantly, in the private realm of domesticity, even relations of

sexuality and procreation between individuals were subject to political scrutiny and interference (Stoler, 1995; Valverde, 1991); the colonization of both bodies and minds was key in the Victorian project of bringing colonies to heel.

Although managing the social identities of Indigenous populations in North America fall within the larger framework of nineteenth-century European and, especially, British, imperialism, the process differs in some important ways in Canadian context. For instance, although the practice of concubinage and/or attendant concubine barracks erected expressly to house them (indicating the presence of unequal and exploitive power and sexual relations) was widespread in the West Indies, Indochina, and Africa (Stoler, 2002), it was not common, if present at all, at trading posts and military forts in what is now Canada (Van Kirk, 1980): a unique social status among European colonies (Freeman, 2005; Van Kirk, 1989; Wolfe, 2001). Isolated in a vast and unknown land far from home and any military support, European intruders in Indigenous territories were socially, economically and practically weaker than the people they encountered. This distinct disadvantage led them to seek to form alliances where they could—marriage being an alliance that fulfilled both their sexual and practical requirements.

Thus, at the time of first contact in the early 17th century, traders, explorers and missionaries, dependent upon the Indigenous people for safety, as guides, and as suppliers of food, shelter and furs, formed both social and economic relationships in accord with the cultural protocols of the people they encountered. In general, there appears to have been more intermarriage where the indigenous group had large numbers, military power, and something other than land that Europeans coveted and the indigenous peoples were willing to trade. Intermarriage was common in colonies or regions where

mercantile relationships rather than white settlement were the rule. (Freeman, 2005, p. 48)

At this time, in what is now Canada, Indigenous-European liaisons *a la façon du pays* were common, though often practiced in the form of serial monogamy, despite varying degrees of response from corporation, church and state. Until the mid-nineteenth century, these alliances were considered to be legitimate family structures by both the women and the European men who married them (Forbes, 1964; Freeman, 2005; Macdougall, 2010; Van Kirk, 1980; Wolfe, 2001). The prevailing social norms and mores of families tended to conform with the culture of the Indigenous wife, rather than that of her European husband who, in addition to being numerically outnumbered, occupied the social margins as a cultural, linguistic, and ethnic minority (Devens, 1992). Consequently, Indigenous women's kin during this period negotiated alliances with colonial men that were in line with Indigenous notions of family, and reciprocity that revolved around Indigenous notions of propriety and respectability, rather than the other way around (Macdougall 2011), an expectation that was transmitted over several generations to their mixed-blood descendants (Macdougall, 2011; Freeman, 2005).

This situation developed and continued despite the fact that during the time of contact, and during the early stages of the fur trade (in what is now Canada and contiguous parts of the United States), Indigenous women and men had far different expectations about the roles and status of women in their respective societies than did the Europeans who married them. According to the normative values of many Indigenous societies involved in the fur trade, women were regarded as equal to, if qualitatively different from, men (A. Anderson, 1996; K. Anderson, 1991; K. Anderson, 2000; Devens, 1992; Van Kirk, 1980).

Indigenous women in these societies tended to enjoy a social status unrivalled by European females of the day: they were not considered chattel, but were entitled to own and trade property, to obtain a divorce, to retain the family home if widowed or divorced, as well as custody of any children produced by the union (A. Anderson, 1996; K. Anderson, 1991; Devens, 1992). For example, although unique among their contemporaries in their historical practice of matriarchy, consider that the “Great Law” of the Confederacy of the Six Nations (their constitution, if you will) explicitly entrenched the legal rights of women, specifically, in all matters of public policy, especially with respect to real property, land stewardship, and lines of inheritance—which were reckoned along the matriline, as opposed to the patriline—effectively precluding any European husbands from pre-empting Indigenous territories (Monture-Angus, 1995).⁵⁵

Due in part to the continued isolation and dependence of European men in pre-colonization Rupert’s Land, Canada, in contrast to Australia, New Zealand and the United States “had the longest period of initial ethnic mixing because, until the late eighteenth century, Canada was a predominantly mercantile colony; settlement was not an important factor until after the American Revolution” (Freeman, 2005; p. 49). In the meantime, the big M Metis had developed as a distinct population, competing with the European re-settlers for power, privilege, and prestige (not to mention land and resources), jockeying for their social place in the new socio-political landscape. This was all to change with the development of a more aggressive form of

⁵⁵ Here, I would like to point out the distinction between “matriarchy” and “matrilineal”, which are not synonymous terms. The former refers to societies organized around women’s leadership, while the latter refers to the way in which a society recognizes lines of kinship and inheritance. I would also like to emphasize that Indigenous matriarchal societies such as the Mohawk do not merely ‘mirror’ and ‘invert’ the social organization of Western patriarchy.

colonization, the arrival of European women, and westward expansion of European re-settlers into more Indigenous territories.

Also by this time, Indigenous resistances against British rule in India in 1857 and the 1879 Anglo-Zulu war had given Indigenous people a much more frightening aspect in European, and especially British, imaginations.

When we turn to the nineteenth century anxieties around Eurasians, Indos, mestizos, the colonial entailments of these discourses become clear. These were not only groups seen as ‘mixed’ by blood. They were the ‘enemy within’, those who might transgress the ‘interior frontiers’ of the nation-state, who were the same but not quite, potentially more brazen in making their claims to an equality of rights with ‘true’ Europeans, but always suspect patriots of colonial rule. (Stoler, 1995, p. 52)

In addition, and much closer to home, “the arrival of White women in Rupert’s Land coincided with threats to British authority involving increased interethnic conflict and nationalist struggles by the interethnic populations against Hudson’s Bay Company practices” (Fitzgerald, 2007, p. 188).

The social abjection of historical Metisses to “the impossible edges of modernity” (McKlintock, 1995, p. 72) and beyond can be traced to these socio-historical processes marked by increasingly restrictive borders regarding notions of miscegenation and racial hybridity, drawn not only along race lines, but also according to the overlapping contours of classism, sexual desire, and misogyny. There is a reason for this sort of degradation of Indigenous and,

later, Metis women: they were too much of a threat—not only to the supposedly more ‘delicate’ sensibilities of European women, but more importantly, to White supremacy.

Indigenous women, especially Metis women, represented a clear danger to the social and domestic position of European re-settler women (and by extension, the purity of European, re-settler cultures): “when British women arrived in the Red River Colony, they were horrified by the presence of women of color in positions they believed to be theirs by right of their racial superiority” (Fitzgerald, 2007; p. 188). To add insult to this injury, White women also had to face the daunting task of destabilizing and undermining generations of legitimate marriage and family relationships, along with the economic rights that these relationships imply, which Metis continued to expect, express and negotiate even after European women began to arrive in numbers, thus—according to Metis perspectives—preserving the respectability of their women.

Casting aspersions upon the (sexual) character of women is a time-honoured, tried-and-true method of enforcing normative gender roles in a society and, along with ostracism, was frequently used in colonial society by White women—who considered themselves the watchdogs of propriety—as a form of social control to reign in ‘uppity’ Metis women (Fitzgerald, 2007; Van Kirk, 1989). One such example is immortalized in the infamous 1850 real-life courtroom drama, *Foss v. Pelly*, an anti-defamation lawsuit that pitted White and Metis women against each other in mortal combat for their good reputations in Red River society. According to the official records, some influential White women accused another woman of high social stature—a Metisse named Sarah Ballentine—of infidelity. She, in turn, responded by having her male friend and alleged lover launch a lawsuit on her behalf, which she and her Metisse kindred ultimately won, by savvy understanding of the tacit rules of play in the game of respectability, and by a shrewd execution of them while giving testimony in court (Fitzgerald, 2007). In spite

of Ballentine's victory in this lawsuit, the status of Metis women in the Red River colony to decline, leaving them vulnerable to further exploitation and degradation (Van Kirk, 1989).

Attacks against the reputation of Metis women were not restricted to those from outsiders, but also extended to lateral violence that came from within one's own society, and ultimately instilled in the hearts and minds of one's own family. Albert Memmi (1967) observes that the internalization of the colonizer's value system (especially its erotic sensibilities) by the colonized is one of the primary goals of the imperial project: a hegemonic process that began early in North America's colonial history, and one that was not lost on Metis in Canada, who were educated to desire Whites as marriage partners (Adams, 1989) and to distance themselves emotionally, as well as publicly, from all things Indian. In many cases, the taint of D.C. Scott's "weird and waning race" descended from the mother-line:⁵⁶

In the case of those labeled mixed-blood or 'half-caste' children – an imperial icon in itself...a demonstrated disaffection for one's native culture and native mother were critical gatekeeping criteria for European membership. Evidence of disdain or estrangement and sympathy for thoughts and things native were basic to the white community's entry requirements. Those thresholds of racial membership, sexual access, and colonial status were not 'private' sites of respite or retreat. In recluse and repose race was put to the test. In these 'tense and tender ties' of empire, relations of power were knotted and tightened, loosened and cut, tangled and undone. These ties are not microcosms of empire but its marrow. (Stoler, 2006; p. 3)

⁵⁶ From his poem, "The Onondaga Madonna" (1898).

This effect is evident in the behaviour of the children of Alexander Ross, a successful HBC trader who retired to the Red River Colony in 1825 with his Okanagan wife, whom he called Sally. Together, they established a family there, going on to become prominent community leaders. Evidently, many of the Ross children displayed an uneasy attitude toward their mother, especially in public situations, which was “in essence an ambivalence toward their own Indian blood and heritage [that] was evidently not uncommon among British-Indian children” (Van Kirk, 200, p. 374).

Distancing behaviour also included—depended on—intermarriage with respectable White people:

For the girls, marriage to a man of consequence in their father’s (Alexander Ross) opinion was practically the only route to assimilation...these marriages to white men not only underscore the Ross family’s desire to be viewed as ‘British’, but they symbolize the way in which the family identified with the forces of ‘progress’ in Red River. (Van Kirk, 2000, p. 372)

Distance could also be measured by means other than assimilative miscegenation as well, a process clearly apparent in the popular nomenclature of hybridity in Rupert’s Land. Comprised of an aggregate of variegated identities, each term seemed to correlate not to “blood quantum” but to socio-economic criteria based on that which would have been salient to colonial sensibilities of the day, such as “occupation, lifestyle, class, and religion” (Macdougall, 2012). Appearing to corroborate Macdougall’s interpretation here are the memoirs of Metis woman, Marie Rose Delorme Smith, who would often identify various Metis women known to her as “quarterbreed” “halfbreed” and “squaw” (MacKinnon, 2012): a continuum that first and

foremost emphasized Eurocentric standards in morality, dress, manner, and socio-economic status, and second by blood quantum and/or issues of ethnicity.

Economic factors have always played a starring role in social hierarchies, and how well Indigenous—especially mixed-blood women—fared under colonialism varied according to their relationship to the means of production in the colonial economy (Freeman, 2005; Stoler, 2002; Wolfe, 2001; Young, 1995). However, many Metis/metis women, at first indispensable to the success of colonial expansion, lost their economic and social status over time as the political, social, and economic agendas of colonization changed (Fitzgerald, 2007; Van Kirk, 2000; Wolf, 2001). As the fur trade dwindled and Euro-settlers established reliable transport and food supplies of their own, women without real property, material assets, or valuable economic ties lost out to an ever-increasing population of White brides. Even if the family of a Metis woman was respected and wealthy, other forces also undermined her.

Sex in the colonies had to do with sexual access and reproduction, class distinctions and radical demarcations, nationalism and European identity – in different measure and not all at the same time. Major shifts in the positioning of women were not, as we might expect, signaled by the penetration of capitalism *per se* but by subtler changes in class politics and imperial morality and in response to the failures of specific colonial projects. (Stoler, 2002, p. 78)

Britain's colonial project—attaining supremacy in the Northern colonies—meant that increasing hostilities between French and English settlers necessitated additional censure and mechanisms of control, with different ethnic and religious populations ranked and treated accordingly.

The image of the halfbreed as dangerous rather than compliant was more likely to be applied, not to the ‘country-born’ descendants of the English or Scots who received a British Protestant education, but to the alien-speaking, resentfully dispossessed, Catholic French-Indian community. Traditional prejudice against French culture, religion, and “immorality” conspired with racist views of the Native American to produce an intensified image of gothic instability and danger. This negative-image halfbreed in fact served to enforce a positive reading of English or Scots mixed-race unions: the one that was an obstacle to process, the other a facilitator of white conquest...in these representations, Frenchness is assimilated to the Indian, and the result is a compound of (Indian) childishness and savagery with (French) cowardice and treachery.

(Malchow, 1996, p. 218)

Indeed, the marginalization of the other also extended to those who, though re-settlers of British origin themselves, were deemed unworthy according to the Victorian ideals of chastity and industry. In colonial, and later, nationalist discourses,

the distinctions defining bourgeois sexuality were played out against not only the bodies of an immoral European working class and native Other, but against those destitute whites in the colonies and in dubious contrast to an ambiguous population of mixed-blood origin. (Stoler, 1995, p. 100)

These anxieties were no more evident than in the discourses of the nineteenth-century European bourgeois, which were “peopled with surreptitious invaders in the body politic, ‘fictive’ Frenchmen, ‘fabricated’ Dutchmen, and Anglicized but not ‘true’ British citizens who threatened

to traverse both the colonial and metropolitan ‘interior frontiers’ of nation- states” (Stoler, 1995, p. 11). It is here, in this particular arena of contest, that we can observe the political abjection of a group of people who are a result of and inhabit the “contact zone” between Europeans and their colonial subjects.

New perspectives and goals need new terms. The word “miscegenation” did not exist until 1864, when it appeared in both the London and New York presses, published in an American anti-abolitionist essay equating amalgamation between the White race and races of colour to the condition of “mongrelity”—an implication that the different races were in fact different species (Young, 1995), thus pathologizing sexual contact between colonizer and colonized as deviant behaviour, and highly discouraged in settler-colonial and Western imperialist discourses (Stoler, 1996).⁵⁷ So deeply embedded are these racial theories in the collective identity of the West that, as late as the mid-1970s, academic literature problematized hybridity and hybrids, both in terms of eugenics and as a social type (Young, 1995). Colonials were concerned not just with biological mixing and contamination—they had to protect themselves against cultural contagion as well:

theories of race (in the nineteenth century) ...were disseminated through an imperial logic in which cultural hybridities were seen as subversive, and subversion was contagious. In that imperial frame, native sensibilities and affiliations were the invisible bonds that could position those of mixed-blood as ‘worked citizens’ at the vanguard of revolt against those ‘full-blooded’ Europeans who claimed the right to rule. (Stoler, 1995, p. 52)

⁵⁷ The essay in question is *Miscegenation: The Theory of the Blending of the Races Applied to the American White Man and Negro* (cited in Young, 1995).

Discourses of “moral panic” regarding covetous, fraudulent, usurping miscegenates smoothed the way for an ever-expanding European settler population seeking to establish sovereignty in the lands they were rapidly settling and annexing, including those of the big M Metis in what is now the Canadian west.⁵⁸ Seeing their lands and rights eroding under the pressure of colonization, and with the 1869 transfer of Rupert’s Land and the North-Western Territory from the Hudson’s Bay Company to the Dominion of Canada looming, the Metis formed the Metis National Committee to protect their social, cultural and political status in Red River and the Northwest. The committee halted the Canadian land surveys on 11 October 1869, thus entering the consciousness of Euro settlers as a political entity. A few weeks later, the committee seized Upper Fort Garry from the Hudson’s Bay Company, declared itself the government of the Red River Settlement and executed Thomas Scott, a soldier captured with others from a force gathered to oppose the Metis resistance.⁵⁹

Subsequently, the Metis were viewed not just as an inconvenience, but as a dangerous impediment to colonial expansion. Consummate buffalo hunters with their own well-articulated systems of governance, commerce, and order, the Metis were suddenly viewed as a hybrid menace, their ancestral savagery, combined with Western acumen, now feared as a formidable combination that would challenge Canada’s claims to land and resources, dispossessing and supplanting Euro re-settlers in the aftermath. The entry of Manitoba into the Canadian confederation in 1870 gave rise to new ideas in regard to the identity (and literal) management of bodies-politic in Canadian society. The role of the Metis as other was exacerbated by this, which,

⁵⁸ See Cohen, Stanley (2011). *Folk Devils and Moral Panics*. London: Routledge. Original publication date: 1972. A moral panic is instigated when certain conditions, events, persons, or groups become defined by those in the dominant group as opportunists who represent an inherent threat to the established social order, its culture and its values. The ‘moral panic’ positions the outliers as “folk devils.”

⁵⁹ (<https://www.thecanadianencyclopedia.ca/en/article/louis-riel/> June 24/18),

coupled with the fact that they continued to negotiate for separate sovereignty, resulted in an uneasy situation which continued until 1885, when, after a series of bloody clashes with Euro, re-settler forces, the Metis lost their bid for an independent nation.

By the late nineteenth century, nearly all territories inhabited by the Metis had been annexed by the newly birthed nation of Canada, subsumed under the totalizing effects of the modern nation-state. Once Canada and the United States no longer worried about attacks by Indians and their halfbreed relatives, they transferred their concerns to assimilation (Brégent-Heald, 2015; Prats, 2002), working to textually erase mixed-blood unions and their progeny from the public sphere:

In late, nineteenth-century European colonies, discourses about sexuality *vis à vis* hybridity were not only exclusionary and prescriptive, but also aspired to a slow form of genocide: “(m)ixed-bloodedness became the post-frontier version of the vanishing Indian. (Wolfe, 2001, p. 887)

Among imperial anxieties in colonies abroad was that any racially hybrid offspring might inherit real property from their Euro, re-settler fathers, in effect returning lands, *fee-simple*, to the descendants of the Indigenous people from whom it was originally appropriated (Stoler, 1995). It is not difficult to imagine Canada fearing the same prospect:

When the hbc monopoly collapsed great fortunes were to be made in the west, and the new imperial and patriarchal goals for the region rested on complimentary assumptions of British superiority and white male dominance. Aboriginal women and their children were not regarded as the proper heirs to the wealth of the country (Carter, 2008, p. 282).

Whatever Canada's inner angst regarding Metis women, its expression is clear in its imperative to evict real, historical Metisses from the beds of Euro re-settler males. Along with official sanctions against inter-racial marriage, historian Sarah Carter notes that when White women began to arrive in numbers at the Red River settlement, "prominent Aboriginal women...were denied elite status" in that society, as well as being "pro-claimed to be promiscuous and a social danger" in Euro, re-settler discourses (Carter, 2008, p. 282). Emergent Euro, re-settler communities developed an "unease over marriages that criss-crossed cultural and colonizing boundaries. White men deserted their Aboriginal spouses, or perhaps divorced according to Aboriginal law" (p. 70) for White wives: a practice of divorce and re-marriage that non-Indigenous communities appear to have "heartily endorsed", excepting when the children of those previous interracial marriages were perceived to have been "abandoned" to lives on reserves with their Indigenous relatives (Carter 2008, p. 71).

In contrast to the mantle of respectability enjoyed by their grandmothers in fur-trade society, as well as the relative power and privilege that accompanied it:

In 1886, country marriages were denied legal recognition, meaning that respectable society considered the progeny of such relationships bastards and the Native or mixed ancestry wives of dubious morality ... (s)ignificantly, contact with white men was not seen to civilize Aboriginal women—the men were regarded as having been polluted and corrupted by their Aboriginal partners. (Freeman, 2005, p. 50)

A perverse colonial fascination with the sexuality of Indigenous women was often expressed as sexual exploitation and violence toward them, and Metis women in Rupert's Land were no exception. Van Kirk (1989) and MacKinnon (2012) point to evidence indicating that the rape of

Metis women and girls was a commonplace occurrence in colonial society, at the Red River colony and elsewhere. The faulty logic of the Madonna/whore polemic, which had been firmly established in the colonies—including Red River—by the mid nineteenth century (Young, 1995; Van Kirk, 1989), is certainly apparent in the case of a Red River cleric who was tried for attempting to force his Metisse housekeeper to undergo an abortion in order to rid her of the child that he fathered while raping her. Of note is that the perpetrator was tried and convicted for attempting to administer an abortion, rather than for the repeated sexual assaults upon the woman that resulted in her pregnancy; due to the presumed venality of her race, the victim's testimony of non-consent was suspect (Fitzgerald, 2007). Clearly, the unambiguous desire of settler-colonial patriarchy was to control female Indigenous bodies, in both public policy and in personal practice.

No longer vital to European life and survival in Canada, Metisses were put in their place through a subtle yet pervasive propaganda campaign in which “intra-racial marriage became an index of respectability... (and) mixed-race marriage was censured in medical and other advice literature of the late nineteenth century (Carter 2008, p. 68). Anne McKlintock's *Imperial Leather* (1995), as well as the works of Laura Ann Stoler (2002; 2006), have found the same strategies used in colonies abroad, illustrating how empire has a vested interest in controlling populations, delimiting those who have power from those who do not. In late nineteenth-century imperialist discourses generally, the West's normative values of race, class and gender were constructed and promulgated through discourses of purity and cleanliness, in which the purity of white women (who were positioned as needing protection as the carriers of culture and civilization) starkly contrasted against the degenerative influence of her (uncivilized, impure) darker sister (McKlintock, 1995; Valverde, 1991). Metisses, and the social legitimacy of their

mixed-race unions, had to be textually expunged from the collective settler-colonial memory as well, in large part advanced through a campaign of popular culture that was little more than a shill for Empire (Valverde, 1991).

Post Red Resistance: Relocating the metisse in the Colonial Master Narrative

Given that miscegenation and intermarriage with Indigenous, and metis women, had become a well-established, if inconvenient truth in the North American colonies, then what to do about it? The savage in the wife must be expunged, of course—the process by which this effect was achieved, and by whom, being an uncomfortable topic with which settler-colonial discourse seemed compelled to grapple. Sir Parker's (1893) pop sensation, *Translation of a Savage*,⁶⁰ responds to this colonialist quandary with a best case scenario narrative so appealing to the re-settler imagination that it spawned several generations of assimilationist narratives, including two filmic adaptations titled, *Behold My Wife!* (Schulburg & Leison, 1934; Lasky, Zukor, & Melford, 1920).

American playwright Edwin Milton Royle's (1905) *Squaw Man* also renders what he considers to be a best case scenario, albeit lacking Parker's charity toward the metisse, denying her the happy ending reserved (pun intended) only for his Euro re-settler characters.⁶¹ De Mille,

⁶⁰ At its original publication, *Translation of a Savage* was received very well, finding appeal among a broad, international audience: a fact Parker feels is "sufficiently established by the very large sale it has had in cheap editions...People of diverse conditions of life have found in it something to interest and to stimulate" (Parker, 2017, Introduction, paragraph 3).

⁶¹ Royle, E. M. (Premiered October 23, 1905). *The Squaw Man (stage play)*. Wallack's Theatre, Broadway, NY. NY. USA.

self-professed propagandist against both the big M Metis and of Indigenous/European miscegenation in general (Berton, 1975), adapted Royle's *Squaw Man* narrative to the silver screen three times, in 1914, 1918, and 1931, inspiring an entire sub-genre of the western that has been a recursive staple in Hollywood productions ever since (Aleiss, 2005; Crolund-Anderson, 2007; Kilpatrick, 1999; Stedman, 1982).

The poetry of Duncan Campbell Scott represents the worst case scenario regarding miscegenation and its efficacy as a pathway to assimilation and civilization. Both of Scott's works examined here, "The Onondaga Madonna" (1898) and "The Halfbreed Girl" (1906), represent Scott's belief that while miscegenation is a necessary evil in pursuit of the greater good of Western imperialism's civilizing mission, it is inherently fallible, as the halfbreed will inexorably regress to her innate, savage state.

Here, we have three authors—all male European re-settlers—writing from different narrative conventions and genres: comedic and tragic, romantic and gothic— yet all participating in the same conversation, speaking the same language of empire.⁶² Neither Parker, Scott nor Royle were the first to employ and promulgate images of the conflicted, misbegotten halfbreed girl. They were merely three more voices speaking from, and into, the longer Western imperialist conversation regarding civilization, savagery, and hybridity:

⁶² Parker and Scott, both Ontario-born, and both heralded as contributors to Canadian literature—in their own time, as well as in ours—were contemporaries and ran in the same social circles, being big fish in the small pond of Canadian literati, such as it was, at the time. If they did not know one another personally, they were sure to have by reputation and would have been familiar with each other's published works. In this sense, those of their works examined here document their differing positions in a very real, very politically and emotionally charged conversation during Canada's confederation era.

beginning largely as an act of imagination, the image of the halfbreed...took on a confirming, corroborating reality in popular readings of imperial events in the nineteenth century. Mixed-race people were floated free from their special places on the red map of empire, invested by means of a spurious empiricism with a common character, and then drawn back, into the world of literary fantasy in the 1880s and 1890s as powerfully reified abstractions. (Malchow, 1996, p. 227)

The recurring theme, assimilation through miscegenation, features large in the works of these authors, amounting to nothing less than a textual purification ritual whose purpose is to purge the body politic of the impurities of any Indigenous blood, while absolving re-settlers of a multitude of the sins that derive from the sensibilities of a patriarchal Western imperialism and settler colonialism—not the least of which was their unbridled lust for the Indigenous female other, as well as their disavowal of her, and the whitewashing of their shared progeny.

A clear example of how the process of abjection worked in Canada around the turn of the nineteenth century is demonstrated in the personage, policy and poetry of Duncan Campbell Scott. Scott's power over metis women is multiplied. First, as the Minister of (then) Indian Affairs, he functions as a socially appointed agent of abjection who then wields the power to subject a socially abjected group (in this case, metisses) to both psychic and political processes of abjection, in which the abjected group is positioned as inhabiting an abjected state, which then justifies their relegation and confinement to abjected zones—conceptual, textual, and actual. Using various techniques of textual mastery (Duchemin, 2011), Scott vents and promulgates a racist misogyny against metisses through his artistic work as well as through his oversight of racist and colonialist governmental policies, profiteering from their subjugation, dispossession,

and ongoing oppression, openly admitting the genocidal agenda of Canada's *Indian Act* (1876), writing, "our object is to continue until there is not a single Indian in Canada that has not been absorbed into the body politic, and there is no Indian question and no Indian Department."

Belonging to his literature of treaty nine (Dragland 1994), the poems, "The Onondaga Madonna" (1898) and "The Halfbreed Girl" (1905) were generated from his encounters with the metis as he traversed traditional as Cree and Ojibway territories in the service of redacting and re-defining those socio-cultural geographies. Apparently, Scott's travels there profoundly affronted his Euro, patriarchal, settler-colonial sensibilities regarding miscegenation. Using the language of gothic literature, Scott celebrates "the beauty of terror" (Dragland 1994, p. 204), giving voice to misogynistic, genocidal fantasies in which his central figures—both metisses—are imagined as "the walking dead": one a man-eating demon-whore, and the other a zombie, and both doomed to vanish, vanquished by good Christian soldiers such as Scott.⁶³

Certainly, Scott would have us believe that there is nothing admirable—or appealing at all—in metis women. However, his works belie the ambivalence of Young's colonial desiring machine (1995), specifically, in the poem, "Onondaga Madonna" (1898), in which Scott deliberately subverts the imagery associated with the powerful Indian Queen (threatening to patri-colonial systems), a rhetorical strategy that allows him to then sexually denigrate, then dominate his textual subject. Scott's "The Halfbreed Girl" (1905) is relegated to perpetual purgatory that (he judges) is the lifeway of the western Metis, from which death is a preferable escape.

⁶³ The phrase, "the walking dead" is a direct reference to AMC's popular television series in the 'Zombie' genre, *The Walking Dead*. (Darabont, 2010 – present)

Deposing Scott's glorification as a canon of confederation-era literature, historian Brian Titley renders a portrait of a vicious, conniving, social-climbing bureaucrat whose art imitates his views in life, using Indigenous characters as "props" and "backdrops", as negative foils for his White characters, or as plot devices involving graphic and brutal violence that is always attributed to Indigenous people(s) (1995, p. 31). Indeed, Scott's "Indian poems can startle and disturb, imbued, as they often, but not always, are with a transparent ideology rooted in firm convictions about once noble, but now vanishing peoples" (Cullingham, 2014, p. 23), a transparency that opens his canonical works to controversy in contemporary Canadian literary discourse (Cullingham, 2014; Dragland 1994; Monkman, 1981; Titley, 1995). Nevertheless, Scott's caricature of the metisse as a half-dead, half-naked, half-civilized abomination does not disappear, but takes up a protracted residency in North American settler-colonial pop-culture discourse.⁶⁴

Although her genesis cannot be entirely attributed to Scott's "narrow vision", and that of his contemporaries, Parker and Royle, their female mixed-blood characters represent a sedulous curation of semiotic resources that attempt to textually purge historical metisses while supplanting them with images of mock-metisses that later metastasize in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries as the stereotypic halfbreed girl.⁶⁵

⁶⁴ These works are subjected to a close reading which appears later in the thesis.

⁶⁵ The phrase, "a narrow vision" is taken from the title of Brian Titley's (1995) *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada*. Vancouver, B.C: UBC Press.

Nascent Nationhood: Reinforcing Perimeters and Parameters

Not quite as stark, the cautionary fiction of Scott's contemporary, American playwright E.M. Royle, reiterates cautionary tales against miscegenation in his theatrical production, *The Squaw Man*.⁶⁶ In this recursive narrative genre, well-to-do Euro settlers adopt and/or marry orphaned, sometimes-related halfbreed girls as either an act of charity or, alternately, a prodigal son's defiance: storylines we see repeated in later eras in the films, *Behold my Wife!*, (Zukor, Lasky & Melford, 1920; Schulburg & Leison, 1934), *Call Her Savage* (Rork & Dillon, 1932), and *Duel in the Sun* (Selznick & Vidor, 1947). The predictable outcome of this story is that this unlikely union brings naught but dysfunction, discord and strife to the Euro-settler family: in the colonial imagination, regression into her original state of savagery is inevitable, and the halfbreed girl is unable to escape her preordained fate, or from visiting that fate upon those drawn into her volatile orbit (Aleiss, 2005; Brégant-Heald, 2010; Marubbio, 2009).

Indeed, the advent of motion pictures provided a new medium for the continual textual redaction of mixed-blood people typical of American (and Canadian) narratives, further entrenching miscegenation taboos in the popular mind. Fictive, filmic settings "created complex and paradoxical spaces to explore the social construction of nation, race, and gender...but ultimately expressed broader anxieties over maintaining gendered, racial, and national boundaries during the early twentieth century" (Brégant-Heald, 2015, p.3). In American filmic narratives during the progressive era, mixed-race unions and/or characters appeared frequently (Brégant-Heald, 2015, p. 92), their roles as victims or villains reflecting current American discourses around assimilation vs. annihilation as well as the actual "ongoing racialization" of

⁶⁶ Royle, E. M. (Premiered October 23, 1905). *The squaw man* (stage play). Wallack's Theatre, Broadway, NY. NY. USA.:

both Northern and Southern borderlands (Brégant-Heald, 2015, p.14). These cultural and legal strictures against miscegenation translated directly to conventions against it in American frontier narratives (Prats, 2002).

In fact, the notorious Cecil B. DeMille openly admitted to waging a defamation campaign against the Metis and miscegenation in his films, personally, and throughout Hollywood generally (Berton, 1975). Certainly DeMille's cinematic erasure of mixed-race marriages is evident in figure 2, which features promotional graphics for Royle's 1905 stage play (left) and DeMille's 1914 silent film (right). Although these images were produced less than a decade apart, the differences between them are dramatic. While the female Indigenous character, Naut-ur-ritch, is not of mixed-blood herself, they illustrate clearly De Mille's bias, and his rendering of her role in this doomed family unit goes on to establish some founding features of the halfbreed girl of later eras.

When these images are juxtaposed with respect to iconography, the change of attitude between eras is evident in both the depiction of Naut-ur-ritch as well as that of the family unit. In Royle's original, theatrical production, Naut-ur-ritch is costumed as the stereotypical Indian Princess, while in DeMille's rendition, she has been thoroughly whitewashed, costumed in western clothing in keeping with the fashion of the period in which the film is set. The halfbreed child's character in his hybridized cowboy/Indian costume remains the same in both versions, but his position (in geography and loyalty) has changed dramatically. In the earlier image, the iconic configuration of mother and child is the dominant relationship; the boy clings to his mother, who stands between himself and his father, whom he regards with some trepidation from behind his mother's skirts. In the latter image, it is the White *father and son* who comprise the primary configuration, signalling a change in social attitude.

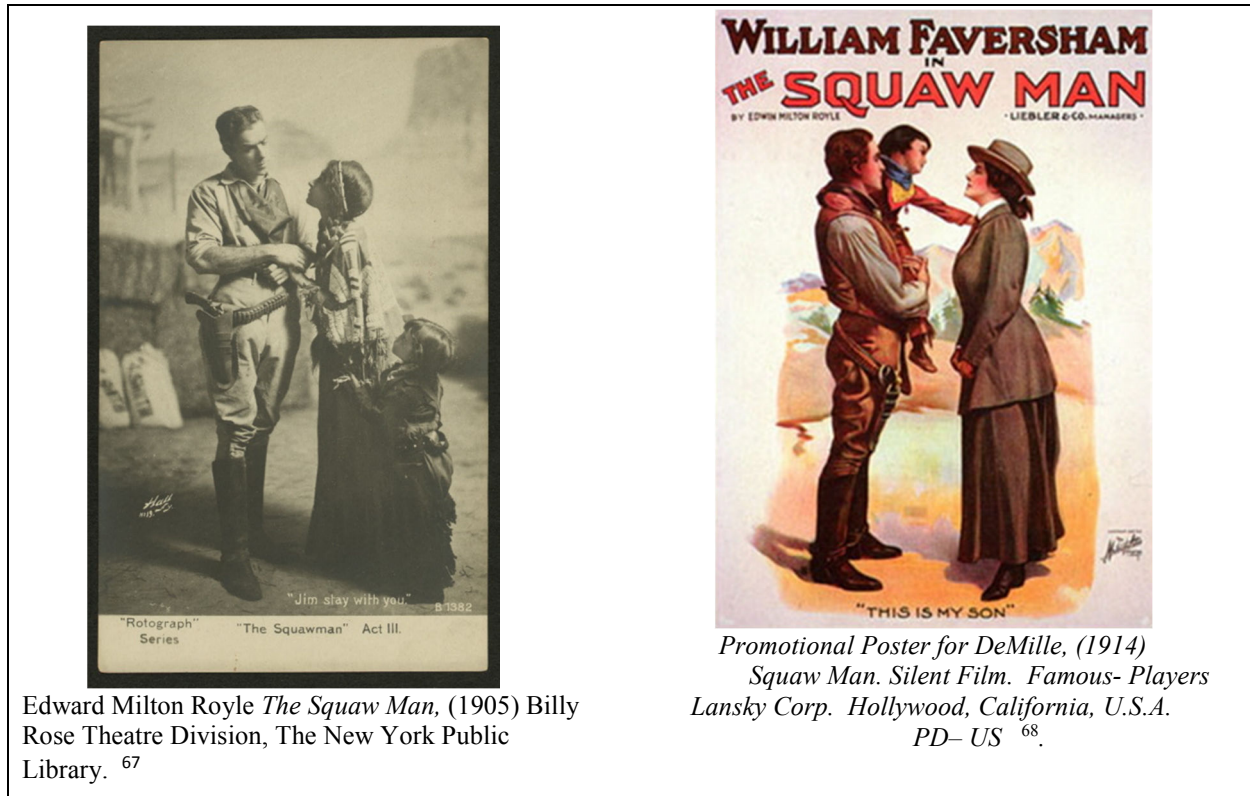


Figure 2: Squaw Men

A compositional analysis comparing and contrasting these images yields similarly interesting results. In the graphic taken from Royle's stage play (image 2, left) all of the characters are Indigenized to some degree by way of costuming, while in the graphic for De Mille's film (image 2, right), only the father and son wear costumes indicative of Indigeneity. In the latter image, the Indigenous mother is anglicized and modernized; ironically, her assimilation emphasized by her mimesis of English bourgeois women's fashion of the day. Underneath the graphic for Royle's original version, the caption simply reads, "The Squawman." In De Mille's reprise, in which the boy-child is ensconced firmly in the arms of his Euro re-settler father while

⁶⁷ Retrieved from <http://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47df-47c1-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99> April 23, 2015, 10:30 a.m. PT.

⁶⁸ Retrieved from <https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=6325070> April 23, 2015, 10:50 a.m. PT

rejecting his Indigenous mother—literally giving her the straight-arm—the caption reads, “This Is My Son.”⁶⁹

In Royle’s original narrative, the son is simply removed from the care of his Indigenous mother by the executive decision of his Euro re-settler father and his kin. In De Mille’s filmic translation, this ploy does not go far enough: the child must disavow his mother himself. While Naut-u-ritch is absent from the home, Wynnegate, the father, attempts to spirit the child away without her knowledge or consent. When Naut-u-ritch suddenly appears and demands some answers from her husband as well as the return of her son, Wynnegate hides the boy behind him, physically shielding him from his mother as though she were a threat to the child. Not to be deterred so easily, Naut-u-ritch gathers her son in her arms and pleads to keep her family intact, demanding that the son be left to choose for himself, asking him, hopefully, “whose little boy are you?”

Naut-u-ritch’s hopes are dashed, however, when the child, pushing away from her, looks toward his Euro re-settler father and points at him. This tableau composes a clear reflection of the distancing behaviour that we saw documented by Van Kirk in Canada’s early settler-colonial society (1989; 2002), a form of lateral violence against the metis/Indian mother. In the end, Naut-u-ritch commits suicide, leaving her widower free to wed more appropriately, according to class and race status, while preserving the social standing and integrity, first and foremost, of the Euro re-settler bourgeois family, but also the authenticity of her father, the Indian chief, and of his tribe, who remain in McKlintock’s (1995) anachronistic space.

⁶⁹ Although a graphic with a similar caption appears in Royle and Faversham’s (1908) novel, it is ‘Wynnegate’s’ Euro re-settler love interest, ‘Diana,’ who holds the child while his father declares, “yes, Diana, this is my boy—my son” (p. 262).

By 1930, these strictures were codified in a set of moral guidelines regulating the American film industry known as the *Hays Code* (1930- 1968). Although the *Hays Code* contained a statute forbidding the portrayal of miscegenation only between Euro re-settlers and blacks, studios often applied this racist moral sensibility to other ethnicities, including Indigenous people(s). In fact, scripts that portrayed harmonious relationships between White and Indian were subject to rigorous scrutiny, if not bald opposition, from a number of directions, not only within the studio hierarchy, but from outside interests such as religious groups as well, and even from the United States Department of the Interior (Aleiss, 2005; Kilpatrick, 1999).

According to Prats, these attempts to pre-empt textual miscegenation and, subsequently, any textual representations of its hybrid offspring, result in a textual genocide of sorts for the miscegenate, explaining why the halfbreed is a rare, but essential, recurring character. Prats argues that the textual halfbreed, like his Indian cousins, exists only to disappear, as a “representation of self– subversion” (Prats, 2002, p. 4), in which, similar to images of the Imaginary Indian, settler-colonialism’s mock metis is subject to a particular sort of gaze that deliberately elides the subject/object in view (p. 97). Prats points to the films of D.W. Griffith as an example of this “omitted gaze” vis à vis miscegenation, observing a thematic motif in which the threat, or actual rape, of Euro re-settler women by Indian males is subtext for the threat of miscegenation to the emergence of the Euro-American family (à la Turner’s frontier thesis): a self-deluded narrative in which

each theme, family, and miscegenation, forms in fact the other’s obverse: not only does the family emerge in consequence of its resistance to the threat of miscegenation, it defines itself precisely in terms of that resistance and thus requires it even as it condemns it. (Prats, 2002, p. 98)

While I agree with Prats that images of the mock metisse are indeed meant to be viewed in a similar way, I counter that this does not necessarily conflate their representational destiny with that of the Indian who vanishes into a discursive, anachronistic space (McKlintock, 1995).

Rather, I read Prats' example as a form of gaze that simultaneously denies the existence of the metisse, while repeatedly, albeit obliquely, summoning her into view as a perennial danger to settler-colonial society.

In the texts studied here, this omitted gaze applies to precluding any intergenerational offspring of miscegenation: this is why in every narrative there are only three textual possibilities for any progeny of the miscegenous couple. First, they need to be whitewashed, so that if they are inheritors, their loyalties will lie with their Euro re-settler fathers and the larger interests of settler-colonialism, as in Parker's (1893) and Royle's (1905) narratives. Failure of the halfbreed girl to properly assimilate (performing White-ness, but not too well) gives way to harsher textual penalties for miscegenation, in which any babies must perish, or come dangerously close to dying—like the mixed-blood son of Parker's Lali and Frank—remedied only by the metisse mother who comes to heel. The alternative is to be born half dead and damned, as is Scott's "Half-Breed Girl". Ideally, the union should be rent asunder before they take to the altar, effectively precluding babies from being conceived in the first place. The motif of dead, dying, and/or never-conceived babies appears in Rork & Dillon's (1932) *Call her Savage*, Schulburg & Leison's (1934) *Behold my Wife!*, Laurence's (1970), *The Loons* and Finstad-Knizhnik, Macdonald & Fitz's (2014) *Strange Empire*: a theme characteristic of settler-colonial sensibilities from the mid twentieth-century into the new millennium.

For example, in Schulburg & Leison's (1934) film, *Behold My Wife!* (a screen adaptation of Parker's 1893 *Translation of a Savage*), and Rork & Dillon's (1932) *Call Her Savage*, the mixed-blood heroines flee unhappy marriages to wealthy white men to seek their fortunes in the city, only to find their ruin in poverty, alcoholism, promiscuity, single motherhood and infant mortality. Their only salvation, textually, is to fall in line with the expectations of a racist and heteronormative patriarchy and, happily for the narrative, they do. Unlike her genteel predecessor, Parker's Lali, Rork & Dillon's Naza and Schulburg & Lesion's Tonita must bottom out before they realize the error of their ways, recant their waywardness, and return to their socialite families, cowing to Euro, re-settler patriarchy. Tonita's penance is the same as that of her progenitor, Lali; for their transgressions, they remain barren ever after.

The stories of Tonita Stormcloud and her filmic, depression-era contemporary, *Call Her Savage*'s Naza Springer, take very similar narrative arcs as they act out the roles of prodigal wife, social problem and bereaved mother. Unlike the pedigreed Tonita, Naza's actual parentage is a well-kept secret, she having been the product of an illicit affair between her bourgeois, Anglo re-settler mother and a former Indigenous ranch hand. Like Tonita, Naza cannot help but regress to her savage state, leading her to leave her husband and run off to the city, where she ultimately loses both of her mixed-blood children when her tenement catches fire (while she is out turning tricks). Unlike Tonita, who has no choice but to return to her husband, a remorseful Naza returns to her family's estate, but similarly begs forgiveness and promises compliance—a supplication, in Naza's case, that is only partially successful.

In a bonus salve to settler-colonial fears about inheritance of land by the mixed-blood progeny of miscegenation, Naza is precluded from inheriting any land or other real property from the re-settler dynasty that has made its fortune from the avails of dispossessing and

appropriating the territories of her biological Indigenous father. Naza's demotion on the settler-colonial hierarchy also disqualifies her from marrying well among Euro re-settlers, despite having been bequeathed a large cash inheritance from her Anglo re-settler father in his will—a cool one hundred thousand dollars. Despite the tragic demise of Naza's young children, the story ends in the comedic form, with Naza's second marriage to the noble savage Moon Glow, the halfbreed ranch-hand she had previously made a habit of abusing.

For *Hays Code*-era film maker Cecil B. DeMille, dispossession and infant mortality did not go far enough to rub out the metis; like Scott before him, he went a step further. Not only were mixed-race unions doomed from the start, so was the very idea of mixed-blood children, who are never conceived to begin with. In De Mille's *North West Mounted Police* (1940), the sham that is Louvette Corbeau's budding romance with Sgt. Logan is nipped before the nuptials (which, in that cinematic era, precede children). This trend continues into the post-war era, as exemplified in *Duel in the Sun* (Selznick & Vidor, 1947). There is no textual room for procreation in *Duel in the Sun*'s filmic narrative, where Pearl and Lewt's relationship is so dysfunctional it necessitates their demise, automatically precluding even the notion of marriage and children. In narratives such as these, despite the fact that mixed-blood women and/or their babies actually die, the ending is framed as a satisfactory one for the primarily Euro re-settler audiences: the moral of these stories being “marry your own kind”.

Canada and the U.S.A. concentrated on the enemy without during the WWII years, which saw Indigenous people from both sides of the border serving overseas, though they were still not allowed to vote at home. Post-war prosperity and social consciousness-raising resulted in some advances in the rights of Indigenous people in Canada, including major changes to Canada's *Indian Act* in 1951, and the full political enfranchisement of all status Indians by 1960,

when status Indian women were finally allowed to vote. The 1960s and 1970s brought more awareness of and sympathy for Indians, and with over-arching worries about communists and A-bombs, Euro-settlers gave the label “Red” a new meaning (Aleiss, 2005, Marubbio, 2009).

In this era, the public perception of the Indian began to swing back to noble savage, an image exploited by the entertainer Cher, one of contemporary North America’s most renowned border dweller/crossers. The debut of Cher’s halfbreed stage persona just happened to coincide with the release of her musical single by that name, which rocketed to *Billboard’s* top 100 in 1973.

Cher’s emergence as a popular music star took place as images of Indian savagery were giving way to images of American nobility, and this newly positive image was being hijacked by the white counterculture. Presented as both hippie and Native American in the early years of her stardom, Cher was well positioned to reconcile the split between hippie whiteness and Native American exoticism. (Negra, 2001, p. 167)

Although this era of social unrest brought with it some inclusiveness, even to Indigenous people, it did not seem to extend this charity to the halfbreed girl. Like her “Gypsy” sister, she tends to embody the social problems and vice attendant with colonization and modernization. The distancing and disavowing behaviour that we see so clearly in DeMille’s films still resonate three generations later, neatly summed up in the lyrics of Cher’s signature ballad, “Halfbreed”.⁷⁰

When subjected to a rhetorical analysis, Al Capps and Mary Dean’s (1973, Track 3) lyrics must stand on their own as plain text: stripped bare of the glamour of Cher’s charisma, her beauty, and

⁷⁰ Link to video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zt9XDdzzp2k>

of Bob Maki's minimal, highly sexually provocative costume designs, we see, stark naked and running amok, the systemic and repetitive use of time-worn tropes that give voice to settler-colonialism's attitudes against miscegenation, as well as its view of the halfbreed girl.

My father married a pure Cherokee
 My mother's people were ashamed of me
 The Indians said that we were white by law
 The white men always called me "Indian squaw"
 (*Refrain*)
 Halfbreed, that's all I ever heard
 Halfbreed, how I learned to hate the word
 Halfbreed, "She is no good" they warned"
 Both sides were against me since the day I was born.

We weren't accepted and I felt ashamed
 Nineteen I left them—tell me, who's to blame?
 My life since then has been from man to man
 But I can't run away from what I am

The *ethos* of the ballad relies on the *pathos* carried by already established tropes of the internally conflicted, promiscuous and socially problematic halfbreed girl, and the inevitability of her fate. Here, the halfbreed girl attempts to distance herself from her ethnic identity, both physically and emotionally, her promiscuity a consequence of her White/Daddy issues, as well as the unnatural means of her genesis. Further, these lyrics recall the social abjection of the historical metisse through defamation ("She is no good, they warned") and distancing ("nineteen, I left them—tell me, who's to blame?") as a result of internalized violence ("we weren't accepted and I felt the shame"). The actual, political abjection of metises, historical and contemporary, is

recalled in the stanza, “White by law” referring to pernicious legislation intended to effect a textual genocide on the Indigenous populations of both Canada and the United States, which deemed Indigenous women who married non-Indigenous men, as well as their subsequent progeny, *ad infinitum*, no longer Indigenous.⁷¹

We see this defamatory characterization of the halfbreed girl, along with her attempts to disavow and distance herself from her Indigenous ancestry, well into the new millennium in SyFy channel’s series, *Haven* (Dunn & Ernst, 2010–2015). An American-Canadian co-production, *Haven* is a drama about a small New England town that is a safe harbour for the “troubled” (read: cursed) and the law men whose job is to try to enforce some sort of normalcy, ideally working with the troubled and their families to manage or cure their various curious conditions. In the first season we meet Jess Minion, a briefly recurring halfbreed girl character, whose surname means “servile, dependent, follower, underling.” Jess first appears in the episode, “Fur” (Dunn & Ernst, 2010), in which she is a person of interest in a murder investigation conducted by the town marshals, Nate and Audrey.

Although being found innocent of that crime, Jess does turn out to be guilty of vandalism not to mention of ethnic “catfishing,” her mixed-blood persona rapidly dissipating under the scrutiny of Audrey and Nate. A rebel without a clue, Jess defaces the sign to a local hunting club, spray-painting it with graffiti. The offending tag is a cryptic Ojibway pictograph that she admits to having gleaned from Wikipedia, a necessity owing to her lack of knowledge about her remote Ojibway ancestry on her grandmother’s side: the strength of that ancestral connection being distanced and all but disavowed in one, apologetic utterance. She is still Indigenous

⁷¹ This stanza refers to the respective blood quantum laws of the United States and Canada that were designed to reduce the number of legally acknowledged Indians. See section 12.1b of Canada’s *Indian Act* (1876).

enough, however, to perform her *real* role in the series, which is to act as an Indigenizing host and sex surrogate for Anglo-American law man Nate Wournos, so that he can actualize his true love for the Aryan (race appropriate) Audrey Parker.

Haven's sub-conscious recapitulation of *Hayes Code* sensibilities can be found in other contemporary narratives as well: specifically, CBC's edgy and subversive *Strange Empire* (Finstad-Knizhnik & MacDonald & Fitz, 2014). In these television dramas, mixed-race relationships *appear* to be condoned, but are dysfunctional and/or fail nevertheless; nor can their progeny be allowed to live, or to be conceived at all. In fact, the CBC series, the first of its kind to feature an historical Metisse as its lead character (albeit, anti-heroine), itself was "early to die"; *Strange Empire* was short-lived, cancelled after its first season in spite of receiving critical international acclaim.⁷² Coincidentally, *SE* was cancelled during then-Prime Minister Stephen Harper's "reign of terror" at the CBC—not only with respect to its funding, but also to the micro-management of its content. It is well known that Harper and his chief advisor, American ex-pat and political scientist Tom Flanagan, had a well-documented grudge against the metis—in particular, their claims to Aboriginal land title and harvesting rights—but whether related to the Harper regime's anti-metis bias or not, the cancellation of this series in its first season only serves to further illustrate the redaction of metisses from Canada's master narrative.

⁷² Levinson King, Robin. (n.d.). "CBC cancels *Strange Empire*." | *The Star*. Retrieved August 10, 2018 from <https://www.thestar.com/entertainment/television/2015/03/02/cbc-cancels-strange-empire.html>

IV. **Placing Women of a “Pernicious Middle Race”: The Abjection of the halfbreed girl⁷³**

A verse from “Halfbreed” (Cap & Dean 1973, Track 3) reflects the processes of abjection as hypothesized by Julia Kristeva (1982) and McKlintock (1995), in which the narrator describes a life defined by her ethnic and subsequent social liminality:

We never settled—went from town to town
When you’re not welcome you don’t hang around
The other children always laughed at me
“Give her a feather—She’s a Cherokee!”

This chapter documents how pop-culture discourses in both Canada and the United States work toward this abjection through “textual warfare” (LaRocque, 2010, p. 38) in which the caricatured halfbreed girl—fashioned within the nexus of the intersecting dichotomies, civ/sav , Madonna/whore, and its racialized by-product, Princess/squaw—serves as a tool of mastery and suppression.

The relationship between these intersecting oppositions is illustrated in the diagram in chapter 3 (figure 1), showing how the junction of the dichotomies, civ/sav and Madonna/Whore, produces the colonialist polemic, Princess/squaw. Three more related colonial binaries are then actuated as sub-set of qualifiers (White/Indian, mimesis/regression, and naturalness/degeneracy) in an attempt to situate the figure of the halfbreed girl more specifically on the Princess/squaw

⁷³ The quote referring to racial hybrids as a “pernicious middle race” is attributed to an unnamed Dutch colonial official in the nineteenth century. Cited in Stoler, 1995, 43.

polemic. However, colonial ambivalence and its attendant anxieties towards the halfbreed girl cause her to oscillate along and between these intersecting oppositions. In this way, this set of sub-binaries serves to circumscribe the location of the halfbreed girl on the settler-colonial, discursive landscape, while providing a toolbox of semiotic resources that can be combined and re-combined, as necessary, in ways that ensure she remains in a state of permanent marginality.

The trope of the marginal halfbreed girl of Cher's refrain recapitulates, in part, one exigency prompted by the social process by which historical metisses were displaced in early re-settler societies by Euro re-settler women (Carter, 1997; Carter, 2008; Freeman, 2005; Van Kirk, 1980; Wolfe, 2001). Sexuality and gender roles are strategically powerful sites of imperial conquest by which the Indigenous other can be quickly and easily differentiated, subjugated and problematized (Stoler, 1995; McKlintock, 1995). In Canada, such a textual expurgation was/is effected by what Carter (1997) describes as the "assiduous" juxtaposition of imagery of Euro re-settler women against Indigenous and metis women in ways that were deliberately designed to defame the latter group's standing as (sexually) respectable members of the dominant society.

This strategy is well illustrated by Scott's poem, "Onondaga Madonna," which begins with the raced and gendered othering that is established by positioning the mixed-blood woman and her infant son in direct opposition to one of Christianity's most sacred configurations, the Madonna and Child—obvious in both the poem's title and in its primary content, which are predicated on the corruption of this hallowed icon. Scott depicts the metisse as the antithesis of the Christian Madonna, her gift to deliver death rather than life, she and her child doomed to vanish through miscegenation. This image of the metises as a deliberate perversion of the Madonna, defiled and corrupt, renders the poem's title sarcastic, and its content openly contemptuous of its subject. Scott's calculated transposition of the Madonna and Child overtly

signifies the satanic in ways designed to conjure specific fears in the Euro-Christian imagination. The deliberate inversion/perversion of Christian iconography, such as the crucifix, signals satanic activity, in spirit and in religious practice.

Scott's abjection of the metisse by way of depicting her as a gothic monstrosity had both literary and emotional currency in its day:

I am interested in the powerful instrument of demonization (next of kin to animalization). This too can be found in much of nineteenth-century White literature that juxtaposes in Manichean dualism Whites as agents of divine elevation in moral combat against subhuman, demonic, shrieking savages. Perhaps demonization is the ultimate expression of dehumanization, the ultimate textual 'technique of mastery.' (LaRocque, 2010, p. 38)

Scott carries the dehumanization of his "Onodaga Madonna" to the extremity of Judeo-Christian damnation. In a fit of textual histrionics comorbid with delusions of grandeur, Scott's metisse is utterly and irrevocably beyond redemption; she is not just a beast, but a thoroughly evil one. Conjuring images of an eroticized savagery, the "rebel lips" of Scott's Onondaga Madonna are "dabbled with the stains of feuds and forays and her father's woes" like some demonic doxy who uses men's blood as lip colour—implying not only the spectre of cannibalism, but also the damnation of women who not only refuse to submit to the Judeo-Christian patriarchy but who themselves prey on men, as personified in the spectre of the succubus.⁷⁴ Equating the mixed-blood woman to the satanic dehumanizes her absolutely, encouraging contemptuous feelings

⁷⁴ A term dating to the late 14th century, a *succubus* is a female version of the male incubus: demons that prey sexually on sleeping men and women, respectively. "from succubare 'to lie under,' from assimilated form of sub 'under' (see sub-) + cubare 'to lie down'". From, <https://www.etymonline.com/word/succubus>. Retrieved: Dec 1, 2018, 11:25 a.m. PT.

toward her, which then allows Scott to visit all manner of textual violence upon the metises, implying her rape by both White and Indian men, as well as that of her female ancestors, in the stanza, ‘her blood is mingled with her ancient foes’. Even so, her demonic essence eschews any need for Christian charity, as well as exonerating his—and by extension, settler colonial society’s—textual departure from any such Christian duty.

This sort of open contempt for metis women was already well entrenched in what is now Canada, evident in the attitude of Governor George Simpson, “the most important personage in the nineteenth century fur trade” (Van Kirk, 1989, p. 161). In charge of Rupert’s Land from 1821-1859, Simpson was a more recent import to Rupert’s Land who (unlike his predecessors) had never wintered-over or acculturated himself to fur trade society’s unique norms and values; it is not surprising that he did not appreciate the importance nor the significance of metis women to the local way of life. He was a notorious misogynist and womanizer, viewing metis women as nothing more than objects for the sexual gratification of (European) men, and was often known to refer to metis women in such racial and gender slurs as “brown jug,” “swarthy idol” and “bit of brown,” and his female metis sexual companions as simply his “article” or “the commodity” (Van Kirk, 1989, pp. 161 & 201).

The lust for land, its resources and the labour (including reproductive labour) of its Indigenous inhabitants was/is a major object of colonial desire. During the years of early trade and Euro, re-settlement of Indigenous territories, miscegenation was useful to achieving this end, while processes of abjection were useful in disavowing and disenfranchising both metis / Indian women afterwards, as well as their mixed-blood progeny. The desire to control such material and human resources is not the only cause for the ill-treatment of the halfbreed girl, however. Western imperialist discourse has long problematized and racialized the Indigenous figure as

both conceptual and literal frontier where past and present collide (Tobing-Rony, 1996, p. 15), in part by way of sexualizing the distinction between that which is civilized (read: White), and that which is savage (read: other). In these discourses of trepidation and mastery, the bodies and identities of Indigenous women represent for the colonizer a point of entry into the territories of the other, allowing for the penetration of those geographical, cultural, and physical boundaries (Brégant-Heald, 2010, 2015; Green, 1975; Marubbio, 2009; Stoler, 1996; Young, 1995).

The body of the Indigenous other is not only perceived as *terra nova erotica*, but also as *terra incognita acutus*—an abjected space of the “in-between, the ambiguous, the composite” where the boundaries that demarcate “identity, system, order... borders, positions, rules” are disrespectfully, openly disregarded (Kristeva, 1982, p. 4). We have seen that in the colonial imagination Indigenous women were/are highly fetishized in the Freudian sense: not only as objects of lust/fear, but also as Indigenizing hosts through which settler-colonists, through generations of miscegenation, can be born again as Native Adams and Eves in their Edenic paradise-found (Brégant-Heald, 2010, 2015; Crolund-Anderson, 2007; Marubbio, 2009).⁷⁵ In the nexus of these narrative contexts, the halfbreed girl represents that frontier: an exoticized, eroticized, historicized, and ephemeral space in which she occupies the role of straw woman meant to serve the twin colonial desires to appropriate Indigenous territories and to Indigenize the Euro-settlers themselves. But such operations seemingly cannot be executed completely cleanly and easily: the metisse, for instance, cannot be summarily disappeared entirely. The settler-colonial master narrative still requires her presence—however marginal—as both

⁷⁵ Specifically, the male fear of castration: either in actuality, or symbolically, through the loss of male power, privilege, and prestige.

Indigenizing host and menace to society, returning to trouble modern Western empire as its “internal repudiation” (1995, p. 72).

Her very existence predicated on overlapping fetishes, the stereotypical halfbreed girl is a faceted and deeply layered fetish herself, rendering her, *ipso facto*, liminal in the patriarchal Euro re-settler psyche, representing little more than the fulfillment and/or frustration of its settler-colonialist yearnings. This process is evident even in the ostensibly sympathetic works of Margaret Laurence, a canon of Canadian literature. Although LaRocque (1983) considers the Metis characters created by Margaret Laurence to be among the most authentic in Canadian literature, she offers the caveat, “Even in Laurence’s work, the Metis are incomplete. They are still portrayed as dying, though nobly” (p. 91).⁷⁶

Here, LaRocque refers to the treatment of Metis character Jules Tonnerre, in Laurence’s novel, *The Diviners* (1974) in which Jules is ennobled by his death. However, in Laurence’s later short fiction, “The Loons” (1978), there is nothing noble about the characterization of the ill-fated Metisse, Piquette Tonnerre. A textual analysis reveals that Laurence succumbs to the settler-colonial master narrative, along with its ambivalent desire towards the halfbreed girl. Recalling Prats notion of the “omitted gaze”, (2002, p. 97), the bourgeois Anglo narrator introduces the Metisse character, Piquette Tonnerre, to the reader as an entity who “dwelt and moved somewhere within my scope of vision, but...did not notice...very much until that peculiar summer I was eleven” (Laurence, 1978, p. 106). Throughout the narrative, Laurence relegates Piquette to the subject position of the abject, as opposed to that of the noble-but-tragic,

⁷⁶ In her 1983 article, LaRocque’s purpose is to demonstrate, “how the civ/sav ideology played out in selected... [Canadian] archival, historical and literary texts...[*vis à vis*]...the Ignoble Savage/Noble Savage binary. [Laurence] attempts to place Metis along the Noble Savage continuum but typically kills off Jules in order to ennoble him. In other words, a form of the vanishing Indian.” Email communication, February 6, 2019, 6:18 p.m. PT.

recapitulating Scott's figure of the half-witted, half-dead, halfbreed girl, who, along with her people, is pictured as the walking dead.

Unlike that of the privileged narrator, Vanessa—the daughter of an Anglo-Canadian, re-settler physician—Piquette's childhood is sacrificed to serve as the squaw/drudge to her male family members. Vanessa describes Piquette, daughter of Lazarus (and certainly, not the resuscitated Lazarus of *John: 11*, but the diseased beggar of *Luke: 16*) as a spectral figure, a classmate who is a bit older than she, owing to her having failed a few grades. Vanessa speculates,

Perhaps (it was) because her attendance was always sporadic and her interest in schoolwork negligible. Part of the reason she had missed a lot of school was that she had had tuberculosis of the bone, and had once spent months in the hospital...otherwise, she existed for me only as a vaguely embarrassing presence, with her hoarse voice and her clumsy limping walk and her grimy cotton dresses that were always miles too long. I was neither friendly nor unfriendly towards her. (Lawrence, 1978, p. 106)

Vanessa's claims of indifference are belied by Laurence's use of semiotic resources to portray Piquette Tonnerre, whose given name translates in French loosely to "sharp" or "pointed," her surname, "thunder", and who also battles tuberculosis of the leg, not having a leg to stand on both in metaphorical and literal senses. Clearly, the title of the piece is a metaphor that likens the disappearance of the loons on Lake Manawaka to the tragic but inevitable disappearance of the Tonnerres and other Metis families and communities in the face of the juggernaut of western civilization. Laurence, succumbing to the colonial desiring machine, exhibits ambivalence toward her Metisse character, who inhabits the intersection of the abject zones of race, class, and gender liminality, from which the only true escape is an (inevitably) premature death.

The figure of the halfbreed girl represents a self-fulfilling prophecy that demarcates her social boundaries, from which she never escapes textually. Situated at the intersection of the dichotomies, civilization /savagery and Madonna/whore, the halfbreed girl is textually delimited by its derivative, the Princess/squaw polemic. The particular raced, classed, and gendered lexicon generated there reticulates this polemic further, into the sub-binaries, White/Indian, mimesis/regression and naturalness/degeneracy, along which the figure of the halfbreed girl, reflecting re-settler ambivalence toward her, oscillates erratically. Unlike Marubbio's (2009) construct of the Native American "celluloid maiden" (who may sometimes be of mixed-blood) the figure of the halfbreed girl does not always die. Rather, many of the characters studied in this thesis go on to live out their lives—albeit, almost always unhappily ever after, and almost always in the abject zones of settler-colonial society, whether that be the frontier of the nebulous Great White North like *Strange Empire's* (Finstad-Knizhnik & Macdonald & Fitz, 2014) Kat Loving, as social rejects, as are the unnamed narrators of the lyrics to "Halfbreed" (Capp & Dean 1973, Track 3) and "Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves" (Stone, 1971, Track 2) or as 'fallen' women, such as Rork and Dillon's (1932) Naza Springer and Schulburg and Leison's (1934) Tonita Stormcloud. In spite of its wishful thinking (not to mention the attempts by individual storytellers, such as Laurence, to exterminate her within their narratives) the figure of the halfbreed girl does not vanish entirely from the settler-colonial imagination: rather, she perpetually hovers at the edge of its society and her supposed, inevitable extinction, but never quite makes her exit.

White/Indian: “Born of Sin and Savagery”⁷⁷

The Savage occupies the position opposite The Civilized in a polemic endemic to the Western Judeo-Christian worldview: a set of logical fallacies that has existed in the West since its earliest imperialist nation-state—the Romans—was extant in Greek discourses, permeating European pre-feudal history deep into antiquity. More a moral judgement than any kind of measure of civility or savagery, the civ/sav dichotomy applies a myriad of differing criteria to Indigenous peoples and can be manipulated to suit the colonizer’s social, historical, economic, and political situation.⁷⁸

The first sub-binary generated by this polemic is that of White/Indian, articulating not only settler-colonial anxieties about race, inter-racial sex, and miscegenation, but also about disruptions to the dominant class structure. Similar to her cousins, the Indian Princess and the squaw (Green, 1975; Marubbio, 2009), the halfbreed girl is fetishized sexually, tending to be defined primarily by her relationship to Euro re-settler men: in the halfbreed girl’s case, it’s the depraved squaw man, “patient zero” in the plague of racial pollution that threatens the purity of the Euro re-settler body politic.

A product of an unnatural and sinful union between the squaw man and her Indian mother, the halfbreed girl is an abomination of God and nature, a character innately divided—even driven to madness—by inner conflict between her White (coded as civilized) and Indian (coded as savage) blood that is imagined to be passed down through generations like a hereditary

⁷⁷ Tagline from the official trailer to the motion picture, *Apache Woman* (Corman, 1955).

⁷⁸ See also: Pearce, R. H. (1953). *The Savages of America: A Study of the Indian and the Idea of Civilization*. Baltimore, Maryland: John Hopkins Press; Dickason, Olive. (1984), *The Myth of the Savage: and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas*. Edmonton: U of Alberta P, and Jennings, Francis, (1975), *The Invasion of America: Indians, Colonization, and the Cant of Conquest*. Virginia: U of North Carolina P.

disease (Aleiss, 2005; Berton, 1975; Friar & Friar, 1972; Malchow, 1996; Stedman, 1982; Stoler, 1995; Young, 1995). Both offspring of and companion to the squaw man, the halfbreed girl is conflicted between her Indian and White ancestries, inheriting her savagery from both sides—the squaw and the White man low enough to consort with her. Moreover, the inner angst of the halfbreed girl is not only attributed to this mix of bad blood, but also to her rejection by both of her ancestral societies, as captured in the lyrics of Cher’s hit single: “white by law/ Indian squaw” for whom “both sides were against me since the day I was born” (Cap & Dean, 1973, Track 3).

Both White and other, neither wholly civilized nor completely savage, when not invisible, the halfbreed girl is an outcast. Even the term halfbreed is itself a signifier of abjection:

Language employed to define interracial genealogy inevitably also fixes the fluidity of individual character. The progeny of parents of different “races”—already arbitrary abstractions—become not merely something different but are themselves confined by the very words used to name them. The terms halfbreed and half-caste are double, hyphenated constructions. Like these words, persons of mixed race became in nineteenth-century English discourse hyphenated beings—or, more accurately, were themselves hyphens. The halfbreed, not a halfbreed or some particular kind of halfbreed, became itself a reified object, although one ordinarily defined, not as a new and autonomous whole, but merely as a link. The term resonates with other linguistic inadequacies and incompletes—with half-wit and half-dead, with half-naked and half-truth, and of course, with half-civilized. (Malchow, 1996, pp. 178-9)

In *Duel in the Sun* (Selznick & Vidor, 1947), it is the heroine's mother who succumbs to the vices of White men and their civilization; the unseen, interior stains that preordain Pearl Sanchez's inevitable fate. She ultimately murders her squaw man, Lewt, with a long-gun, which is not only a phallic symbol, but also signifies her contamination by and inevitable ruin through modernity, along with its technology and industry that make her possession of that weapon possible. Texts such as these demonstrate that unlike her Indian cousins, the Princess and the squaw, the halfbreed girl exists outside of anachronistic space as an object of modernization and urbanization—but only as a liminal figure in society's abject zones.

Characterized as not White and not Indian, metisses exist in the space between the two, reviled by both groups who have shaped her ethnicity, as demonstrated in the dialogue of DeMille's (1940) film, *North West Mounted Police*, in which the hero, a Texas Ranger sent to extradite a Metis outlaw, cautions a Canadian Mountie who is romantically involved with the villain, a Metisse, "never trust a squaw with blue eyes." This inner conflict between White/Indian is at the centre of Selznick & Vidor's *Duel in the Sun* (1947) as well, in which the halfbreed girl, Pearl Sanchez, struggles to maintain respectability (mimetic whiteness) in the face of continuing oppression and abuse at the hands of Euro re-settler men. In the end, her savagery (stereotypical Indianness) wins out, culminating in violence of homicidal/suicidal proportions, taking revenge upon her squaw man for his alternating sexual abuse and rejection of her: transgressions ostensibly instigated by Pearl's hereditary carnality, and complicated by the magnetism of her dark and feral beauty.

Pearl represents the quintessential halfbreed girl in the settler-colonial imagination: a hybrid being who is conflicted by her very nature, doomed to suffer an eternal struggle between her White and Indigenous selves: an image with a long history in European discourse (Malchow,

1996; Stoler, 2006; Young, 1995) and a recurring —if infrequent—motif in North American pop culture, especially in literature and the performing arts (Aleiss, 2005; Berton, 1975; Cooke, 1984; Friar & Friar, 1972; Hurd, 1997; Marubbio, 2009). Even E.L. Marin's domesticated and whitewashed Cecile Gautier in the film, *Canadian Pacific* (1949) suffers angst over her divided loyalties to her Indigenous and Metis kin, and to her law man and his cause (the Canadian national interest of westward expansion).

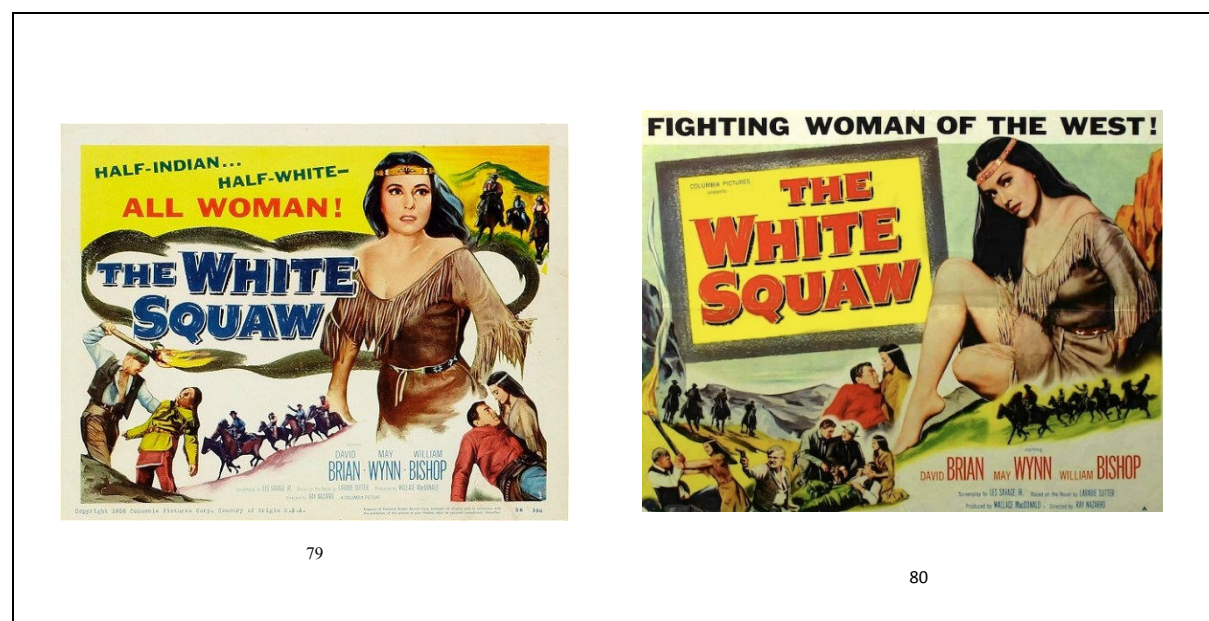


Figure 3: The Bifurcated, White Squaw

This motif also informs the various back-stories of the American anti-heroine, White Squaw, a recurring character who began her textual career in the late nineteenth century in the pages of Beadle and Adams's dime novels.⁸¹ A summation of a Manichean world view that collapses

⁷⁹ From: <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0049950/mediaviewer/rm3269462272>. Retrieved: Dec 1, 2018, 12:41 p.m. PT..

⁸⁰ From: <https://fiftieswesterns.wordpress.com/2014/03/13/50s-westerns-dvd-news-144-the-white-squaw-1956/>. Retrieved: May 27, 2017, 2:13 p.m. PT.

⁸¹ Mayne Reid, (1876). Beadle and Adams 20 C Novels, v. 1, no. 12

the two poles of the civ/sav dichotomy into a single entity, White Squaw indicates more of a graft than a hybrid, any sense of metissage becoming lost in the bifurcated identity of the moniker. This binary operation is illustrated in the copy in the advertisements for the theatrical release of Ray Nazzaro's (1956) film, *The White Squaw* (figure 3), in which the headline places the word "White" directly on top of the word "Squaw." The sub-heading, which reassures the audience that this particular aberration is indeed human, barks, "Half Indian, Half White—All Woman!", emphasizing the contradiction between the terms while simultaneously conjoining them.

Nazzaro's halfbreed girl, Eetay-O-Wahnee, has an absent Euro re-settler father but was raised by her Sioux family who ultimately forsake her, driving her into the arms of her Euro re-settler lover in an act of reversed forced relocation of sorts.⁸² Perhaps in an attempt to render this union appetizing to audiences accustomed to consuming films informed by the *Hays Code*, White is the operative word in the advertisements, in which the paleness of Eetay-O-Wahnee's skin is as salient a signifier of race as is her fringed and full-throated doeskin apparel. The halfbreed girl's marginality in popular culture, illustrated in these examples, mirrors her banishment from settler-colonial consciousness, her social abjection and racial ambiguity further reinforced by casting Euro re-settler actor, May Wynn, in the role—a long-standing and ubiquitous practice in cinema that further reinforces the racial ambiguity of 'mixed-blood' characters (Brégant-Heald, 2015; Marubbio, 2009).

This supposed internal conflict, generated by the sub-binary White/Indian, also plays out in the character Naza Springer in Rork & Dillon's (1932) film, *Call Her Savage*, whose

⁸² Plot Synopsis: <http://www.tcm.com/tcmdb/title/27390/The-White-Squaw/full-synopsis.html>

behaviour belies her true origins, giving the wealthy Anglo re-settler patriarch (who believes he is her father) acute vexation that such an improper young lady issued from his loins, or from his household. The unladylike (savage) behaviour and predilections that set her apart from the other debutantes in her well-heeled neighbourhood also trouble the unwitting Naza, who has yet to learn the truth of her paternity:

The film points to Naza's Indianness as the cause for her flamboyant behavior: She frolics on the floor with her Great Danes, playfully lashes her halfbreed suitor with a riding whip, instigates fistfights with her fiancé's former lover, and bashes a guitar over the head of a Mexican singer. Indeed, Naza's unpredictable behaviour puzzles even her: "Why can't I be like other girls?" she pouts. (Aleiss, 2005, 53-4.)

The images in figure 4, still shots from the film, illustrate how the halfbreed girl fluctuates between civilization and savagery as she alternately embodies her White or Indian sides, evident in her differing costumes, postures, and backdrops. The savage Naza's costume and body language are far too casual for a proper young lady of the era in which the film is set (or produced, for that matter) and appears outdoors and/or with animals. The civilized Naza is attired as a respectable upper-class woman would be—as modest as her postures, and as structured as her indoor settings.

The supposed madness that ensues as a result of these competing essences is illustrated in the image on the bottom right, in which an elegantly but seductively dressed Naza appears wild, chaotic and dishevelled as she glares at the audience through the jagged cavity of a shattered mirror, the casualty of her own rage when she can no longer stand looking at her own reflection, indicating the breakdown in her core identity and subsequently, her mental state.



Figure 4: Naza's Internal Conflict

The eponymous (1906) halfbreed girl of D.C. Scott's poem also suffers from the same ephemeral malaise as she wrestles with her inevitable, internal conflict arising from Indigenous-European miscegenation, resulting in physical, emotional and mental sickness. Her heart and soul are troubled by "shadows" of which "she cannot learn the meaning," while "Her heart is shaken with longing / For the strange, still years / For what she knows and knows not / For the wells of ancient tears." Ultimately, Scott imagines the confused and tormented existence of the racial hybrid and the Metis way of life to be worse than death, which would at least free his halfbreed girl from the ghastly, "trap and the paddle, the portage, and the trail."

As hard as Parker's Lali tries, she, too, is afflicted by a mysterious illness that no physician can correctly diagnose:

now there came in upon her a flood of despair. At best she was only of this race through one-third of her parentage, and education and refinement and all things could do no more than make her possible. There must always be in the record: "She was of a strange

people. She was born in a wigwam." She did not know that failing health was really the cause of this lapse of self-confidence, this growing self-depreciation, this languor for which she could not account. (Parker, 2017, Ch. 13, para 5)

Lali is much more than homesick for her homelands; she is soul sick because she'll never fit in—not in the way she most desires, not to the standard of her aristocratic in-laws, or according to British society at large, who would rather the mimetic, yet Indigenous other remain a bit of erotic exotica for their conspicuous consumption (Root, 1996; Tobing Rony, 2001). Most importantly to Lali, this difference would be a source of constant shame to her growing son, and a blight on his standing among his aristocratic kin. Moreover, Lali's experience has transformed her irrevocably, prohibiting her return to Canada and re-integration with her Indigenous kin. Lali is now, and forever will be, a displaced person, and as such, *persona non grata*, in both the old world and the new.

a fetish, by any other name.

As we have seen, women occupy an axis of both fear and desire in the patriarchal Judeo-Christian imagination, a neurosis from which colonized Indigenous women could not escape: "transnational histories of social movements...have demonstrated with striking consistency that...(imperialist) transnational global ventures rested on the existence of a degraded female Other in the colonies and at home" (Thorne, 2002; cited in Stoler, 2006, p. 31).

The Princess/squaw polemic, co-morbid with the Judeo-Christian Madonna-whore complex, represents a gendered, raced, and classed expression of the civ/sav dichotomy (Green, 1975; LaRocque, 2010), as exposed in this syllogism constructed by Dumont (1996, p. 19), who writes:

newo
 squaw is to whore
 as
 Indian maiden is to virgin
 squaw is to whore
 as
 Indian princess is to lady

The Princess, portrayed as loyal, feminine and pure (Aleiss, 2005; Green, 1975; Kilpatrick, 1999; Marubbio, 2009) stands in stark contrast to her degraded sister, the squaw, depicted as an unclean, savage drudge, to be used and abused by men (Acoose, 1995; Bird, 1999; Coward, 2014; Parezo, 2009; Stedman, 1982b).

As a sexual fetish, the image of the halfbreed girl differs from her fictive cousin the Indian Princess—a feminine version of the romanticized noble savage. Sexually unavailable to European men, the virginal Princess retains her purity from the taint of both original sin and from contact with the underbelly of European civilization. Neither is the halfbreed girl exactly like her fictive cousin, the squaw, who tends to be depicted as silent, obedient, and sexually exploited at will by all men—even her own. Instead, the halfbreed girl vacillates along this polemic, pretty as a princess but as scary as a squaw—positioned as alluring but irritating, strong-willed but emotionally unstable, full of agency, but ill-intended, and perhaps most importantly, sexually willing and available to European men—but at their peril.

This aspect of the halfbreed girl is clearly illustrated in the official music video of Cher's Halfbreed.⁸³ Casting a now-informed and contrapuntal gaze upon the *mise-en-scene* of this work, it becomes clear that although Cher's performance manages to recuperate some elements of the Indian Princess, her stage persona fluctuates between this ephemeral nobility, the indignity

⁸³ A recording of the song as performed by Cher on *The Sonny & Cher Comedy Hour* in 1973. Link to Video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Z6E98ZRau1s>. Retrieved: Sept 13, 2012, 11:46 a.m. MT.

of the squaw named in the lyrics, as well as the masculine, warrior-like attributes of the Indian Queen: a trait that sets the halfbreed girl apart from her fictive Indigenous predecessors.



Figure 5: Still Shot from Halfbreed - Official Video

Although the white, bejeweled costuming along with the white background signify the dignity (sexual purity) of the Princess, its extremely revealing design hyper-sexualizes the halfbreed girl. Cher's wardrobe, effeminate in design and delicate in construction, is at odds with her body language as she assumes a dominant stance atop a war pony, her posture aggressive, her facial expressions fierce, her gaze direct and defiant (figure 5). The culturally misplaced totem pole and the animated fire in the opening sequence signify her Indigeneity (savagery), recalling Indian and Metis resistances, evoking the threat of violence, historical or imagined, against re-settlers.

squaw man / law man / straw man.

It is no accident that the first line of Cher's iconic song, "Halfbreed" (Capps & Dean, 1973, Track 3) begins with the line, "My father married a pure Cherokee," as it is the presence of European men who triangulate the location of the halfbreed girl on the settler-colonial landscape: "(c)learly, the search for the image of the halfbreed begins, not with the savage black temptress and the product of her womb, but with the white man himself" (Malchow, 1996, p.189). Concerned with rationalizing the brute reality of their own conflicted attitudes, discourses in both Canada and the U.S.A. give textual birth to the figure of the squaw man:

'Squaw Man' is the name given to a white man who has married one or more Indian wives and been regularly adopted by their tribe with whom he lives. With the exception of being of occasional use as an interpreter he is an utterly worthless person. He has completely left his own race and taken to the way of the savage, and is equally despised by the whites and by his adopted brethren. (Booth, 1880, pp. 39-40)

Even though miscegenation in what is now Canada was much more widely practiced and tolerated than in other colonies of the day (Freeman, 2005; Wolfe, 2001), in the nineteenth-century British discourses that helped to shape Canada's master narrative, "domination, mastery, and subordination were recurring themes, framed as critical to the formation and maintenance of any kind of respectable masculine identity" (Malchow, 1996, p. 2). It would seem that in the worst-case scenario, a European re-settler becomes a squaw man when he has subordinated his own culture, society, religion, and family to that of his Indigenous wife—ergo, his masculinity as well. This decidedly unnatural un-masculine state of affairs is remedied by way of textually disavowing the metisse and her lifeway in order to subdue her.

Examples of this dynamic can be found in Gilbert Parker's *Translation of a Savage* (1893) and in its later filmic adaptation titled, *Behold My Wife!* (Schulburg & Leison, 1934), as well as in Royle's (1905) play, *Squaw man*, and in the filmic adaptation included here (Lasky & DeMille, 1914). As much as the pedigrees, land and wealth of Parker's and Royle's male protagonists grant them, *de facto*, the basic social authority of an inherited station, their characters display all the hallmarks of the quintessential squaw man. Parker's Francis Armour is a man lacking integrity, honour, and intestinal fortitude, described as a rash, reckless, radically cruel huckster, whose marriage to his wife, Lali, is as exploitative as it is vindictive. Royle's John Wynnegate lusts after his brother's wife, his marriage to Naut-ur-ritch merely one of convenience (for him). Unlike the acculturated squaw man who fully goes Indian, however, the squaw man of the halfbreed girl—himself half-wild—expects his halfbreed wife to mimic his culture, to learn his language and, ultimately, to abject her own metissage/Indigeneity.

Simultaneously desired and disavowed (Marubbio, 2009, 29; Stoler 1995), the halfbreed girl is the object of the tortured ambivalence of settler-colonial desire, even as she is being used—sexually and textually—by Young's colonial desiring machine (1995). Since the very existence of the halfbreed girl is predicated on actual and fictive sexual unions between Indigenous women and European men, her liminality is tripled: by the unseemly brute reality of her origins, by her relationships with the White men who her ancestors, and by those imagined to be her (illicit) lovers.

The figure of the squaw man is the vehicle by which the racist, heterosexist and misogynistic fantasies of empire are vicariously animated and actualized without fear of any perceived moral, physical and cultural contamination, while simultaneously exonerating the idealized male colonizer from any accountability or consequence for his offenses. The moral

failings of Euro re-settler males are projected onto the squaw man, his innate weaknesses precipitating the inevitable failure of his mixed-race union, as well as sealing the fate of his doomed metisse wife and children. The figure of the squaw man is cathartic for settler-colonial sensibilities: this recursive, liminal scene—representing the sort of textual absolution and purification ritual identified by McKlintock (1995)—effectively maintains the race/class/gender boundaries of North American, re-settlers while purging them of their transgressions.

The squaw man is a straw man—what Prats (2002) refers to as a "double-other": a process by which the self-reflexive image of the Euro re-settler divides in two, creating a mirrored reflection of itself—one idealized and retained as the core identity, and one abjected and othered in an act of splitting off. In the case of the 'squaw man, this double-other is vilified and distanced from the idealized self-reflection, carrying with it the sins of its father, as it were. Even those squaw men who occupy the more civil end of the spectrum are roguish, like *Canadian Pacific's* well-meaning surveyor, Tom Andrews (Marin, 1949) or damaged, as is *Strange Empire's* (Finstad-Knizhnik & MacDonald & Fitz, 2014) twice-displaced/dispossessed Scots re-settler, Jeramiah Loving. Sometimes the more reputable side of the squaw man will assert itself as the law man, exemplified in the hapless Sgt. Jim Logan in DeMille's (1940) *North West Mounted Police*, the uncompromising U.S. Marshall, Rex Moffit, in *Apache Woman* (Corman, 1955), and the sadly blighted (read: impotent) Nathan Wuoronos, town sheriff of *Haven* (Piller & Mcleod, Dunn & Ernst, 2010–2015).

Although typically the Law Man is metonymic of settler-colonial rule—a figure of Euro re-settler patriarchal authority (Prats, 2002), the social stigma of his attraction to the halfbreed girl, as well as his sexual liaison with her, indicate his moral weakness and sexual incontinence, rendering him at best a chump and at worst as base and debased as his racially hybrid mate. The

most savage incarnation of squaw man linked to a halfbreed girl is the character of Lewt (sounds like “lewd”) in Selznick & Vidor’s (1947) *Duel in the Sun*. Here, the swarthy-complexioned Lewt mirrors his upright Aryan brother, foiling his engagement to the chaste and innocent metisse, Pearl Chavez, by despoiling her virtue, rendering her unfit for any proper gentleman to marry. In this filmic narrative, the only good squaw man is a dead one; Pearl’s father and/or her own squaw man’, Lewt, are portrayed as opportunistic, misogynistic, fiancé-coveting and/or adulterous, anti-social miscreants, prone to drunkenness, sexual assault, and murder. Both men are gunned down for their crimes—Lewt’s life ending at the end of Pearl’s rifle.

Clearly, simply taking a halfbreed girl to wife brings even the most civilized man’s integrity into question. Most often, the squaw man redeems himself by disavowing the halfbreed girl, defaming her character, and distancing himself from her savagery—physically, emotionally, and culturally. At times, the figure of the squaw man is conspicuous by his very absence, as in D.C. Scott’s poem, “Onondaga Madonna” (1898), which features a mixed-blood woman and her mixed-blood, infant son, standing alone—the product of a long genealogy of absentee European fathers. Scott’s portrait of the Onondaga woman is so wanton, violent, and sexually deviant that she is worthy of no man, not even the despicable squaw man: an opportunistic, immoral being who, having ‘gone’ Indian’, is as worthless as he is despised by Whites and Indians alike, depicted as being even more traitorous than the mercenary who deals arms to the very Indians who are at war with his own people (Booth, 1880, pp. 39-40).

Attempts to redeem the squaw man by way of marginalizing the halfbreed girl is a phenomenon apparent in the *Sonny and Cher Comedy Hour*, whose humour is predicated on the notion that Cher wears the pants in the relationship. Upon closer examination however, we see

that these aspects of her episodic performances belie a larger, narrative arc in which Cher's persona of the halfbreed girl is habitually side-lined:

the show displayed a number of strategies for reining in and recuperating Cher's dominance over Sonny both as a vocal performer and as the narratorial 'voice' at work... To a great extent, Cher's presence in the show was constructed in the terms of an enigmatic absence... conceptualized as significant only insofar as it showcased the creations of a male fashion designer, her voice was interpreted as a sign of her husband's creativity and virtuosity. (Negra, 2001, p. 169)

For example, although Cher got the best lines, it was only Sonny who ever addressed the audience and camera; Cher's stinging quips were delivered as side-talk, addressed to Sonny, always looking directly at him. Cher never actually speaks to or looks at the audience and looks directly into the camera only while singing. In press releases, interviews, and entertainment news articles, it is Sonny Bono who is credited solely as the duo's creative architect and the mastermind of their marketing success (Negra, 2001, p. 168).

bestial beauties.

The logic of the civ/sav dichotomy dehumanizes and demonizes the halfbreed girl: in Western imperialist discourse, to be a halfbreed is to be half-human, half-beast.

Language itself both reveals and itself shapes the processes by which stereotypes are reified into social fact... *halfbreed*... often associated with "crosses" between native Americans and Europeans or Negroes... (and the) sexual element of animal husbandry... provides a bridge of sorts to the post-Darwinian language of racial "hybridization". (Malchow, 1996, p.178)

Such tropes reinforce the need to textually dominate and master the halfbreed girl sexually, invoking as justification either divine right and/or natural order: religious and scientific discourses crafted to justify the supremacy of the Euro Christian male over women and Indigenous others, the beasts of the wild, as well as those of the field.⁸⁴

The strong association of the halfbreed girl with animals—both domesticated and wild—is a standard rhetorical practice in Western discourses regarding the Indigenous other (Berkhefor, 1978; Francis, 1992; Kilpatrick, 1999; Marubbio, 2009; Pearce, 1988). Our earliest example in this study, Parker's (1893) Lali, is equated to a number of different animals or portrayed simply as animalistic, a part of—rather than apart from—the natural world. To reiterate this connection, our first impression of Lali's physical presence is the pungent aroma of the bear grease traditionally used by her people as a hair product. Notwithstanding this baser sign of her savagery, the fauna most commonly associated with Lali is contrived to appeal to the more tender sensibilities of Western imperialism:

the Indian girl turned on them, her body all quivering with excitement, laughed a low, bird-like laugh, and then, clapping her hands above her head, she swung round and ran like a deer towards the lake, shaking her head back as an animal does when fleeing from his pursuers. (Parker, 2017, Ch. 3 paragraph 21)

As we have seen in previous chapters, both Lali's innocence, as well as her savagery, derive from this close affinity to nature.

⁸⁴ In the Judeo-Christian cosmology, God gave humankind (specifically, Judeo-Christian males) dominion over “the fish of the sea, and over the fowl of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the earth, and over every creeping thing that creepeth upon the earth” (Genesis 1:26. King James Version).

Abjection through bestialization is evident in the film, *North West Mounted Police* (De Mille, 1940), and its advertisements. In the production notes for the film, DeMille describes the Metisse character as he envisions her:

I see a tough son of a bitch, you know, who is a half animal, and a magnificent one, crafty as hell, beautiful as hell, and unconsciously a terrible destroyer. I see a gorgeous black panther, something that is death, and yet anybody will go to it and stroke it and pet it and love it...Men are afraid of her. (Cited in Marubbio, 2009, p. 89)

Her original name, Lupette, parodies the word, ‘lupine’ as well as the French slang term for a ‘street girl’, suggesting that she is both sexually promiscuous and innately animalistic” (Marubbio, 2009, p. 89). DeMille had to bow to outside pressures when one Baron Valentin Mandelstamm wrote him to inform him of the name’s colloquial meanings, and that he had better find a new one for the character: thus, Louvette Corbeau was born. However, the alteration to the character’s name did nothing to ameliorate DeMille’s vision of the feral, predatory, lethal but enticing halfbreed girl.

In figure 6, the Metisse character, Louvette Corbeau, is rendered abject as an object of base, raw, animal lust. In both images, Louvette is highly sexualized—her bare legs, knee-down, on display, suggestively reclining on animal skins. In the still shot of a scene from the motion picture (left), Louvette is poised atop a horse, riding, implausibly, both side-saddle and bareback (with only a fur blanket draped over the horse’s back) covered in ermine skins (which she pilfered from a trapper), brandishing one in a disingenuous display of accomplishment. In the other image (right)—an advertisement for the film’s theatrical release—Louvette reclines on a pile of furs while a ‘wolf’ (which appears, in actuality, to be a dog—a Husky and/or Malamute

breed) perches on the furs just above her, doubled by his shadow in the background, which looms directly behind and over Louvette, who casts no human shadow.



Figure 6: *Lupine Louvette*

Illustrations of the bestial beauty are no better exemplified than in the photo art on the inside cover of Cher's music album, *Halfbreed* (Garrett, 1973) which features her scantily clad in a beaded, doeskin-white halter top and very short shorts (for the day) pausing for a rest among the wildflowers while ostensibly riding her horse in the desert. Also improbably reclining supine atop a horse's bare back, Cher's face and upper torso are in shadow, her face turned down and slightly away from the camera, the light source hitting only the space between her naked legs, knees and feet spread wide apart. ⁸⁷

⁸⁵ Taken From <http://www.westernmovies.fr/documents/imgtag.php?t=1945>. Retrieved: April 13, 2017, 1:50 m. PT

⁸⁶ Taken from <http://www.counterweights.ca/2013/05/happy-140th-north-west-mounted-police-when-dropping-%E2%80%99Croyal%E2%80%99D-from-canadian-names-may-be-in-style-again/>. Retrieved: April 7, 2017, 12:36 m. PT.

⁸⁷ Link to image: https://cherscholar.typepad.com/i_found_some_blog/2015/08/the-50-year-mark-jon-stewart-sonnys-park-in-dc-chaz-play-cher-art.html. Retrieved: February 28, 2019, 1:19 p.m. PT.

Bestializing the halfbreed girl is a way of framing her supposed sexual deviance as a quality intrinsic to her savagery, rendering her fair game. Associating the halfbreed girl with livestock and the practice of animal husbandry *ipso facto* justifies her subjugation. Conflating the halfbreed girl with the sorts of wild creatures that Europeans and Euro re-settlers consider vicious and troublesome—such as the bear, wolf, weasel and snake—further accentuates the imagined threat she poses to the already precarious race, class, and gender boundaries of the Euro re-settler bourgeoisie. In fact, in literature on the halfbreed, the “wolf or half-wolf became...a common trope for the threatening halfbreed in the nineteenth century” (Malchow, 1996, p.181). This use of *pathos* is a rhetorical device that resonates with the ancestral folktales of Euro re-settlers, in which the proverbial wolf at the door figures large and looming: “(s)eeing the halfbreed as a lone wolf, isolated from both communities that gave him birth...suggests a familiar form of gothic monstrosity... (Malchow, 1996, p. 181).

Mimesis/Regression: You Can Dress Her up, but You Can’t Take Her Anywhere

Settler-colonialism’s ambivalent approach to expunging the halfbreed girl’s inherent savagery is to demand her assimilation yet dread the imagined outcome of a disingenuous mimetic performance, or worse, one that is so successful that it passes for White. Passing for White, that desirable state that Western imperialist sensibilities so prized and feared, was the reason behind the belief that if a proper European father truly loved his mixed-blood children, it was his duty to remove or limit them from contact with the pagan, contaminating influences of their Indigenous mothers, preferably to be sent to school in Europe (Stoler, 2002): an historical reality we see reflected in Royle’s 1905 play.

Such preoccupation with and stringent scrutiny of the lifestyle and personal habits of metis women in comparison to White women is common in Western imperialist discourse. In historical settler-colonial societies across the globe, a woman's respectability quotient was directly proportionate to the degree to which her entire way of life was mimetic of the values of the Euro colonial elite:

Assessments of civility and the cultural distinctions on which racial membership relied were measured less by what people did in public than by how they conducted their private lives—with whom they cohabited, where they lived, what they ate, how they raised their children, what language they chose to speak to servants and family at home. (Stoler, 2002, p. 6)

Discourses around the desired mimeses and expected regression of mixed-blood women is expressed in a language of moral panic that sets up an equivalency with the sub-binary, mimesis/regression, which overlaps with fears of contamination and degeneracy, in the purity of blood, culture, and social hierarchy.

The fear of the halfbreed girl passing was connected in no small part to the possible transfer of wealth and real property, owned fee-simple, to the descendants of the Indigenous people from whom it was stolen. Note that in *Duel in Sun* (Selznick & Vidor, 1947), the Euro re-settler's family patriarch doesn't want Pearl to marry in because he "won't see this ranch turned into a damned Indian reservation." So, too, was the protest of Frank Armour's sister in Parker's (1893) *Translation of a Savage*. This anxiety overtly drives the plot of the American translation of Parker's popular narrative in the films, *Behold My Wife!* (Schulburg & Leison, 1934), *Call Her Savage* (Rork & Dillon, 1932) and *Duel in the Sun* (Selznick & Vidor, 1947), with the halfbreed girl depicted as a dormant threat to Euro patriarchal, settler-colonial

boundaries, their hierarchy and attendant race/class/gender privilege, posed by the inevitability of regression to her savage state.

In director Mitchell Lesion's (1934) "talkie" we see substantial artistic liberties taken with Parker's heroine, starting with changing her name from Lali Eye-of-the-Moon to Tonita Stormcloud. Unlike Lali, Tonita does not adapt so well to life as the wife of a prominent socialite, whose well-to-do family are not at all pleased with their son's folly. This time, Tonita arrives in by train to a Manhattan station populated by her new in-laws, who await the arrival of their new daughter-in-law with anticipation, not having been informed of anything much about her. As in Parker's version, Tonita steps off the train garbed in her traditional regalia to shocking effect, as her husband intended. Unfortunately, Tonita lacks Lali's dignity and restraint; when startled by multiple flashes from the cameras of the news reporters, Tonita Stormcloud lives up to her name when she degenerates into the savagery hidden just beneath her seemingly civilized exterior, bursting into a violent tantrum, smashing the offending cameras, assaulting the reporters, and generally laying waste to any modern technology about her in a fury of King Kong-like mayhem, all the while shouting unintelligible curses in Hollywood "Indianese."

Colonial mimicry is the desire for a reformed, recognizable Other, as *a subject of difference that is almost the same, but not quite*...the discourse of mimicry is constructed around ambivalence; in order to be effective, mimicry must continually produce its slippage, its excess, its difference. The authority of that mode of colonial discourse that I have called mimicry emerges as the representation of a difference that is itself a process of disavowal. (Bhabha, 1984, p. 126)

David O Selznick's stop-motion, animated film, *King Kong*, was released in the spring of 1934, while Lesion's film was in production. Scenes of Kong on his rampage in Manhattan would have been still fresh in the minds of cinema audiences at the time of the release of *Behold My Wife!* in December, 1934. Apes are metonymic of the African continent in western imperialist discourses and its dark, wild, dangerous, anachronistic, Indigenous 'other' (McKlintock, 1996), who must be contained and tamed, or perish. Like Schoedsack & Cooper's (1933) tragic figure of the simian colossus, Parker's Lali and Schulburg & Leison's version of her, are metaphors for the inexorable and ill-fated clash of the 'noble savage' with the juggernaut of Western modernity.

Recall that McKlintock observes that in Victorian discourses mirrors and like surfaces were a recurring motif, appearing in "liminal scenes of fetish and ritual" in which they function as "boundary objects" (McKlintock, 1995, p. 33). We see this in Parker's novel, in which mirrors function (among other things) as ways by which Lali and others can monitor her mimetic behaviour, or lack thereof:

slowly there came into Lali's mind the element of comparison. She became conscious of it one day when some neighbouring people called at Greyhope... she caught a sidelong glance and smile, and when they were gone she took to looking at herself in a mirror, a thing she could scarcely be persuaded to do before. She saw the difference between her carriage and theirs, her manner of wearing her clothes and theirs, her complexion and theirs. She exaggerated the difference. She brooded on it. Now she sat downcast and timid, and hunted in face, as on the first evening she came; now she appeared restless and excited. (Parker, 2017, Ch. 3, para 34)

In a process of identity formation similar to Cooley's (1902) theory of the looking-glass self, Lali self-consciously acquiesces to the pressures of English aristocracy and resolves to acculturate herself to her new culture and class milieu, eventually earning the respect, then the love, of her in-laws—even becoming an overnight sensation in London's salon scene.

Lali performs mimesis so well, in fact, that she bests the upper crust at their own game, becoming a force with which to be reckoned. Even though Parker's Lali comports herself with the diplomacy and decorum befitting her chiefly status (as indicated by her willingness to be assimilated) her "dark eyes", "active in expression" with "capacities for passion" betray her: "Mrs. Armour and Marion saw that this stranger might become very troublesome indeed, if her temper were to have play" (Parker, 2017, Ch. 5. para 17). Eyes are often said to be windows to the soul, but here, Lali's eyes are a mirror, reflecting the worries of western Empire concerning its miscegenous offspring:

A scornful glitter came into Mrs. Armour's eyes—a peculiar touch of burnished gold, an effect of the light at a certain angle of the lens. It gave for the instant an uncanny look to the face, almost something malicious...Herself was by nature a creature of impulse, of the woods and streams and open life. (Parker, 2017, Ch. 6. para 59)

In a verbal sparring match with her husband's former society fiancé, Lali launches "an attack (that was) studied and cruel", stinging her rival, who was "piqued...that this was possible" (Parker, 2017, Ch. 6, para 60). When her rival attempts to extend an olive branch, Lali warns her, "In my country enemies do not compel us to be polite" (Parker, 2017, Ch. 6, para 81). Inevitably, Lali has become that Anglicized Brit who's "not quite/not white" (Bhabha, 1983, p.132), but very capable of performing mimetic behaviour when it is to her own advantage,

effectively carving out one of Bhabha's "interstitial spaces"(1994) that represent the point of "slippage" in colonial discourses of mimesis between desire and its repudiation, in which the colonized employ mimesis as a form of resisting, if not actually entirely subverting, the dominant paradigm (Bhabha, 1983)

The mirror in Parker's novel also acts as a textual portal that allows Lali to traverse to and fro between the civilized space of Western modernity and the anachronistic space of her Indigenous people, depending on which way of looking Lali employs in the moment. Like Lewis Carroll's hapless Alice, poor Lali tumbles through the colonial looking-glass to find herself in an alternate universe in which, like a yellow swan, her existence is not only incomprehensible, but also impossible.⁸⁸ In the next passage, it is her reflection in the mirror of this mimicked persona—her whitewashed self—that triggers Lali's regression into her previous, feral state:

Her eyes immediately flashed. She rose quickly to her feet, went to her wardrobe, and took out her Indian costume and blanket, with which she could never be induced to part. Almost feverishly she took off the clothes she wore and hastily threw them from her. Then she put on the buckskin clothes in which she had journeyed to England drew down her hair as she used to wear it, fastened round her waist a long red sash which had been given her by a governor of the Hudson's Bay Company when he had visited her father's country, threw her blanket round her shoulders, and then eyed herself in the great mirror in the room. What she saw evidently did not please her perfectly, for she stretched out her hands and looked at them; she shook her head at herself and put her hand to her cheeks

⁸⁸ In this passage I use the metaphor of the "looking-glass" as does Lewis Carroll in his (1871) fantasy novel, *Through the Looking- Glass and What Alice Found There*. Macmillan: United Kingdom.

and pinched them, they were not so brown as they once were, then she thrust out her foot. She drew it back quickly in disdain. Immediately she caught the fashionable slippers from her feet and threw them among the discarded garments. She looked at herself again. Still she was not satisfied, but she threw up her arms, as with a sense of pleasure and freedom, and laughed at herself. She pushed out her moccasined foot, tapped the floor with it, nodded towards it, and said a word or two in her own language. She heard some one in the next room, possibly Mackenzie. She stepped to the door leading into the hall, opened it, went out, travelled its length, ran down a back hallway, out into the park, towards the stables, her blanket, as her hair, flying behind her. (Parker, 2017, Ch. 3 para 77)

Although not specifically named in the text, Lali's ethnicity is indicated by a costume change from her fashionable Western attire to that of her Indigenous ancestors. Specifically, the red sash of the metis, from which Lali "could never be induced to part," is symbolic of that bloodline, locating her ethnically, geographically and temporally as clearly as a line on any map. The sash around her waist demarcates civilized spaces from savage ones, marking Lali as a border-dweller/crosser, and hence a potential threat to the integrity and purity of the Imperial body politic. Lali greets the reflection of her recuperated metisse self in her Indigenous language, punctuated with a tap of her moccasined foot (reminiscent of jigging). She then bolts down a hallway, through a back door, and makes her way to the stables, attempting to flee, symbolizing her rebirth into anachronistic space, symbolized by her desperate attempt to hurdle the physical and conceptual barrier of the hedge fence.

Lali's desperate bid for escape is ill-fated, as she is literally hedged in by the tortured, clipped and groomed shrubberies that, dividing up Britain between its landed aristocracy, maintain not only the material boundaries of their race and class privilege, but also symbolize their dominance over and mastery of nature and—by extension—the Indigenous other. Perhaps Lali had forgotten that swans are the sole property of the crown (Trott, 2018). This trope warns of the inherent and invisible dangers of the hybrid who can pass: not only contaminating the family, community and nation, but also usurping Euro re-settler race and class privilege. Even Lali, that expert mimic of European gentility, cannot but fail in the end. After riding her trusting horse well beyond the limit of its endurance, causing its unnecessary death, injury to herself and worse (in anthropocentric perspective), endangering the life of her child *in utero*, the remorseful Lali berates herself:

Why had she ever been taken from the place of tamarack trees and the sweeping prairie grass? No, no, she was not, after all, fit for this life...The London season? Ah! That was because people had found a novelty, and herself of better manners than had been expected. (Parker, 2017, Ch. 13, para 5)

In the final chapter of Parker's novel, titled "The End of the Trail," Lali recovers from a mysterious malaise only when she submits to complete assimilation by (read: subjugation to) the colonial desiring machine, realizing she has already lost her only—very Aryan, very Anglicized—child to that process already. Lali remains with her squaw man, but as in most cautionary tales against miscegenation, such transgressions cannot pass without penalty: "as if to remind him of the wrong he had done, Heaven never granted Frank Armour another child" (Parker, 2017, Ch. 15, last para).

Even much of the work of Parker's mixed-blood literary contemporary, Canada's celebrated Pauline Johnson, depends upon the Manichean aesthetics of empire, which are often received uncritically by historic and contemporary audiences alike (LaRocque, 2010). Whether intended to be a critique of the treatment of the fictive Indian Girl and/or of settler-colonialism's treatment of actual and historical metisses, Johnson's work relies on well-worn imperialist tropes regarding the civ/sav dichotomy and its implications for the mimeses and regression of the halfbreed girl.

Take, for example, the following assessment of her young Metisse heroine, Esther, proffered by none other than the heroine's own beloved mentor, Father John:

the blood is a bad, bad mixture... you never can tell what lurks in a caged animal that has once been wild... No, no; not the child of that pagan mother; you can't trust her... What would you do with a wife who might any day break from you to return to her prairies and her buckskins? You can't trust her. ...Think of her silent ways, her noiseless step; the girl glides about like an apparition; her quick finger, her wild longings—I don't know why, but with all my fondness for her, she reminds me sometimes of a strange snake.⁸⁹

Although this passage is meant as an indictment against the treacherous and duplicitous Father John, his church, and settler-colonial society in general, it does just as much to reinforce its apprehensions concerning the halfbreed girl's possible performativity of a disingenuous, subversive mimicry and her inevitable regression to homicidal savagery. This passage both foreshadows and reinforces the abhorrently non-human, the bestial, and demonic in Esther—all

⁸⁹ From Pauline Johnson, *As it was in the Beginning*.
<http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/tbacig/cst1030/1030anth/epauline.html>. Retrieved Sept. 13, 2013, 2:46 p.m.

rhetorical tropes consistent with the gothic sensibilities popular among Western audiences at the time concerning the internal constitution of the racial hybrid (Malchow, 1996).

Being off the reservation as it were, the halfbreed girl signifies for the colonial imagination the undesirable but inevitable modernization and/or urbanization of Indigenous people(s), but only at the margins of settler-colonial society. The assimilation of the halfbreed girl simultaneously demands mimetic behaviour while insisting upon its certain failure, and as such, is ultimately unsustainable. Consequently, the halfbreed girl often succumbs to the supposed vices of addiction, promiscuity, prostitution, and single-motherhood. Countering Homi Bhabba's (2017) claim that, in its pre-ordained failure, any form of mimicry is inherently subversive, I argue instead that it is this futility keeps the halfbreed girl perpetually wavering between mimesis and regression, placing her as a member of more than one abject group at one time.

A ready example can be found in Margaret Laurence's character, Piquette, in the short fiction, "The Loons," demonstrating that the halfbreed girl is not necessarily rendered with any more charity under the reproving scrutiny of Euro re-settler women than that of Euro, re-settler men:

The jukebox was booming like tuneful thunder, and beside it, leaning lightly on its chrome and its rainbow glass, was a girl.

Piquette must have been seventeen then although she looked about twenty. I stared at her, astounded that anyone could have changed so much. Her face, so stolid and expressionless before, was animated now with a gaiety that was almost violent. She laughed and talked very loudly with the boys around her. Her lipstick was bright carmine, and her hair was cut short and frizzily permed. She had not been pretty as a

child, and she was not pretty now, for her features were still heavy and blunt. But her dark and slightly slanted eyes were beautiful, and her skin—tight skirt and orange sweater displayed to enviable advantage a soft and slender body. (Laurence, 1970, p. 113)

It is little wonder that any attempts by Piquette to whitewash her appearance are met by Vanessa's disappointment, if not outright disdain. The adult version of Piquette, unlike her cinematic counterparts, is pictured as no beauty, Laurence painting a hideous visage in bold, broad strokes. However, in keeping with the West's sexual fetish with the Metisse, Laurence emphasizes her lithe and youthful physique, echoing the writing of European traders and explorers—and evidently, some Euro re-settler historians:

Opinions varied considerably as to the merits of the women of the other western tribes. The hardened features of the Plains Indian women were not deemed very seductive, but some were attracted by the sweetness of their voices and the way in which their long, soft robes of antelope skin showed their figures to advantage. (Van Kirk, 1980, p. 23)

There is little room to read subversion into Laurence's representation of Piquette's embarrassing, tawdry, and cheap imitation of White standards of fashion and beauty, nor in her pandering to the baser interests of the Euro, re-settler patriarchs who are groomed to view her as intransigent and disposable.

Despite the emphasis placed on assimilation through respectable modes of cultural transmission, "Colonial officials wrestled with the belief that the Europeanness of Metis children could never be assured, despite a rhetoric affirming that education and upbringing were

transformative processes” (Stoler, 2002, p. 94). Subsequently, as much as the colonial desiring machine (Young, 1996) demands mimesis from the colonized, it regards mimetic behaviour as suspect and abnormal at the same time, its ambivalence projected on to the racially hybrid other, manifesting in the myth their inevitable regression to their natural primordial, savage state. This contradiction is a recursive narrative trope in Western imperialist discourses, articulated in a language of both pleasure (in the perceived acculturation of the colonized) and paranoia (of the feared subversion of the colonized) (Bhabha, 1984; McKlintock, 1995; Malchow, 1996; Stoler, 1996).

Subversion might be more easily read into the performance and personage of Pauline Johnson: a consummate mimic, could pass either way in Canadian society, able to “highlight her Native credentials in her writing or omit them altogether” (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p.4). Her ability to blur this binate distinction was part of her appeal, even “critical to her mystique and her authority” (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 181). Along with her upbringing, Johnson had the good fortune to be born with a combination of light skin, hair and eyes, as well as physical beauty, affording her further social advantages among the Western elite and settler-colonial bourgeoisie (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000). Ameliorated by her cultural capital and by her beauty, Johnson’s racial hybridity was more exotic/erotic than it was problematic for Euro-re-settler audiences (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 85).

Despite her “dash of Indian blood”, Johnson tended to be perceived by those in the orbit of her personal life as “an accomplished and well-bred young Canadian lady” (Horatio Hale, cited in Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p.145), and enjoyed a certain degree of acceptance and acclaim, in dominant culture, and in Canada’s salon scene, for the majority of her long career. “Double-garbed and double-voiced, she moved across Canada and beyond its

boundaries...embracing the evolving stereotype of the Indian princess, as well as the promise or threat of the independent career woman” (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, pp. 68-9).

they say “money lightens” (dimly)

Unlike other debased or victimized metisse characters in this study, Lali’s depiction as the irresolute, halfbreed girl is somewhat ameliorated by her chiefly ancestry, her Scots ancestry, and by the aristocratic status that marriage to her English husband confers upon her. Similarly, Pauline Johnson’s real-life performativity of a prototypic halfbreed girl as more of an Indian Princess as opposed to a squaw, succeeded only due to the cultural capital and socio-economic advantages of being raised by an Anglo re-settler socialite mother. Emily Howells was born into an affluent family, who subsidized the Johnson’s uniquely hybrid, yet bourgeois lifestyle, replete with a large manor house on the river and a complement of paid servants (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000)—living proof that the savage might be civilized through education and assimilation. In this equation, Johnson is able to express her sexuality under the rubric of savagery, but evades the mark of the debauched squaw.

Before Johnson publicly asserted her Native identity on stage, her education and social milieu predicted integration through marriage into the dominant Anglo– Canadian culture. When she started to perform in costume, her assumption of a clearly racialized identity intersected with her representation of gender and class such that...(she)...was always described in language implicitly drawing on the stereotype of the noble savage. (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 115)

The postures that Johnson assumed while dressed in her full-throated Indian costume—a careless pose by the standard of the day—stand in stark contrast to the more appropriately

modest poses she struck in her Western attire. The costume, contrived by the Johnson sisters, was designed for strategic displays of female skin not ordinarily revealed in public, not only baring Johnson's neck and shoulders, but also flashing nude arms and ankles as she moved, accentuating the curves of her figure (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p.110). Johnson's performative duality gave license to her sexuality—but only as long as she inhabited her Indian persona. By later appearing in the attire worn by proper, well-bred young ladies, Johnson performed a form of Euro-femininity consistent with her ethnic and class status as a bourgeois Anglo-Canadian, enabling her to recuperate her virtue. In spite of brazenly flouting normative modes of respectable attire for women in Victorian-era Canadian society, due to her class status, whether in Indian costume or evening gown, she always played the Princess.

In fact, class “was an essential part of the performer's repertoire. By clinging to its privileges, she could hope to counteract other disadvantages” (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p.70). It is easy to fall from grace, however. While beauty may well extend to halfbreed girls certain privileges, as it ebbs, so do the social accolades, the latitude, and the cultural and (upward) social mobility that might go along with it, no matter how light one's complexion. As Johnson aged out of the role she had performed for a lifetime, neither her mimicked exoticism nor her actual cultural capital translated into the sort of economic capital and/or transfer of real property that beleaguers settler-colonial anxieties concerning the halfbreed girl's potential to pass as one of them. Johnson's portrait from her final publication, the (1913) anthology, *The Moccasin Maker* (Figure 7), resonates with class contradictions and colonial binaries. Johnson's profile—raven-like, clad in dark, fine furs—simultaneously exudes bestial exoticism and a

dowager's class privilege: an image that belies both the infirmity and relative poverty that troubled her final years (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000).⁹⁰



Figure 7: Photo Portrait, Pauline Johnson, From Moccasin Maker

In modern and contemporary pop-culture discourse, the mimesis/regression binary tends to problematize the halfbreed girl as the social delinquent that is the natural consequence of the unnatural (morally and/or psychologically deviant) act of miscegenation, and from the inner angst and conflict believed to be inherent to racial hybrids. Parker's Lali, Rork & Dillon's (1932) Naza Springer, Schulburg & Lesion's (1934) Tonita Stormcloud, and Selznick & Vidor's (1947) Pearl Sanchez were all halfbreed girls who, respectively, married into, were born to, or were fostered by bourgeois Anglo re-settler families. These modern characters begin their narratives as Princesses of a sort, but unlike the Victorian Lali, sabotage themselves to greater or lesser extent, jeopardizing and/or ruining their reputations, declining in socio-economic status, and

⁹⁰ http://www.canadianpoetry.ca/confederation/johnson/moccasin_maker/image_pages/johnson.htm Retrieved: June 17, 2017, 1:22 p.m. PT.

degenerating into dysfunction as an inevitable outcome of their bad blood. This rhetorical trope can be marked in the transition of these characters across the narrative arcs of their respective narratives, exemplified by Pearl's transformation from blameless ingénue, to treacherous jezebel, to murderous ghoul in *Duel in the Sun* (Selznick & Vidor, 1947).

It is a lack of both of cultural and economic capital that contextualize the Metisse character Piquette, in Margaret Laurence's (1970) *The Loons*, representing a regression from the Metis' initial contact with modern Western civilization and its supposed technological and social progress. Introduced early in the narrative, the Tonnerre family is defined by their homestead: while contextualized by modernity, their space is pictured as teetering at its edges, its detritus littering their setting in a senseless sprawl of "discarded car tires...tangled strands of barbed wire...and rusty tin cans" (Laurence, 1970, p.105). This modern squalor is common to halfbreed girls who encounter modernity and urbanization who are often relegated to its textual abject zones, inhabiting hovels at the outskirts of town as do Laurence's (1970) Tonnerres, or tenements in city slums, as do Rork & Dillon's (1932) Naza and Schulberg & Leison's (1934) Tonita, or even travelling caravans, as in Stone's (1971), "Gypsies, Tramps & Thieves" (Track 2).

Defying this convention is *Haven's* (Piller & McLeod, 2010) solidly middle-class Jess Minion, who lives in a neat, heritage Cape-Cod with an ocean view (an inheritance from her French-Canadian/Ojibway grandmother) situated in contemporary New England: but a New England in an alternate universe, which falls under the broader narrative genres of science fiction and fantasy. Further, Jess's house is located in a geography that is liminal to space/time itself.

The fictional town of Haven, Maine, is a dim spot in Stephen King's Dark Tower multi-verse:⁹¹ a place that is seen, but not noticed by outsiders—not by the human inhabitants of Haven's home universe, nor by most other beings who occupy higher reaches of the tower's multi-verse. In its own form of omitted gaze, Haven's narrative framework relegates the halfbreed girl to the most literal and far-flung impossible edges of settler-colonial mythos.

whitewashing the halfbreed girl.

Compare DeMille's hostile rendition of the Metisse to that of Marin in *Canadian Pacific* (1949).⁹² While DeMille's characterization conforms more closely with the reviled halfbreed girl of D.C. Scott's imaginings, Marin's Cecile Gautier is a kinder, gentler, more respectable (read: Anglicized and whitewashed) version (figure 8), even going so far as to let her get her man in the end. Like DeMille's (1940) Louvette Corbeau, Cecile Gautier is a member of a larger Metis family and community, who, along with their Indian kin, find themselves on the wrong side of colonization—this time, in the form of the impending railway through their homelands. Cecile, too, is conflicted at having to choose between the fate of her people and her love for her (Euro re-settler) man, but following in the tradition of the ennobled savage, she ultimately chooses—unlike the faithless Louvette—to stand by her man rather than to betray and/or entrap him.

⁹¹ *The Dark Tower* is a series of eight novels published by American writer, Stephen King, between 1982 – 2004. Crossing the genres of Sci-Fi, Fantasy, Western and Horror, the series employs the concept of the, 'Dark Tower' as a model for an interdimensional 'multi-verse', in which a great many of the characters from his other novels reside, linking their individual narratives together in one, meta-diegesis.

⁹² <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVq1UTn5QC8>



Film stills taken by screen capturing software ⁹³

Figure 8: The Metisse Who Gets Her Man

Featured in only one scene in Marin's film, Cecile's whitewashed sexuality—Anglicized, heteronormative, submissive, and kittenish—stands in stark contrast to DeMille's Louvette, her filmic contemporary, with her suspect Frenchness and overt, relentless sexual predation (read: deviance and degeneracy). Compared to the perpetually licentious Louvette, Cecile's costuming is much more modest, and she is portrayed as more intelligent, more temperate and reasonable—not to mention much less childish—her loyalty to the colonizer proven. When the leading man is made to account for his seemingly counter-intuitive nuptial choice, he remarks he would rather have a “real woman” than a “statue with a halo,” referring to what would, in this genre, his ‘natural’ love interest—the very Aryan Euro re-settler female—in the form of the female frontier doctor: another staple character of frontier narratives (Brégant-Heald, 2015).

Ultimately, all ends well when Cecile comes to her senses and likewise convinces her father, who persuades the Metis and the Indians to throw down the hatchet—which they do,

⁹³ <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IVq1UTn5QC8> Cue film for scene: 1:34:11

literally, making peace with the Euro re-settlers, with the railway and with their fate as helpless victims against the onward march of civilization and progress. The final scene in *Canadian Pacific* has the happy couple honeymooning in a little teepee in the Rocky Mountains (?!), with a quick cut to a shot of a steam locomotive barreling its way to the Pacific Ocean on the newly installed rail lines so hard won in battle with the misguided Metis and their Indian kin.

Canadian Pacific is singular in its film genre in that it upends the long-cherished tradition in the settler-colonial master narrative by having a semi-respectable Euro re-settler leading man choose a Metis woman over a Euro re-settler woman. What sets Cecile apart from other textual halfbreed girls? It appears that the degree to which the figure of the halfbreed girl—as embodied in the characters of Lali Eye-Of-The-Moon, Tonita Stormcloud and *Canadian Pacific*'s Cecile Gautier (Marin, 1949)—is able to hold on to a decent man is directly variable to her efficacy as a mimic and how long she can maintain the performance; such dedication to one's own assimilation allows these characters to live almost happily ever after.

More often than not, however, the halfbreed girl is subject to textual whitewashing', followed by severe penalties for her mimeses, which is feared to be a (c)overt attempt to gain some sort of undeserved and/or unethical advantage, even as colonialism demands her assimilation. Another function of whitewashing the halfbreed girl is to erode certain signifiers of her Indigeneity and imposing markers of Whiteness (light skin, hair and eyes, mode of dress, speech, habitation) so that her ethnicity becomes even more ambiguous (Marubbio, 2009), sublimating her actual ancestry and lived experience as an Indigenous and colonized person to that of the simulacrum constructed by the settler-colonial imagination. This textual strategy creates a conceptual gap into which re-settlers may step into the identity space of the metisse by

animating the figure of the halfbreed girl (in a literal sense, on stage and in film) while relegating actual, historical and living metisses to the margins of that identity space as inauthentic.

The halfbreed girl loses her Indigenous ancestry altogether in the early 1980s, in E.J. Hunter's interpretation of the character, White Squaw, whom we met in the ads for Corman's (1955) motion picture. Hunter's rendition of the American folk character is no longer Indigenous by birth but was adopted and raised by the "Red Top Sioux" from childhood. A typical western anti-hero—a role usually occupied by men—Rebecca Caldwell is a Euro re-settler champion of Indians, her sidekick a Sioux man named Lone Wolf. Hunter's White Squaw is a manifestation of the double-other in American western narratives (Prats, 2002): "a white man gone native, himself in fact become a half-caste, a monstrous self-transformation" (Malchow, 1996, p. 189).

Monstrous she is indeed: in "Here Comes the Bride", we discover that Rebecca has previously castrated her Euro re-settler uncle (his motive for homicidal vengeance against her) with a Bowie knife and observe while she later dispatches him with the same. Granted, said uncle murdered her squaw man (ennobled, in this narrative, as the spouse of the Euro re-settler heroine) and was a known pedophile and rapist as well, ostensibly providing the reader with a sympathetic rationale for such gender-subversive savagery. The only reason Rebecca can get away with such behaviour and still be an anti-heroine is because it is White-on-White violence; if Rebecca were Indigenous by birth, such transgressions against Euro re-settler males would require some sort of social sanction—even death—in order to satisfy the patriarchal settler-colonial master narrative.

Naturalness/Degeneracy: Miscegenous Monstrosities

Originally written by Bob Stone about America's gypsies—known as “travellers”—the lyrics to “Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves” (1971, Track 2)—one of Cher's other signature ballads—portray the unsettled, marginal, and degenerate life of the female nomad in modern North America: one that is characterized by a vicious cycle of sexual promiscuity, unwed motherhood, poverty, and social stigma.⁹⁴ The narrative begins, “I was born on the wagon of a travelling show/ mama used to dance for the money they'd throw,” indicating the loose morals of these modern-day nomads to which our narrator, a young girl, is born. True to the self-fulfilling prophecy of the stereotypical, social problem presented by such off-White entities, the narrator becomes impregnated (questionably non-consensual) by a young man who travels along with the protagonist's family caravan until, “four months later, I'm a gal in trouble and I haven't seen him for a while...”. These lyrics reiterate the fate of the halfbreed girl in the last verse, in which the life cycle of the newest addition to this family of gypsies, tramps and thieves is recapitulated with each new generation. Perhaps this is why Cher was the first to record this song in 1971, reprising the performance countless times over her career, and why it has become synonymous with her halfbreed stage persona.

In the settler-colonial imagination, the halfbreed girl is unable to escape her preordained fate (Aleiss, 2005; Stoler, 1995), owing to her naturally unnatural inner torment. The mere physical existence of the progeny of European and Indigenous women represent a clear, present and inconvenient truth that contradicts such assimilative fantasies, as well that of European

⁹⁴ The reference to America's travellers can be found in Fred Bronson, 1988. *The Billboard Book of Number One Hits*. California: Billboard,

claims to the monopoly on sexual self-mastery and propriety. Perhaps worse than standing as empirical evidence of the carnal transgressions of European males, the children of these indiscretions embodied for the colonials “a degenerate...subaltern class... (who were) a threat to male authority...a population that officials saw as ‘lacking paternal discipline’ ... inhabiting a contrary colonial world in which the mothers took charge” (Stoler, 2002; p.94). Both of these challenges to the presumed supremacy and divine right of European patriarchy to world domination are answered by way of a raced, and highly misogynistic discourse.

These assumptions actuate the the third sub-binary, naturalness/degeneracy, which reflects contamination anxieties among Euro re-settlers, again representing unacceptable challenges to their established power hierarchies, considered an inevitable outcome of deviant sexuality, gender roles, and the racially hybrid product of said deviance. In this binary, the halfbreed girl is further rendered abject through her demonization, her image as a promiscuous, morally-challenged prostitute even further vilified and exaggerated, evoking one of her more archaic and European textual ancestors, the demonic succubus of Judeo-Christian lore. Here, the halfbreed girl is transmogrified into a nymphomaniacal and/or destructive, emasculating force, animating further fears of upset to the Eurocentric, patriarchal, hetero-centric power structure.

The savagery to which the halfbreed girl may degenerate is front and centre in the advertisements for *Apache Woman* (Corman, 1955; figure 10). Any rhetorical analysis of these advertisements cannot miss the gratuitous use of *pathos* to imbue the text with several potent layers of meaning. The copy in the image on the right reads, “Call her Half-Breed, and All HELL Breaks Loose!” and “Half-Breed Emotions Stripped to Raw Fury!”. Evidently the Apache Woman is incited to violence by the mere mention of her ancestry, which indicates her inner conflict regarding the same, as does the reference to the volatility of her emotional state.

mastering the miscreant halfbreed girl.

Corman's Anne LeBeau illustrates how the halfbreed girl is subdued in various ways. In addition to being eroticized by way of her imagined innate innocence or carnality, or pathologized as mentally/emotionally unstable and volatile, the Indigenous female other tends to be masculinized, her savagery attributed to both her deviance from her natural gender role as well as her consistency with the natural inclinations of her race (Green, 1975; Marubbio, 2009; McKlintock, 1995). An illustration of this sort of textual transgendering can be found in the iconic Indian Queen, an image prevalent in imperialist discourses between the fourteenth and sixteenth centuries (Green, 1975). While the physical form of the Indian Queen is undeniably female, she is rendered a sexual and social deviant by the semiotics of Western masculinity when they are applied to her form:

Draped in leaves, feathers, and animal skins...she appeared aggressive, militant and armed with spears and arrows. Often...she stood with her foot on the slain body of an animal or human enemy. She was the familiar Mother-Goddess Figure—full bodied – powerful, nurturing but dangerous. (Green, 1975, 702.)

The Indian Queen's challenge to Euro, heterocentric patriarchy, along with the threat of its subversion by her, is inherited by the halfbreed girl, but in the despoiled version of the savage squaw, "a phantasm also a product of male Euro settler-colonial lust...(t)he dark side of the of the Mother-Queen figure" (Green, 1975, p. 703).

This subversion, and the threat to the establishment it implies, is illustrated in an example of what McKlintock (1995) refers to as a liminal scene in the film, *Call Her Savage* (Rork &

Dillon, 1932), in which Naza's father interrupts his wild, mercurial, and tomboyish daughter as she senselessly beats her halfbreed man-servant with her bull-whip. To her father's dismay, Naza explains that she is "practicing for marriage."⁹⁵



Figure 9: Naza, the Snake in the Grass

96

This exchange is preceded by yet another liminal scene recalling Lali's wild ride and reckless abuse of her horse (Parker, 1893) in which the illegitimate Naza also endangers the safety of both her steed and herself as she careens headlong into the path of a rattlesnake. The significance of her whip (figure 9) is tripled in the image of the snake she assaults: as a phallic symbol, it indicates the social power that goes with it, as well as Naza's envy and appropriation of both. It evokes sado-erotic imagery of violence, mastery, and submission, its physical resemblance to the snake overt in its biblical overtones, strongly associated with humanity's expulsion from Eden, paralleling nineteenth-century discourses that pointed to the very existence

⁹⁵ Link to clip: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mt3_fZRrl8M. Retrieved: June 30, 2018, 9:03, PT.

⁹⁶ Image: <https://unobtainium13.com/2018/07/29/4-shots-from-4-clara-bow-films-it-wings-dangerous-curves-call-her-savage/>. Retrieved: March 1, 2019, 12:25 p.m. PT.

of racial hybrids as proof of Europeans' fall from grace (Malchow, 1996; Stoler, 1995).⁹⁷

Deceit and betrayal are personified in Naza, who is herself even more dangerous and volatile than the rattlesnake, and thus has nothing to fear, because it is she who is the snake, infiltrating, disrupting, and despoiling—and possibly inheriting—settler-colonial paradise.

Masculinizing the metisse, as well as arming her, supposedly levels the playing field, permitting the Euro male re-settler to rightfully defend himself from her, providing just cause to ultimately dominate her. The ill intent of the male Euro re-settler authority figure is excused, his crime of coercive sexual predation of the halfbreed girl transmuted, because through virtue of the savagery and masculinity of her distant ancestor, the Warrior Queen, she is elevated to an (almost) capable adversary of the White man, while at the same time, leveled to the bestiality of the squaw. Hitting Pearl Sanchez, Louvette Corbeau or Anne Le Beau, therefore, isn't like hitting a lady (read: White woman). The unladylike (savage) demeanor of the halfbreed girl is evident in the weapon/phallus, such as a knife, axe, or gun—and in her predilection to irrational fits of violence. These phallic weapons, along with the halfbreed girl's skill with and liberal use of them, are emblematic of her unnatural contact with—and subsequent contamination by—squaw men and their supposedly baser instincts, which are both enabled and escalated by the technology they bring with them.

We see this motif well into the new millennium, in the popular, long-running CBC series, *Murdoch Mysteries*. In the episode, *All That Glitters* (Crossland 2015), we meet Mack, a female character who, at first, is the prime suspect in a murder investigation of a Euro re-settler prospector on the eve of Ontario's Cobalt Silver Rush in the early twentieth century. With her

⁹⁷ Image 10 is taken from, <https://tvtropes.org/pmwiki/pmwiki.php/Film/CallHerSavage>. June 30, 2018, 9:10, PT.

swarthy complexion, Mack is obviously racialized, but never identified as to her ethnic origin(s); instead, she is tellingly juxtaposed against the noble-but-tragic Ojibway, upon whose ancestral and treated territories the silver is found. As the narrative unfolds, it turns out that there is no need for labels; aside from the braids (obvious markers of her Indigeneity), Mack displays all of the hallmarks of the halfbreed girl of settler-colonial lore, aside from her boozing, and her preference for the beds of Euro re-settler men. Mack is greedy, scheming, treacherous, venal, emotionally immature, sexually aggressive toward men and murderously violent, her weapon of choice, an (appropriately phallic) long gun. Mack is a contemporary representation that recapitulates earlier incarnations of the halfbreed girl as villainous, her ethnic identity ambiguous. However, setting Mack apart from her contemporaries is that she reflects more recent trends to emphasize the disruption of Western, heteronormative gender identities, hyper-masculinizing her so as foreground her gender ambiguity. Mack's stout figure and butch demeanor—not to mention her masculine professional and sartorial choices—signal her deviance from normative gender roles, sexual behaviour, and standard of beauty, rendering her unfit for the sexual consumption of any but a squaw man.

In North American settler-colonial discourses, miners and lumberjacks are positioned as debased fringe-dwellers that move between the colony's political, economic, and geographic core, and its periphery—between rural and urban settings. These spaces were presumed to be lawless, (read: without the civilizing influence of middle-class white women) and degenerate (Brégant-Heald, 2015; Harris, 1997). The inhabitants of these spaces were considered the fringe of the fringe of the frontier. As a prospector—a female in a male's role—and as a person of colour, Mack's liminality is not only tripled but quadrupled as a fringe-dweller, inhabiting the no

(wo)man's land between that which is civilized and that which is savage, routinely transgressing boundaries of both race and gender with the intent to break the class barrier as well.

When caught out by the indefatigable Detective Murdoch and his sidekick, Constable Crabtree, Mack shoots to kill, mortally wounding the detective. It turns out that She is aware of the murdered prospector's intent to file a claim for a large silver deposit on Ojibway treaty land; knowing how that story will inevitably play out for the Ojibway, Mack is determined to cash in on the silver rush about to ensue, at their expense. She is stopped from killing both white lawmen (read: enforcers of the authority of Euro re-settler, bourgeois males) when her scheme is foiled, *deus ex machina*, in the form of the unexpected arrival of the Ojibway guide, who shoots Mack dead. As it turns out, the ennobled Ojibway guide has relapsed into savagery after all, having been the one who "dunnit" in the first place, murdering the prospector who staked the original (illegal) claim—albeit for the most noble of motives: protecting his ancestral territory (which is protected by treaty) and his people, as well as the law men—and by extension, the Canadian, settler-colonial establishment. While the noble savage is allowed to survive with his dignity (if not his freedom) intact, the metisse, as usual, comes to a bad end, nothing remaining of her but her infamous reputation.⁹⁸

It is this process of objectifying and vilifying the metisse that sanctions textual (and, I argue, actual) violence against her: not only is she subjected to a process of dehumanization by way of sexual objectification, but she also is branded a deviant, committing the taboo of crossing

⁹⁸ The episode's final scene and post-script implicates the naive detective Murdoch—and the Canadian system that he so conscientiously and righteously upholds and defends—in the provincial government of Ontario's extinguishment of Indigenous land title in that region, allowing their ancestral territories to be over-run by miners following the Colbalt silver rush. This event was critical in opening up that region to further resource- extraction and re-settlement, further dispossessing the Ojibway from their birthright. See, RCAP (1992). "3. Land and Resources" in *Volume 2: Restructuring the Relationship* <http://caid.ca/RRCAP2.4.pdf>. Retrieved: May 3, 2015, 1:08 pm. PT.

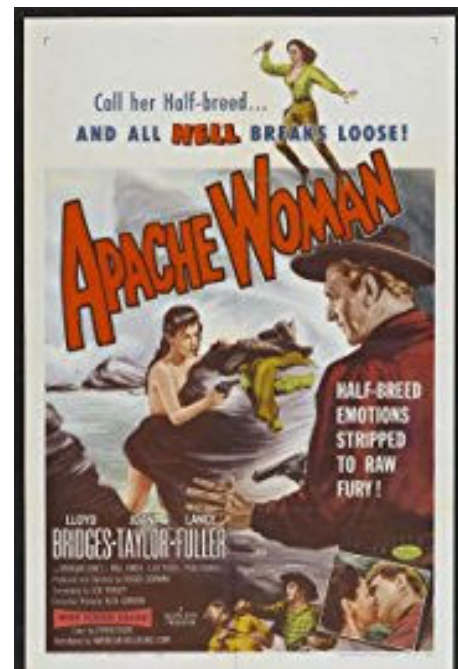
patriarchal, heteronormative gender boundaries. This punitive attitude is even more apparent in the copy of the advertisements for the theatrical release of Roger Corman's 1955 film, *Apache Woman*, (figure 10), one caption of which reads brazenly, "Naked Violence: with a gun or a knife, she was a match for any man." The first scene in the official trailer for the film depicts the femme fatale, Anne LeBeau, "defying all conventions" as she circles U.S. Marshall Rex Moffit in a knife fight as other men look on. In the urgent, staccato, authoritative style of a 1950s radio announcer, the male narrator describes the film as "a story of a beautiful Apache woman who brought men together in such violent, venomous combat that suspense reaches heights seldom seen on the screen! Because of her, men die! And one man dared fight her for her love!"⁹⁹

That one man to which the narrator refers is the squaw man, this time incarnated as a law man; the fight for the halfbreed girl's love is in reality a rape scene that asserts and reinforces the prerogative of the settler-colonial patriarchy to decide that "no" means "yes," Advertisements for the theatrical release of the film, *Apache Woman* (figure 10), are powerful in their promulgation of the violent predation upon the halfbreed girl by Euro re-settler males, which is highly eroticized, recreating liminal scenes of voyeurism and violence. At one end of the spectrum, the halfbreed girl is a passive object of lust for the voyeuristic pleasure of a white male, whose authority is doubled in that he is both White man and law man; on the other, her phalluses (the gun and the knife) signify a clear danger to the safety of both the White man as well as the settler-colonial law that he represents. In this, she is like the New World: tough, beautiful and there, by manifest destiny, to be conquered by the White man.

⁹⁹ Link to official film trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HOGw-fJibk&t=6s>. Retrieved: June 30, 2018, 8:52 a.m. PT.



100



101

Figure 10: *Apache Woman* - Stripped, Raw, Fury

In compositional analysis of the posters advertising *Apache Woman* (figure 10), the hero's doubled authority is indicated by his size, as he looms over the distant figure of the halfbreed girl, taking up most of the space in the frame. The dominant motif in these images also carry with them a potent *ethos*; the thinly veiled threat of sexual violence—and violence in general—against metisses under the regime of Euro settler-colonial patriarchy. In the image on the right, the marshal and Apache Woman are depicted in a passionate embrace in one inset, juxtaposed in the same frame against another inset in which Apache Woman is attacking with a

¹⁰⁰ Taken From <https://e.snmc.io/lk/f/1/53ede103dbff89a7b4a3b3fa8afcb68e/1012638.jpg> retrieved: May 15, 2018, 1:13 p.m. PT

¹⁰¹ Taken From <https://www.imdb.com/title/tt0047837/>. retrieved: May 15, 2018, 1:13 p.m. PT. retrieved: May 15, 2018, 1:13 p.m. PT

knife, recalling the scene from the film where she and the Marshall mix it up on Main Street. The images are saturated with the semiotics of power. Metonymic of settler-colonialism's power hierarchy based on race and gender, the law man's power is tripled as his voyeuristic gaze confers yet another power: the power to see without being seen—transferring that power vicariously to (predominantly) re-settler audiences. The image objectifies the halfbreed girl sexually, while problematizing her gender, as well as her transgression of gender boundaries.

Although the *Hays Code* prohibited the portrayal of sexual assault against women, or women prostituting themselves, this particular rule seemed to be bent more often than not in the Hollywood western when it came to images of squaws and halfbreed women (Stedman, 1982). Popular cinema is full of examples of this representation of a hyper-sexualized halfbreed girl, along with overt misogyny and violence, sexual and otherwise: a danger graphically illustrated in images from the films *North West Mounted Police* (De Mille, 1940) and *Duel in the Sun* (Selznick & Vidor, 1947) (figure 11). The iconography of both images—a still shot from De Mille's film, and the other a poster for the theatrical release and DVD cover of Selznick & Vidor's film—show disturbing similarities in their thematic configurations of the halfbreed girl and their squaw men.

In both texts, the halfbreed girl lies on the ground, vulnerable, yet posing in a sexually suggestive manner, one arm up over her head, body twisted slightly to the side, accentuating the curves of her breasts, waist, and hips. Her squaw man stands over her menacingly, his partially obscured face, his gun, and the ambient, yellow and/or red lighting all suggesting the threat of male violence—sexual and otherwise. The still shot from De Mille's (1940) film, *North West Mounted Police*, recaps a scene in which Sgt. Logan curses at his traitorous lover, Metisse

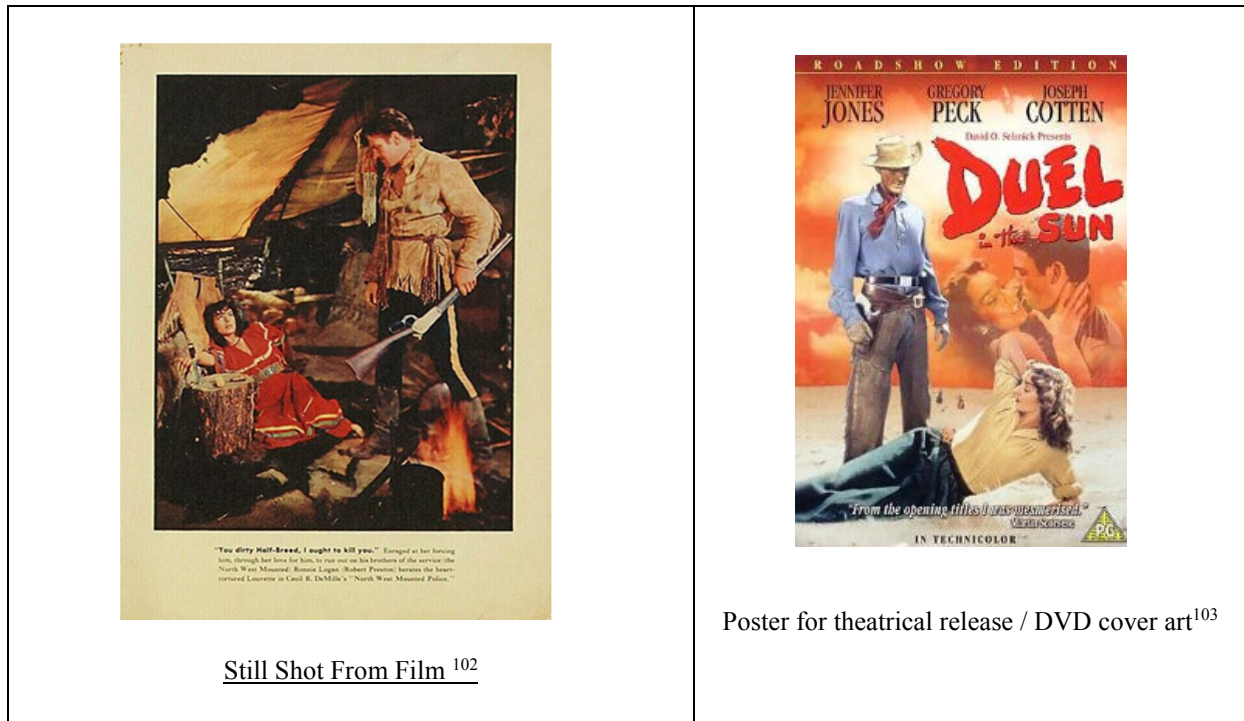


Figure 11: Mastering the Halfbreed Girl

Louvette Corbeau, “You dirty halfbreed. I ought to kill you.” Unlike Louvette’s law man, Pearl’s squaw man does much more than threaten her, triggering in Pearl the inevitable descent of the halfbreed girl into madness, followed by the dreaded regression into a state of animalistic, vengeful, savagery, ultimately murdering her rapist, Lewt—penetrating/violating the Euro re-settler male with the deadly force meted out by her own phallus, in the form of a long-gun—the same weapon with which she takes her own life, as does Royle’s Naut-ur-Ritch, with her pistol.

In a trifecta of internal contradictions, the halfbreed girl is often simultaneously infantilized in a very literal, “lexical strategy of belittlement” (LaRocque, 2010, 38) common to patriarchal discourse. This tactic serves not only to reinforce the positional superiority of the

¹⁰² <http://www.westernmovies.fr/documents/imgtag.php?t=1945>. Retrieved: April 13, 2017, 1:50 m. PT

¹⁰³ Image from: <http://www.moviesteve.com/see-this-duel-in-the-sun-1946-dir-king-vidor/>

Euro re-settler male, but also to emphasize the child-like, irrational and capricious savagery of the halfbreed girl, thereby necessitating and justifying her domination, while conveniently, rendering her all the more easy to subdue. In a scene from a scene in DeMille's (1940) film, *North West Mounted Police* we find Louvette smack-dab in the middle of a knife fight with a Scotsman, who eventually disarms her, takes her over his knee, and spansks her for her impudence, much to the delight of the mostly European, male, crowd. This scene of domination and mastery not only metes out a penalty to Louvette for stealing (from a White man, no less), but also puts her in her place within the settler-colonial hierarchy.¹⁰⁴

a dark lady.

Depicting the halfbreed girl as a siren who divides and conquers settler-colonial couplings are a particular form of textual abjection amply illustrated in cinematic images from the 1940s and 1950s, in which the regression of the cinematic metisse becomes darker, more graphically sexualized, and more menacing to the settler-colonial domesticity (Marubbio, 2009). A generation later, we can still see her presence as embodied in the preternatural, eponymous "Dark Lady" of Cher's hit single (Durill, 1974, Track 5). Resurrecting D.C. Scott's vision of the racial hybrid as a gothic monstrosity, this "fortune Queen from New Orleans" evokes a Creole cachet while conjuring images of the rapacious succubus as she makes clandestine, nocturnal, carnal visitations to the bedroom shared by the song's protagonist and her man, presumably using her preternatural, Gypsy wiles to control him sexually. While the protagonist entrusts her with the most intimate details of her life, the antagonist is busy stealing her hard-earned cash

¹⁰⁴ Link to image: https://www.doctormacro.com/Images/Posters/N/Poster%20-%20North%20West%20Mounted%20Police_09.jpg. Retrieved: March 1, 2018, 12:36 p.m. PT.

(and ultimately her man) through a fraudulent psychic performance that turns out to be nothing more than the fortune-teller's self-serving, self-fulfilling prophecy.

Although Cher's nemesis in this narrative is not an image of the stereotypical halfbreed girl, the animated female characters in Durill's (1974, Track 5) lyrics represent Cher's doubled self: the narrator/protagonist, and the ambiguously racialized antagonist. In the official animated music video that originally appeared on *The Sonny and Cher Comedy Hour*, the character of the Dark Lady, drawn to appear very Cher-like in both visage and costume, is scantily clad, while in comparison the Aryan narrator/protagonist is more modestly dressed. Coupled as they are with the ethos of their vocalist, whose halfbreed stage persona was at its zenith at the time of the song's release, these images conflate and fix the lyrics of Durill's "Dark Lady" with Cher's embodiment of the halfbreed girl.

Moreover, the stereotypical swarthy Gypsy closely associated with petty sorcery, augury and larceny in western discourse is yet another untrustworthy fringe dweller, who, like the halfbreed girl, is doomed to traverse the margins of respectable (read: landed) society, which is in constant danger of being infiltrated by the contaminating influences they carry (Malchow, 1996). The subject's occupation (a fortune-teller), her anonymity (she is never named) and her primary descriptor as a dusky, shadowy entity all evoke a gothic sense of horror in the unknown, and unknowable. Like the displaced metisse, the image of the female Gypsy fortune-teller is an abject person, relegated to a state of perpetual liminality in the abject zones of the imperial West (McKlintock, 1995), her inescapable regression into demonic savagery or at best, human degeneracy representing a constant menace to a civilized society founded on heteronormative and same-race couplings. The musical narrative concludes when the protagonist and narrator, Cher's Aryan half confronts her dark half and her man *en flagrante delicto*, "laughing and

kissing ‘til they saw the gun in my hand.” Ominously the last stanza intones, “Dark Lady ain’t gonna turn no cards no more,” recapitulating the inner conflict, emotional/mental instability, and inevitable regression to savagery of the halfbreed girl, in spite of the filmic narrative attributing this barbarity to the protagonist’s gender, rather than to her race, recalling the ending to Johnson’s short fiction, “As it Was in the Beginning” (1913).

The positioning of Durill’s (1974, Track 5) villainess in his lyric narrative exemplifies a familiar trope utilized in the abjection of the halfbreed girl: the love triangle. In this thematic configuration, she is positioned between Euro re-settler lovers as a divisive force. At times, rather than impeding the natural order of raced, heterosexual pairings, she instead insinuates herself between two men, becoming a Yoko Ono: destroyer of the brotherhood and/or bromance. As we have observed, this trope is taken to histrionic levels in the trailer for Corman’s 1955 film, *Apache Woman*, Reminiscent of Royle’s (1905) *Naut-ur-ritch*, the “venomous” and mortal combat between men is brought about when the Apache woman, Anne Le Beau (note the French rather than Spanish surname), ultimately betrays her own brother, family and community to keep her volatile and abusive relationship with her squaw/law man.¹⁰⁵

Corman’s (1955) narrative merely recapitulates liminal scenes from earlier narratives, including DeMille’s *North West Mounted Police* (1940), in which Louvette plays two law men and best friends against each other. In ads for the film’s theatrical release, DeMille’s (1940) vision of the Metisse as a beastly gothic monstrosity is evident in Louvette’s mindless, feral predation of the love (read: lust)-struck Sgt. Logan, as well as in her histrionic, duplicitous Frenchness and her archaic, idolatrous (by Protestant standards) Catholicism (Malchow, 1996).

¹⁰⁵ Link to trailer: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1HOGw-fJibk>. Retrieved: July 3, 2018, 2:46 p.m. PT.

In a still shot from the film that depicts Louvette with Logan and the leading man, Dusty Rivers, the direction of each character's body, and juxtaposition to one another, indicates their relationships. As Sgt. Logan gazes possessively down at the object of his misguided desire, Louvette, her costume and lips tinted red, casts a wary, sidelong glance at her lover's bestie, who, in turn, assesses the threat of the situation by scrutinizing the expression of his infatuated friend's face. This configuration not only locates Louvette's role in the screenplay's narrative, but also positions the historical Red River Metisse as a divisive element and inherent danger to Euro settler-colonial patriarchy.¹⁰⁶

Likewise, another ad for the film features Louvette Corbeau with Dusty Rivers and his love interest, an Aryan, re-settler female. Louvette, in a red blouse with plunging neckline, looks sidelong and right with a come-hither smile at Dusty, the knife wedged between her teeth a sign of the sexual, moral, and physical danger she poses to the Euro re-settler couple sitting next to her. Meanwhile, the race-appropriate couple cling to each other for dear life. Dusty's shoulder is turned away from Louvette in a defensive posture, protecting his little lady while he looks back over it in apprehension at the halfbreed girl to the left of the frame. The Euro re-settler woman to the right of the frame (much more modestly attired, and in properly sombre colours) peers, frightened, at Louvette from behind the protective embrace of her hero, the object of Louvette's untoward and unwelcome advance, as he happens to be the best friend of the hapless Sgt. Logan, with whom she is currently romantically involved.¹⁰⁷

¹⁰⁶ Image: Preston Roberts as Sgt. Logan (left) Paulette Goddard as Louvette Corbeau (centre) Gary Cooper as Dusty Rivers (right) In, DeMille, (1940), *North West Mounted Police*. Link to image: <https://www.diomedia.com/stock-photo-north-west-mounted-police--northwest-mounted-police--the-royal-canadian-mounted-1940-usa-image5390496.html>. Retrieved: February 28 2019, 12:57 p.m. PT.

¹⁰⁷ Image: Paulette Goddard, Gary Cooper, Madeline Carroll. Image I.D. BP9WWK (1940). Alamy Archives. Link to image: <https://www.alamy.com/stock-photo-paulette-goddard-gary-cooper-madeleine-carroll-north-west-mounted-30950687.html>. Retrieved: February 28, 2019, 12:54 p.m. PT.

In another recent example, *Haven*'s Jess Minion is naught but a dalliance for law man and, briefly, squaw man Nate Wuornos. Nate is himself troubled by a lack of tactile sensation; a boon as a law man but a bane as a lover, which keeps him from pursuing his true love and partner in curse-fighting, the angelic (read: Aryan) Audrey Parker. This is problematic from the first episode, in which Nate's life-long frienemy Duke asks him pointedly, "does she (Audrey) know you're not a real boy?" as he motions to his face, mimicking a growing nose/phallus. Unlike *Haven*'s celibate yet kittenish and youthful Aryan heroine, Audrey (and the squaw man/law man's true love), the dusky, middle-aged Jess Minion is sexually experienced and aggressive (a masculine trait represented by her axe and her long gun) and wastes no time moving in on Nate. In the episode *Sketchy* (Peacock, 2010), we see Jess and Nate successfully consummate their attraction to each other, much to Nate's relief.

Once Nate is secure in the knowledge that he is still indeed a real boy, Jess has fulfilled the purpose that Turner's frontier thesis sets out for her, and subsequently must be eliminated from the love triangle, which she does on her own volition in the episode, "Ain't no Sunshine" (Girotti, 2010). After assisting Audrey and Nate in a paranormal show-down in which she almost loses her life, Jess decides that she lacks the intestinal fortitude to do the work that they do to help the town and its troubled. Nate arrives at Jess's home to find her packing, her intent to skip town without warning or goodbye; for all of her plastic shamanism she cannot handle the uncanny. Flaky, weak, and cowardly, the *faux*, quasi-Franco-metisse Jess serves no other purpose than as a sex surrogate who facilitates the true love (racially appropriate sexual union) of the Euro re-settler couple.

dark lady, strange empire.

Imagine a scene in which two figures, clad in long, leather dusters, chaps and broad-brimmed hats race desperately on horseback across the open prairie and through forest, under a dark and rolling sky. As the scene progresses, we discover it is a couple: a husband and wife trying to reach the nearest stage-coach station-house where they hope to find a doctor. As the couple arrives at their destination, we see that they are a mixed-race union, the husband White, the woman of a dark phenotype. The woman dismounts her horse, clutching something close to her chest that is wrapped in a Metis sash that is slung around her body. Alas, their ride ends in tragedy: when their precious cargo is un-swaddled, we find it is an infant child, already deceased. Recapitulating the mad rides of both Parker's (1893) Lali and Rorke & Dillon's (1932) Naza, in this liminal scene, the woman also puts her own needs ahead of that of her trusty (and trusting) steed, who, shortly after she dismounts, keels over and dies from sheer exhaustion. In a subsequent scene, the couple bury their son along with the sash he was swaddled in. Not long after, his father, the squaw man, goes missing and is presumed murdered, leaving the protagonist, Kat Loving, to survive on her own, along with three of the four orphans the couple adopted to ease their grief for the one they lost.

This is the opening scene of the pilot episode of CBC's (2014) series, *Strange Empire*, "The Hunting Party".¹⁰⁸ Set in 1869 at and around the Alberta-Montana border, this series features a historically and geographically correct Red River Metisse protagonist as its reluctant anti-heroine. Finstad-Knizhnik (producer) and MacDonald & Fitz (directors) turn the

¹⁰⁸ From, <https://watch.cbc.ca/season/strange-empire/season-1/577265d4-123d-4de0-86b0-967bcd203bd3>. Retrieved: July 12, 2018, 9:26 a.m. P.T.

conventions of the western genre on its head in this feminist, revisionist, gothic period piece that mirrors and subverts, disruptive with its questions that pester North America's settler-colonial master narrative. The storyline, as well as the images promoting it, closely resemble that of Sirafian's (1973) classic western, *The Man Who Loved Cat Dancing* (figure 12): a tale in what is known as the "post-squaw man" genre, in which bereaved widowers of Indigenous women seek revenge on those who murdered the wives (precluding mixed-blood offspring), and in some permutations of the narrative, the children of the union as well (Crolund-Anderson, 2007; Marubbio, 2009).

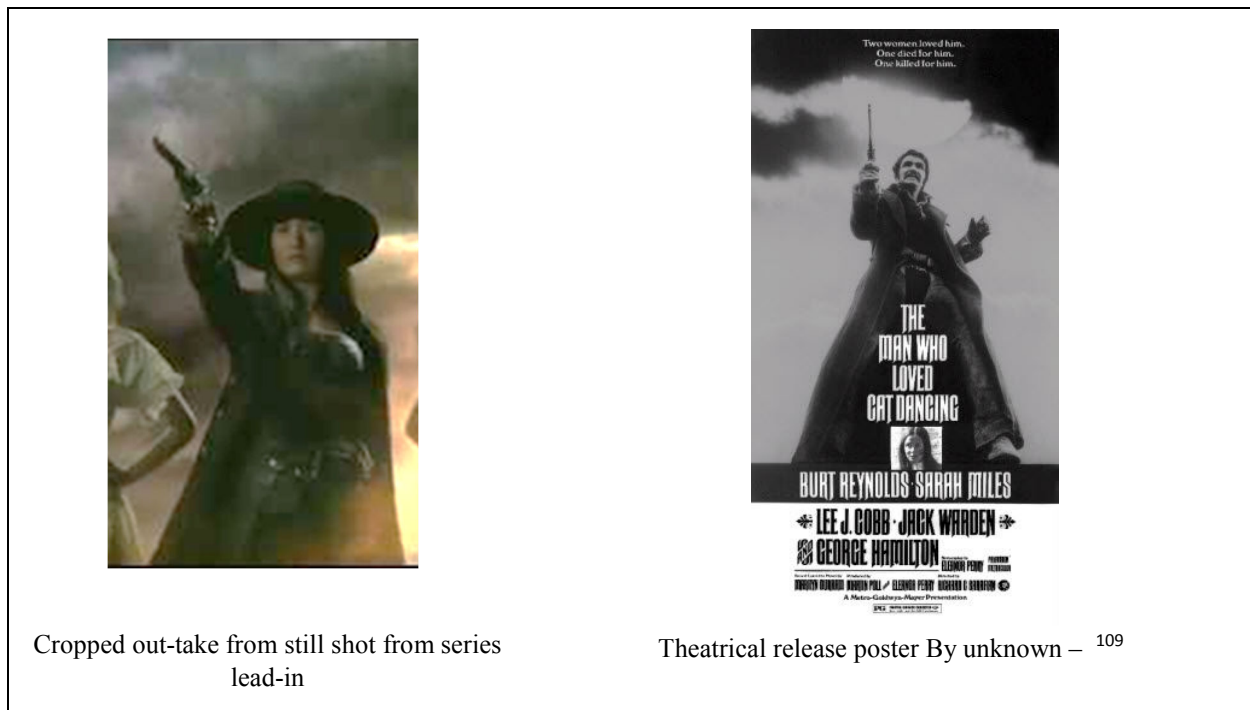


Figure 12: *Loving Kat Dancing*

In a subversion of the usual settler-colonial narrative, in *Strange Empire*, squaw men are good men, and the series protagonist, Metisse Kat Loving (*nee* Dumont), is the vengeful widow

¹⁰⁹ Image taken from: <http://www.allrovi.com/movies/movie/the-man-who-loved-cat-dancing-v31112>
<https://en.wikipedia.org/w/index.php?curid=37689333> Retrieved: April 8, 2017, 1:02 m. PT

of one such example, her husband, a Scots re-settler, having gone missing and presumed murdered in the pilot episode. Her skill with horses, guns, and other weapons unparalleled by the toxically masculine White men in her orbit, Kat is an outlaw, a fugitive from her home in the Red River settlement for murdering a surveyor, an action so at odds with Kat's code of honour and conduct that her adolescent daughters deduce, "whatever she did it was justified, knowing her."

In many ways, *Strange Empire* represents a clear and present danger to Canada's master narrative, as well as its collective sense of self, in which the existence of historical Metisses along with their peoples tend to be repressed. This narrative dissonance is first indicated in the unlikely sound track for a story in the western genre, in which calliope music, along with the surrealist graphics of the opening sequence, impart its *mise-en-scene* with the unmistakable sense of *Carnivale*: a place of misrule, where social norms, values, and expectations are suspended and/or subverted. Here, the oppressed might feel normal in contrast to the freaks and misfits on display for public consumption. Carnival people in and of themselves are indexical of the fringes of society and the socially acceptable: nomadic, they travel by caravan or RV or live in tents. They are the monstrosities, the nomads, the vagrants—thus the savages—of modern times: exotic, enticing, alluring, but also freakish and hence suspect, and even dangerous.

In this re-imagining of how the west was lost, Kat Loving is indeed a dark lady, meting out a dark justice to those who would abuse their power. Not only does Kat defy strictures against miscegenation and normative behaviour for her gender, she disrupts the Euro, patriarchal, settler-colonial order in a number of ways. First, she murders a surveyor, causing her to become a fugitive of Canadian law. Then, if unwittingly, Kat undermines the marriage of villain and *petit despot*, John Slotter, whose open and unrequited lust for Kat incites his own wife, Isabelle,

to collude with Kat against him, even if in Isabelle's own best interest. Ultimately, Kat turns the women of Janestown, most of the local miners, and even some of Slotter's own minions against him, eventually assuming positional superiority (and certainly moral authority) over him, when the community conscripts her as town marshal.

Clearly, Kat Loving challenges, disrupts and divides the settler-colonial patriarchy, but does she conquer? Although well-intentioned and ostensibly subversive, in many ways, Finstad-Knizhnik's project nonetheless succumbs to settler-colonialist assumptions surrounding the conflicted, abjected racial hybrid. By way of her Indigeneity, her racial hybridity and her deviance (criminality, transgression of gender norms), Kat is set apart from most of the other (mainly Euro re-settler) women, finding affinity only with other fringe-dwellers like herself, such as the autistic-savant Rebecca Blithely (a hybrid between the stock characters, the mad doctor and, the cool, aloof single/white/female frontier doctor), whose moral compass often takes a back seat to scientific inquiry, and the quadroon Isabelle (coincidentally, another fortune queen from New Orleans), former prostitute-now-wife to pimp, and inept captain of industry, John Slotter, whom she is currently poisoning with arsenic. Highly intelligent and resourceful, both Isabelle and Rebecca are weary of being under the thumb of patriarchy and actively seek their own power, thwarting male domination and co-opting control where and when they are able, using strategies ranging from manipulation to murder. In this strange empire, misrule rules.

Recall that Carter (1997) and Valverde (1991) demonstrate in their works how settler-colonial discourses in Canada engaged in a deliberate defamation campaign in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries against Indian, metis, and women of colour, in which disparaging images of them were juxtaposed against favourable ones of Euro re-settler women. Deliberate effort was made to subvert this convention in *Strange Empire*: if not in the episode screenplays

themselves, then at least in the lead-in sequence to each episode, in which Kat appears fully clothed while her non-Indigenous counterparts are wearing full-throated costumes (literally, in their underwear) and in careless pose, standing just behind her. And yet, certain glaring stereotypes regarding race and miscegenation remain, and not solely applied to images of Kat. For instance, Isabelle, the quadroon, is the most highly sexualized figure in the trio, with a much more revealing costume than the other female characters (in both figures 13&14): in image 13, her lingerie is red, indicating her profession.¹¹⁰ Note that both racial hybrids have guns, while the Euro re-settler woman brandishes a scalpel-phallus (with which she vivisects a violent, serial rapist, more out of curiosity than desire to punish). Flanked by her ghastly and formidable wing-women, Kat is front and centre, and, consistent with masculinizing the halfbreed girl, clearly the butch in this scenario, occupying the power position in this configuration.



Figure 13: Strange Empire. Still Shot From Lead-In Sequence

¹¹⁰ <http://www.drg.tv/Brand/12663/strange-empire>. Retrieved: April 10, 2017, 3:30 p.m. PT.

Ironically, given the series' theme, it is interesting to note the difference between the lead-in sequence of the television series and the graphic art used to promote it to a potential audience, which amounts to a bait and switch marketing technique, used to lure in those who would otherwise be disinclined to watch (read: settler-colonial patriarchs). In the images used in the series' lead-in sequence (figure, 13), Kat (similar to the images of Jay Gobart in figure 12) looms over the viewer, who regards her from below—subjugating them in a power stance (an angle much more so pronounced in the image of the White, male Gobart).¹¹¹



Figure 14: Strange Empire DVD Cover Art

However, in the (2016) DVD cover art (figure, 14), Kat Loving is de-masculinized, her apparel so reminiscent of that of Sarafin's (1973) male hero softened: her gun-belt is gone, along with the long, black, leather duster and the wide-brimmed hat that partially obscured her face. Her neckline is now much more open, her bound hair now flowing free—all changes serving to soften her appearance as well as to feminize it, allowing for a clear and unobstructed view of her

¹¹¹ <http://www.drg.tv/Brand/12663/strange-empire>. Retrieved: April 10, 2017, 3:30 p.m. PT.

face and figure, which is accented by the costume change. In keeping with her fall from her transgressive, gendered grace, now the viewer is elevated to Kat's level, looking her straight in the eye, toppling her from her pedestal and making her less threatening (to settler-colonial patriarchs). In spite of being femme-washed, however, Kat still retains her gun—this time, pointed directly at the audience—just in case the viewer forgets who's in charge.

While it must be acknowledged that the creator/producer and directors of the series are likely not responsible for its marketing, the episode screenplays themselves reprise many of the qualities associated with the halfbreed girl, including *Hayes Code*-era sensibilities regarding the survival of Metisses/metisses and their children. In the pilot episode, the recurring motif of dead hybrid babies is in keeping with the colonial narrative tradition in which miscegenation is abhorrent and must not result in the production of hybrid offspring (possible inheritors of real property). If such is the case, mixed-race families and their children must not be permitted to survive—at least, not whole, nor as a healthy, functional unit.¹¹²

Note that in the images in the series' opening sequence, Kat stands atop a field littered with the bones of longhorn cattle, signifying the death of her dream of homesteading, running a ranch, and raising a family with Jeramiah. In the wake of their infant's death, Kat and her squaw man, Jeramiah, adopt four orphaned White children in an effort to start over.¹¹³ Presaging and foreshadowing further violence and mayhem that's about to be inflicted upon her newly formed, adopted family, Kat intones to her Scottish mate, "I feel death all around me." Almost immediately they lose yet another child—their adopted son—to the vengeful ego of the depraved

¹¹² Watch: <http://watch.cbc.ca/strange-empire/season-1/episode-1/38e815a-0091c9d1430>. Retrieved; May 20, 2014, 2:20 p.m. PT.

¹¹³ I believe this to be a deliberate reference to the cultural practice among Algonkian – speaking peoples, 'the making of a relative' ceremony; a practice that many Metis families retained as a mode of survival, building instant capacity by adopting, especially adolescents, adults and elders. See, (Macdougall, 2010).

John Slotter, himself the father of a still-born hybrid daughter with his quadroon wife, Isabelle. The racially hybrid infants of both heroine and villain are early to die, to be replaced by settler-colonial changelings.¹¹⁴

Placed along the White/Indian binary, Kat, and everyone in her personal orbit, grapples with her abjection, replete with both distancing and disavowing behaviours. Kat hides her Indigeneity, even to her new family, passing until she cannot anymore, and her true identity as a Metisse is revealed in episode 4, “The Whiskey Trader”. Instantly the Euro re-settlers turn on her, calling Kat a “dirty half-breed” and accuse her of colluding with supposed, marauding Indians: proof of her inevitable regression and innate untrustworthiness. Her adopted children, all Euro re-settlers themselves, suffer the same treatment by mere association. They, in turn, have a moment where they disavow their adopted Metisse mother/saviour, spitting, “I don’t want to be a dirty halfbreed for the rest of my life.” Wounded by both injustice and ingratitude, Kat decides to instead make her home in an Indigenous community. After freeing two Blackfoot men held captive by the residents of Janestown, she attempts to tag along as they make their escape, telling them, “I don’t belong with these people.” Her abjection is complete when they rebuff her, responding, “you don’t belong with us, either.”

Although Kat eventually wins the trust and respect of her adopted children as well as that of (most) of the local Euro re-settler population, she remains marginal, even as she transitions to law man herself, being appointed *de facto* town marshal. Episode 5, “Lonely Hearts”, has the widowed women and working girls of Janestown pairing off with the local miners, making

¹¹⁴ According to old European folklore, sometimes elves or fairies might steal your baby and replace them with their own “deformed or imbecilic offspring”, which is called a ‘changeling’. “According to legend, the abducted human children are given to the devil or used to strengthen fairy stock”. From, <https://www.britannica.com/art/changeling-folklore>. Retrieved: Dec 1, 3:54 p.m. PT.

honest people out of everyone, effectively undermining John Slotter's authority as well as his profits from the bordello he owns. In the closing scene of this episode, the people of Janestown are celebrating the wedding of the first "jane" and "john" to be paired by the local match-maker. As couples take the dance floor—or town square, in this case—only Kat remains alone, off to the side of the action, visibly upset by her status as wallflower, missing her mate and her deceased sons.

In later episodes, Kat finds solace in an illicit affair with a halfbreed United States marshal—a relationship constituting only allies with benefits: one without social legitimacy owing to the fact that Kat is a fugitive from Canadian law and has a bounty on her head in the United States, a situation that also precludes the danger of legitimate, inter-generational families of halfbreeds from forming. The halfbreed lawman/squawman keeps her secret, which puts him at risk—not only his job, but also his life and freedom, as their hook-ups require the covert crossing of international borders.

Kat Loving ends up being a synthesis of many of the forms of the halfbreed girl that we have seen up to this point. She acknowledges her Indigeneity privately but passes for White and, sometimes male, in public. She vacillates between masculine and feminine, between faithful wife and mother, to a bereaved widow and mother, to illicit lover, from wanted murderess—if justified—to reluctant heroine and defender of (White) women and children. Kat is at once both powerful and powerless. She has personal power to a certain extent, even some socially sanctioned power at the local level, but only among a certain demographic. She may be capable of a limited disruption of the established power hierarchy, but she is powerless to change the grand scheme of things, such as the project of colonization, with its Western patriarchy, classism, racism, and misogyny. Ultimately, whatever power she has is precarious and can be destabilized

at any time (when a real law man comes to town, for example, bringing further codified stratified systems of race and gender oppression). As such, she occupies an unstable position in the social landscape as both person of authority and abject person.

V. Through a Glass, Darkly: Reflections of/on the Other/self

As demonstrated in previous chapters, the imperial West's particular way of talking about the other (meaning all non-Christians and especially Indigenous people) involves the application of the intersecting civ/sav and Madonna/whore dichotomies to form the Princess/squaw polemic; binaries upon which discourses of miscegenation and racial hybridity produce a lexicon that serves to rationalize the degradation and dehumanization of metis women. Derived from an imperialist lexicon deeply embedded in the language of the West, the Princess/squaw polemic generates its own semiotic lexis that eventually wends its way into popular culture, informing the conventional wisdom of the masses. This process is part of a larger imperialist project meant to shape and influence the relationship between colonizer and colonized: from the realms of national governance and public policy, to the most personal and intimate aspects of our private lives (Stoler, 1995).

The latter, less readily apparent outcome of such distorted imagery is the management of the identities of metis women themselves—not only at the *macro* (socio-political) level, but also at the *micro* (social-psychological) level, since the images of the halfbreed girl purveyed by settler-colonial pop-culture discourse are just as readily consumed by metisses as they are by re-settlers. For metis women, they act as Cooley's (1902) proverbial looking glass through which, in part, they must form a sense of their social selves in response to how they are represented. Thus, if the only two options for Indigenous women in this grand colonial narrative are either Princess or squaw, and if miscegenation—the very means to metis origins—is pre-empted by

other colonial programming, how do metisses, as racially and/or ethnically hybrid entities, place themselves, with respect to the master settler-colonial narrative?

One outcome of this process among colonized individuals is a psycho-social effect identified by Emma LaRocque as the “same-other” (2010, p. 121), in which the shame the colonized are made to feel about themselves is “projected onto those of the same race or grouping, which is then unconsciously cast as other” (LaRocque, 2010, p. 121). In this process, the colonized projects the shame attached to their social identity as the dehumanized, bestialized, and/or demonized other onto a member of their own group, in an act of psychological splitting off and lateral violence. In other words, the same-other is a process of abjection, in which the subject objectifies and dissociates from, in whole or in part, elements of her social identity.

Several decades of research on acculturation in developmental psychology supports the notion that individuals develop their ethnic identities, not only with respect those held by their parent(s) and extended family members, but also within the context of their ethnic group’s relationship to the dominant culture (Phinney, 1990; Richardson, 2006). Scrutinizing this relationship and its effects on the ethnic identities of the colonized forms the basis of Medina’s work (2009). She argues that, by examining performance narratives of Chicana/o and Latina/o artists, we can observe them observing their own othering in the various ways that they portray their brown identity-space, as well as that of their actual, ethnic selves, *vis-à-vis* the socio-historical context of American cultural imperialism. These performances, asserts Medina, exhibit overt and conscious modes of assimilation, internalization, critique and resistance as well as more latent or even unconscious ones, providing “significant clues to the underpinning processes that have led to this moment of complex identities” (Medina, 2009, p. 36). Whether or not Chicana/o and Latina/o performers are cognizant of their third eye experience regarding their

construction as a particular sort of brown in a White America, Medina is clear that these “cultural producers have been actively engaged in negotiating their identities and deciding to what extent they will participate in already established...paradigms” (Medina, p. 38).

In order to illuminate underlying processes of ethnic identity formation among three metis women authors, Lundgren (1995) subjects their narratives to textual analysis.¹¹⁵ Specifically, she searches for instances that exhibit Louis Althusser’s Marxian operation of interpellation, a process “during which individuals ‘recognize’ (or misrecognize) themselves in discourse and adopt subject positions accordingly, and through which existing distributions of power are perpetuated” (Lundgren, p. 63). Lundgren finds that rather than unwittingly or willingly adopting the subject position assigned to them by Canadian society, the metisses’ narratives of race and culture represent syncretic identity responses: a trait that Lundgren maintains is intrinsically metis, in and of itself. Further, their responses vary in the ways that they interpellate their metisse-ness, depending on their particular social and cultural contexts.

We have seen how images of the halfbreed girl vacillate along the polemics, civ-sav, Madonna-Whore, and Princess/squaw, and the sub-binaries generated by this intersection: White/Indian, mimesis/regression, and naturalness/degeneracy. This study finds that in the works by metisses auteurs examined in this thesis, expressions of gender and ethnic identity speak to these extremes while fighting to carve out a middle space that has some sort of equilibrium. In the absence of realistic representations of themselves, these women tended to fill in the blanks, drawing upon the already established settler-colonial images to flesh out a raced and gendered social identity as metisses. At times, certain qualities of the halfbreed girl

¹¹⁵ The texts analyzed include Maria Campbell’s *Halfbreed*, Beatrice Culleton’s, *In Search of April Raintree*, and Lee Maracle’s, *I am Woman*.

stereotype are embraced—for pragmatism, to pander to a settler-colonial audience, or simply because they appeal to the metisse herself. For the purposes of this thesis, I refer to this specific form of constructed self-image as the other/self.

Likened to looking at oneself “darkly, as through a veil” (Dubois, cited in Tobing-Rony, 1996, p.4), the sensation of the third eye is not limited to this single epiphany, indicating that,

... this insight can be taken one step further—the racially charged glance can also induce one to see the very process which creates the internal splitting, to witness the conditions which give rise to...(a) double consciousness... allow(ing) for clarity of vision even as... (the third eye)... marks the site of socially mediated alienation. (Tobing-Rony, 1996, p. 4)

This enhanced oculus not only allows the colonized to perceive that social representations of them are largely social constructions of the settler-colonial imagination; it allows the colonized to observe the colonizer in the very act of constructing those images, as well as the socio-political and historical exigencies that shape and inform their manufacture. It is this last revelation that yields the promise of the third eye’s emancipatory potential. It is simply not enough for postcolonial discourses to expose colonialism’s warped looking-glass nor to simply acknowledge the distortion of the images reflected therein. Pointing to the “doubling of the female self” in Western imperialist literatures of the Victorian era, McKlintock counsels us that textual transcendence will occur only if/when the Euro bourgeois “female writer” acknowledges the historical and “class contradictions that shaped the patriarchal mirror” (1995, p. 97).

The metisse auteurs in this study illustrate McKlintock's proviso clearly in their works, extending it to reflect the race, class, and gender contradictions that shape the settler-colonial mirror. They contend with the ways in which these layered and intersecting polemics shape and inform images of the halfbreed girl, along with the dominant society's expectations of her. These images are absorbed by these women and processed through their work in various ways, at times assimilating, resisting, exploiting, and/or subverting the raced, classed, and heteronormative assumptions and instantiate colonial exigencies undergirding them.

One of these exigencies involves grappling not only with their Indigeneity, but also with their European roots (which they do in a variety of different ways), as well as with the social expectation for them to mimic this inherited whiteness—racially, culturally, and aesthetically—along with the fear of their inevitable regression to savagery.¹¹⁶ Sometimes the works and/or performances of these metisse auteurs appear to internalize and (re)produce colonial mimicry, at other times they clearly seek to resist it; at others, they produce ambiguous and /or ambivalent mimetic responses to the semiotics of Whiteness and the regression motifs that trouble images of the halfbreed girl in settler-colonial pop culture.

However, LaRocque reminds us that “Individual responses to untenable colonial situations may not be as they appear” (2010, p. 122), citing E. Pauline Johnson as an example of ambiguity and ambivalence with respect to her degree of internalization, resistance, subversion, and perhaps even lateral textual violence (e.g. toward the Huron, pp. 123-5), questioning whether or not, or to what extent, Johnson's rhetorical choices—as well as her performative ones—were strategic, or even unconscious. For example, the duality integral to Johnson's stage performance

¹¹⁶ Here, I use the term white and whiteness—as opposed to Euro re-settler—to indicate a set of *semiotic resources* integral to establishing the positional superiority of the West (racially, culturally, morally and aesthetically) in its imperialist, and settler-colonial discourses (See McKlintock, 1995; Valverde, 1991).

mirrors not only the zeitgeist of post-Red resistance Canada, but reflects her lived experience as well; in her personal life, she had trouble finding a middle space, as she did not belong to any metis community, *per se*. Johnson's mother was English, and her father was Mohawk, by default making her a legal Indian under Canada's 1876 *Indian Act*: an already liminal entity, in both Canadian society and in Canadian law. Further, in Iroquoian societies, kin ties and inheritance—along with the civil, social, and political enfranchisement that they confer—are reckoned through the mother line (Monture-Angus, 1995); as such, Johnson would have not been fully enfranchised according to Mohawk tribal law either, and though her father was chief for a time, she and her family's renowned loyalist partisanship “roused mixed feelings among the people she publicly celebrated as her own” (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 37).¹¹⁷

Seeing Double-Othering

In a process of constructing a sense of social self that incorporates aspects of an abject ‘other’, the metisse auteurs, in their works studied here, contend with several layers of intersecting polemics that (dis)locate them in the discursive landscape of settler-colonialism and Western imperialism generally. The first of these is the sub-binary, White/Indian, a racialized expression of the civ/sav dichotomy. Consistent with the Manichean sensibilities of the West, this sub-binary establishes the boundaries between its socio-cultural core and its periphery. These binaries also serve to ‘double’ the metisse, splitting her into two, polar opposite entities, *ipso facto* eliding any sense of ‘metissage’ in her identity. This sub-binary is one with which all

¹¹⁷ Johnson was not given a Mohawk birth name and possessed none of her own Mohawk regalia. Her assumed name, *Tekahionwake*, was that of her father. See Strong-Boag and Gerson, 2000, p.116).

of these metisse women engage, in various ways, from being complicit in their own obfuscation (either deliberate or unwitting) to labouring to bring their metisse-ness into view.

For example, while there may have been only one Indian Girl in late nineteenth century Canadian fiction, Johnson was often heard to declare of herself that there were two of her (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 9). In fact, Johnson made a career animating this doubleness. Pauline Johnson bisected herself into two entities, White, and Indian, in her stage performances. While the first act was dedicated to her Indian poems, recited while dressed in her Indian costume, the second act featured Johnson in attire suited to a proper young English lady, reciting poetry to match that persona (figure 15).

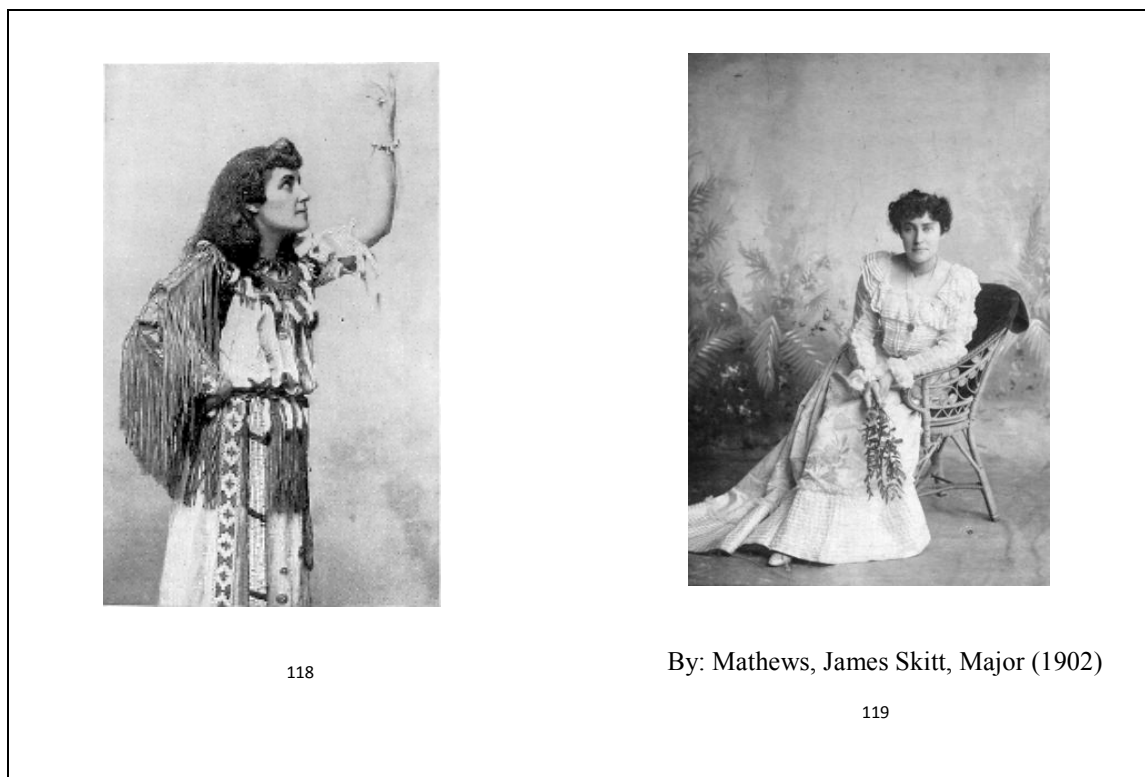


Figure 15: The Doubling of Pauline Johnson

¹¹⁸ By <http://www.humanities.mcmaster.ca/~pjohnson/archive.html>, Public Domain, <https://commons.wikimedia.org/w/index.php?curid=1437957> Retrieved: June 17, 2017, 1: 20 p.m. PT.

¹¹⁹ Vancouver City Archives. AM54-S4-: Port P1633 Retrieved: June 17, 2017, 1:16 p.m. PT.

These dramaturgical choices were just as strategic as they were aesthetic expertly managing re-settler sentiment and sensibility regarding the civ/sav dichotomy, using the vantage of the third eye:

As a part-Native woman developing an independent career in a socio-political world dominated by powerful white men, Johnson developed several performance strategies to exploit the power structure on her own behalf...(one) was to manipulate her audience through use of costume... the sequence of (which) refrained from posing any threat to the prevailing hegemony by showing the ‘wild’ Indian, sexually alluring with visible ankles and loose long hair, replaced by the cultivated European in chignon and corset. (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 113.)

And yet Johnson, obviously cognizant of which of her stage personas drew the crowds, declared, “never let anyone call me a white woman” (quoted in Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, 4). So strongly was Johnson identified as an Indian by the Canadian public that an article run by the *Vancouver Province* at the time of her death reported that “Through a great many of her works runs a thread of savagery that betrayed her origin. In spite of her English mother she was Indian to the core” (cited in Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 113). In reality, a simple content analysis of her published poetry reveals that those works that addressed Indian subject matter comprised only a small portion of their sum total (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, 115). In her off-stage persona, Johnson carried herself as one to the manor born, as observed by staff attending to Johnson’s ironing: “(s)he was not quite as primitive as she pretended. Or, to put it more charitably, she was not as elemental as her audiences liked to think her. She was, in one way, quite patrician in mind and spirit” (Stringer, quoted in Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 70).

Ironically, it was this, Johnson's 'backstage' White persona that troubled the Euro settler public. These audiences readily accepted her Indian Princess persona, which Johnson expertly mimicked from observing settler-colonial images of their beloved Imaginary Indians, her performativity recapitulating the pan-Indian female of which she so bitterly complains in "A Strong Race Opinion" (1892), as opposed to any authentic, culturally specific representation of her Mohawk relatives. Johnson's iconic costume, later promoted as 'correct', in reality made no effort to replicate the actual clothing of any specific Native group" (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 110). Rather, her outfit was purely a tactical, sartorial choice made only after her first



Figure 16: Pauline Johnson's Indian Costume

year on the recital circuit; "unlike her father and brothers...Johnson did not possess distinctive Native garments or ornaments of her own. Although many of the items she acquired were in fact genuine, and were gifted to her by various individuals, including a hunting knife from her father, a necklace of bear claws from Thomas Seaton, and a Sioux scalp from a Blackfoot chief, the bulk of the costume, according to Johnson's sister, was "copied from a picture we had of Minnehaha" (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p. 110).

Scholars still debate whether or not, or to what extent, Johnson's work either mimicked or mocked the invented identity ascribed to her by the colonial imagination. Certainly, her literary and dramaturgical choices were informed and circumscribed by the expectations of her nineteenth-century audiences, who were steeped in imperialist fantasies; we see evidence of Johnson's ambivalence to these fantasies when she uses her work to challenge imperialist understandings of the relationship between the colonizer and the colonized (Crosby, 1991; Francis, 1992; LaRocque, 2010). At the end of the day, "Whatever Johnson thought of the complexities of her personal situation as a Mixed-race woman she knew how to play to settler audience' expectations of state Indians" Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, pp. 110-111).

Although separated in time by a century, contemporary poetess Marilyn Dumont also finds herself, of necessity, grappling with the White/Indian binary—and by extension, the civ/sav dichotomy—but lacking Johnson's cultural capital and light-skinned privilege, her experience of metissage stands in stark contrast to that of Johnson, whose upbringing was much more charmed by comparison. In the following excerpt from her poem, "The Red & White" (1996, p. 17) the bestialization common to images of the halfbreed girl evokes a cachet far less glamorous than that of Johnson's apparel of fine furs and textiles, the extrusion of the Dumont children's incorrigible bone and hide belying an inevitable, underlying, and emphatically ignoble savagery:

god knows Mary tried
to keep us clean and fed, respectable, but
all the bleach and soup bones
in the Red & White couldn't keep our
halfbreed hides from showing through

Throughout her anthology of poetry, *A Really Good Brown Girl* (1996), Dumont's Metis identity is first and foremost but, like Johnson, she finds herself having to parse out an ethnically distinct identity from that of the dominant Euro re-settler culture, its Imaginary Indian, status Indians, and non-status Indigenous people.

One constant remains, however: for all her childhood longings, she can never be mistaken for anything other than other due to her noticeably dark skin, hair and eyes—a fact that is made clear to her in her very first year of public school when she is singled out by a classmate for being “ever brown!” precipitating the dreaded inquiry, “are you an Indian?” (Dumont, 1996, p. 15). The child-Dumont, withering under this “racially charged glance” (Dubois, cited in Tobing-Rony, 1996, p. 4), perceives both the doubling of her consciousness as well as the larger social processes that create this internal splitting. This third eye experience grants her “a clarity of vision” (Tobing-Rony, 1996, p. 4) in which she sees two choiceless choices: either to deny her ethnicity now, only to be caught out later, inevitably, as a liar, or admit to it and be ostracized right from the start.

Dumont chooses to lie, despite knowing it will only lead her to be doubly reviled, because this is the only choice that allows her a period of grace in which she will not be outwardly marked and socially abjected as the racialized other that she has already internalized as part of herself. At first, as a child and adolescent, Dumont experiences the same-other effect, in which her shame is projected onto a generalized, colonized other. As an adult, her shame is followed by another, distinctly different process: an insight that leads the colonized to feel “shame about being ashamed” (LaRocque, 2010, p. 121), yet another form of emotional violence that follows Dumont's childhood disavowal of her ancestry in “Squaw Poems”. This insight,

along with the sense of shame that is doubled by it, exemplifies one aspect of the process of social identity formation that I refer to as the other/self.

Internalization: Dueling Dualities

Recall that prime among Pauline Johnson's objections to the myriad fictions featuring an Indian Girl character, is there appears to be only one of her: a monolithic, generic Indian lacking any socio-cultural specificity:

The term "Indian" signifies about as much as the term "European," but I cannot recall ever having read a story where the heroine was described as "a European." The Indian girl we meet in cold type, however, is rarely distressed by having to belong to any tribe, or to reflect any band existing between the Mic Macs of Gaspé and the Kwaw-Kewlths of British Columbia. (Johnson, 1892, p. 1)

In spite of Pauline Johnson's "Strong Race Opinion" regarding Canadian fiction's ubiquitous Indian Girl, it is clear that Johnson herself exploits this reductive image in her performances. Moreover, in addition to erasing any ethnic, cultural, and social diversity among Indigenous female characters, Johnson's pan-Indian performances obliterate the varied, socio-cultural specificities of Canada's metisses. These, and other performative aspects of Johnson's work, both reflect and reinforce the White/Indian binary, and by extension, the civ/sav dichotomy, subsequently eliding her identity as a contemporary, living, mixed-blood (a danger to settler-

colonialism) and reinforcing that of the anachronistic Indian (safely vanished into the past), until over time, the latter role inflected her public identity.

It appears that neither the halfbreed girl nor the actual metisse can outrun her reputation, as it also becomes part of an internal dialogue of the colonized, infecting individuals, families and communities, manifesting itself as both internal and external conflict, ultimately expressing itself as internalized and/or lateral violence on emotional, psychological, and physical levels (Fanon, 1963; Memmi, 1967; Van Kirk, 1985). Although the colonized other may well indeed experience angst and cognitive dissonance in settler-colonial society, this state is a result of internalizing colonial conditioning rather than some imagined, lingering inherent quality (Fanon, 1963; Memmi, 1967). Continued elision of metisses for the past century and a half continues to be internalized and promulgated up to the present. Settler-colonial pop culture images of the halfbreed girl represent an ongoing, external dialogue with which metisse auteurs engage internally. This inner dialectic of the other/self can be found in the works examined here, in which metisse auteurs, aware of settler-colonialism's reproving gaze, are able to recognize the falsity of its imagery and to perceive the imperialist and colonialist exigencies of the imagery's construction, and yet incorporate these representations, in whole or in part, into their social identities nonetheless, albeit in uneven, unpredictable, and unstable ways.

For Dumont, the racially charged glance of the settler-colonial, signified other is an ever-present entity in her head, judging her and her people as unworthy: *"You are not good enough, not good enough, obviously not good enough. The chorus is never loud or conspicuous, just there"* (1996, p.13. Italics in original). This critical refrain later becomes the focus of the chapter, *White Noise*, in which Dumont explores her relationship to settler-colonial society and how to negotiate her identity as metisse amid the ambient white noise of its social constructs

about Indigenous people(s). In her work, Dumont reflects upon how the White/Indian binary, and its parent, the civ/sav dichotomy, constitute part of the white noise, persistent and pervasive, that tends to drown out the voices of those who fail to fall neatly on one side or the other of the White/Indian binary.

In *Circle the Wagons*, she muses,

I feel compelled to incorporate something circular into the text, plot, or narrative structure because if it's linear then that proves that I'm a ghost and that native culture really has vanished... There are times when I feel that if I don't have a circle or the number four or legend in my poetry, I am lost, just a fading urban Indian caught in all the trappings of Doc Martens, cappuccinos and foreign films but here it is again orbiting, lunar, hoops encompassing your thoughts and canonizing mine, there it is again, circle the wagons. (p. 57)

Invoking the hackneyed trope common to Hollywood westerns, the title of the poem exposes the disingenuously inclusive, circle motif favoured by New Age discourse as just another binary: you are either in or out. Venn-like overlaps are forbidden. Either one is authentically Indian, or one is not, and since Dumont's phenotype marks her indelibly as the brown other, the settler-colonial draws its wagons in a circle to exclude those that fail to conform to the traits of its Imaginary Indian. Evidently, Dumont's expressions of metissage do not fit well into the trendy 1990s paradigm, which, despite its claim to embrace the traditional knowledges of Indigenous peoples, in reality continues to silence Indigenous voices through neo-colonial textual

conventions that mimic Indigenous cultural forms—all the while reproducing models of White, heteronormative womanhood as feminist and/or anti-colonial discourse.¹²⁰

The logical fallacy of this either/or proposition has been internalized by many Indigenous people as well, creating lateral racism between status and non-status, full-blood and halfbreed. In *Leather and Naugahyde*, Dumont documents a “racially charged” glance that once again (dis)locates her on the White/Indian binary—this time, her European ancestry marking and alienating her as other:

So, I’m having coffee with this treaty guy from up north and we’re laughing at how crazy ‘the mooniyaw’ are in the city and the conversation comes around to where I’m from, as it does in underground languages, in the oblique way it does to find out someone’s status without actually asking, and knowing this, I say I’m Metis like it’s an apology and he says, ‘mmh,’ like he forgives me, like he’s got a big heart and mine’s pumping diluted blood and his voice has sounded well-fed up till this point, but now it goes thin like he’s across the room taking another look and when he returns he’s got ‘this look,’ that says he’s leather and I’m naugahyde (Dumont, 1996, p. 58).

In other words, this treaty guy sees Dumont as a cheap imitation of the real thing—a synthetic product of Western technology and industry.

In an interview in which she explains her *Cyborg Hybrid* collections (2006) Canadian visual artist, K.C. Adams unwittingly overlooks her metisse-ness, as well as internalizing

¹²⁰ For an example of new age, feminist, Indigenous discourse that crossed over into popular in the 1990s, see Laguna scholar, Paula Gunn Allen’s (1992), *The Sacred Hoop: Recovering the Feminine in American Indian Traditions*. Boston: Beacon Press. This text is part of a literary movement during this era to rematriate and reproduce the ‘tradition’ of the ‘sacred feminine’ in Indigenous writing and cultural practice.

outdated and reductive (Euro settler-colonial) stereotypes regarding the same when she uses the term, “Euro-Aboriginal”, as opposed to metis, as a self-referent, feeling that the latter “incorrectly describes her aboriginal/Scottish heritage, and...at the same time it undermines the general understanding of the word ‘Metis,’ to mean a person of French Canadian/aboriginal heritage” (Eyland 2017).¹²¹ First, this hyphenation gives primacy to the European identity, rendering Indigeneity secondary. Second, this term is a further abjection of metissage by circumscribing its membership to only those people(s) of Indigenous/French ancestry, rather than recognizing and acknowledging the complicated and ethnically heterogeneous ancestries—including the Scots—of Canada’s Red River Metis that set them apart as a separate and distinct people (St.Onge & Podruchny, 2012).

Speaking to her work, *White Squaw* (2016), American visual artist, Wendy Red Star, also wrestles with settler-colonial popular wisdom regarding Indigenous/Euro racial hybridity and issues of racial authenticity. Red Star, who describes herself as “half Crow half White,” grew up on a Crow reserve, pointing to this experience as the most salient factor in determining her ethnic identity, which she describes as akin to that of her Crow father, rather than that of her ethno-Irish mother.¹²² Red Star’s ambivalence to the designation halfbreed is evident in her initial assertion that she never experienced it as a derogatory term until she left the reserve—yet later in the interview she admits that she indeed “struggled with it, for sure... (with) feelings of not being valid, or someone questioning my identity.” Acknowledging an experience of the same-other complex, Red Star recalls that, in fact, she wanted to dissociate herself from the public

¹²¹ From, <https://www.umanitoba.ca/schools/art/content/galleryoneoneoneone/kc02.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:18 p.m. PT.

¹²² From *Art Beat* podcast interview. <http://www.brokenboxespodcast.com/podcast/2014/11/5/episode-19-interview-with-wendy-red-star> Retrieved: July 14, 2017, 11:06 m. PT.

embarrassment of her Euro re-settler grandparents, who, like the adult Dumont in *Leather and Naugahyde* (1996), are the abjected part of the self in Indigenous social contexts.

When measuring themselves against European standards of feminine beauty and virtue as opposed to those ascribed to the halfbreed girl, responses range from internalization, exemplified in Marilyn Dumont's childhood gender insecurities and anguished desire to conform in her anthology of poems, *Memoirs of a Really Good Brown Girl* (1996), to Andrea Menard's sense of ease and complementarity negotiating the same in "A Pinch to Grow an Inch" (2002, Track 17). Dumont and Menard take a retrospective approach to considering the role of mimesis in the formation of their ethnic and gender identities as the other/self. The adult metisses recount their journeys as they come of age in a patriarchal, heteronormative, settler-colonial society, observing their younger selves as they struggle with the assimilative forces of cultural imperialism and psychological warfare as embodied in the images that represent them as the half-breed girl.

For the child Dumont in "Squaw Poems," successful mimicry of the dominant culture's prescriptions for performing Whiteness are tantamount to respectability:

I am looking at a school picture, grade five, I am smiling easily. My hair is shoulder length, curled, a page-boy, I am wearing a royal blue dress. Look poised, settled like I belong. I won an award that year for most improved student. I learned to follow really well (Dumont, 1996, p. 15).

For all of her sincere attempts at mimesis, however, Dumont could never truly appear to belong, remembering, "my skin always gave me away" (1996, p. 14), inevitably leading to a different sort regression: the racially marked glance that alienates her as other.

Later, the adult Dumont questions the point of attempting to mimic heteronormative, female whiteness only to perform a poor half-breed girl's version of it in "Blue Ribbon Children":

I was supposed to be married, a wife
 who cooked large pots of potatoes,
 chunks of steaming meat and
 slabs of brown crusty bannock.

(1996, p. 21).

Here, mimicry makes a mockery out of the Metisse and her family, her productive and reproductive labour hijacked in service to producing a poor facsimile of the Canadian (Euro re-settler) family ideal—a product to be offered up for the consumption and evaluation of the ever-present chorus that we see in the poem, "White Judges," who represent Dumont's signified other:

I was supposed to balance children like
 bags of flour on my hip,
 lift them in and out of
 bathtubs, lather them
 like butterballs, pack them safely
 away in bed, then stuff them
 into patched clothes for morning, and
 feed them porridge as though
 they were being fattened up
 for prizes at a fair, blue ribbon children

(Dumont, 1996, p. 21)

In “Squaw Poems”, the adult Dumont reflects upon her adolescent self who internalizes racist and misogynistic messages about Indigenous women whose sexuality is located emphatically at the intersection of squaw and whore: “Indian women know all too well the power of the word squaw...As a young girl, I held the image of that woman in my mind and she became the measure of what I should never be” (Dumont, 1996, p. 18).

I learned that I should never be seen drunk in public, nor should I dress provocatively, because these would be irrefutable signs. So as a teenager, I avoided red lipstick, never wore my skirts too short or too tight, never shoes that looked the least ‘hooker-like’. I never moved in ways that might be interpreted as loose. Instead, I’d be so god-damned respectable that white people would feel slovenly in my presence. (1996, p. 19.)

Dumont’s pubescent self internalizes the compounded and intersectional binaries, Princess/squaw and Madonna/whore, exhibiting the same-other complex (LaRocque, 2010). The abjection of those sexual qualities attributed to the squaw—and as we have seen, to the halfbreed girl as well—is evident in the choices that the adolescent Dumont makes about the gendered presentation of her raced social self as she recalls, “I could react naturally, spontaneously to my puberty, my newly discovered sexuality or I could be mindful of the squaw whose presence hounded my every choice” (p. 19).

The adolescent Dumont’s pursuit of what Jean Rhys identifies as “aggressive respectability” (cited in Dumont, 1996, p. 19) is a hostile aversion to pervasive images in settler-colonial pop culture of the halfbreed girl as sexually provocative and promiscuous. In fact, Dumont’s description of what she internalized as loose behaviour and mode of dress strongly

resembles Margaret Laurence's portrayal of her Metisse character, Piquette Tonnerre, whose sad mimicry of White women's fashion—in the Euro-settler judgement of narrator, Vanessa—does nothing but make her look tawdry, cheap, and very much hooker-like, especially set against the garish coloured lights and glass of the jukebox, surrounded by a throng of libidinous (and no doubt hopeful) boys. For Dumont, as in Laurence's image of the fictive Piquette, wearing high heels is a sign of impropriety (read: impurity): avoiding them might not be exactly emancipatory, but this is an either/or choice for her—either she performs the trampy halfbreed girl, adding to her own oppression, or not.

Andrea Menard explores the process and consequences of assimilating such stereotypes as she traces the journey of her Metisse heroine's sexuality from ingénue to vamp in the video production of her one-woman musical play, *The Velvet Devil* (Bauman, 2006).¹²³ Set in 1930s Manitoba, the plot follows the journey of a young Metisse, Velvet, who leaves her family, her rural community, and her Metis sweetheart for Winnipeg to pursue dreams of becoming a jazz diva—a dream she actualizes, but not without unforeseen, and sometimes regrettable, consequences.

Menard's heroine hardly conforms to the dominant culture's standards of beauty and sex appeal, at first, as she appears in her authentic incarnation as the simple country Metisse (figure 17, top left): a persona that is quickly discarded in favour of one deemed more glamorous (figure 17, right). In track 8, "Looking For a Mate", Menard's heroine sings of her lonely heart, while in track 3, "If I Were a Man", she imagines herself as a (Euro re-settler) man in order to better grasp her lovelorn situation, singing, "If I were a man, I'd like to meet somebody like me."

¹²³ The original, theatrical version was produced in 1998; the soundtrack was released in 2002. A televised production of *The Velvet Devil* was aired on CBC's program, 'Opening Night', in 2008.



Figure 17: From Velvet to Devil

The heroine's animation of the sort of (Euro re-settler) male she would like to be reflects a rather unflattering image of settler-colonial patriarchy, along with the sort of systemic discrimination, chauvinism, and misogyny that she has encountered so far:

If I were I man, I'd grow a moustache
 And make all my ladies wear high heels
 I would be the leader in every dance there is
 Every stubborn dancing queen would follow me.

¹²⁴ Images from <http://www.andreamenard.com/velvetdevil.html>. Retrieved: July 6, 2016, 11:27 a.m. PT.

If I were a man, I could do anything
 Anything that I desired
 I'd be the "man" in mankind
 And the universal "he"
 I'd never go out on a limb because I'd be the tree
 If I were a man, I'd be in the boy's club
 I would be so masculine
 I'd conquer all the ladies
 With force or gallantry
 I'd hold you in my arms just so that you could hold me

Laid bare in these lyrics is the Eurocentric assumption that the Euro male is the universal object of desire, especially for the colonized other, personified by the halfbreed girl's fetish for and brazen pursuit of them. After all, a significant part of the White man's burden is "saving brown women from brown men" (Spivak, 1988), while at the same time, using his positional superiority to dominate "every stubborn dancing queen."

It appears to Velvet that marrying a Euro re-settler man—even if it makes him a squaw man—means getting next to the sort of social power, privilege, and prestige that she, the raced and gendered other, is denied. For Menard's heroine, Velvet, mimicking certain aspects of Whiteness is a means to celebrity—which does not necessarily entail traditional notions of social or sexual respectability, or even authenticity, as exemplified in track 7, "It's In The Bag", marking her transformation from Velvet to Devil (figure 17). Ascending to such rarified heights is not achieved without great cost, however. In track 14, Halfbreed Blues, Velvet regrets how "she left her soul in her loved one's hands/and I turned my back and walked away," so that she

can transcend what she perceives to be the circumspect parameters of her country life, re-locate to the city, and “walk on the street where the people are free.” The price of this freedom, however, is to eschew her Metisse-ness in favour of a self that does not include this other: a response she regrets in a third eye experience, feeling shame about feeling ashamed.

These feelings do not deter Velvet’s ambition to achieve the hallmarks of success. Evidently, the talent for simulating a contented Euro-femininity (as opposed to a sincere expression of it) is all that is required to satisfy Euro settler-colonial patriarchy, as exemplified in the lyrics to, “It’s in the Bag” (track 7): “you need a woman who fakes it, a woman who lies/A woman who hides her pain in big, fat smiles.” The aspiring diva goes on to promise her future, Euro re-settler manager/lover/abuser that she can mimic a sort of femininity that will please him and settler-colonial audiences alike:

I can wear make-up.

I can shave my underarms.

I can cross my long and lovely legs

I can win you with my charms! (pause) Charms!

Velvet takes bald inventory of her physical assets during an audition, selling not only her voice, but also her sex appeal as defined by the heteronormative patriarchal Euro re-settler society. She points out that she has a voice, “bigger than her ass”, “breasts bigger than her waist” (“Look at this! Look at these!”), and “long, lovely legs”—not to mention her seductive charms (as she chuckles to herself knowingly, amused at herself for her clever use of this euphemism) she assures the director that, like the models in *Cosmopolitan* and *Vogue*, she’ll never grow old; she “can do it—I can do it! It’s in the bag...”

These sentiments echo those of Pauline Johnson, who, like Menard's Velvet, was "wise in the ways of audiences" and "treasured good looks" (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p.99). Johnson laments, "I lose every time people undertake to estimate when I was born. You see when a woman depends upon the public for her bread and butter *she must not get old*" (italics in original. Pauline Johnson, quoted in Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p.98). Indeed, note Strong-Boag and Gerson, "New Women, not to mention supposed Indian princesses, were most likely to win a hearing when they were beautiful" (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p.99).

Surpassing racist, and heteronormative gender binaries altogether is the object of KC Adams's work, exemplified here by her *Cyborg Hybrid* series of photographic collections that represent an

investigation of the relationship between nature (the living) and technology (progress)...The *Cyborg Hybrids* are digital prints of Euro-Aboriginal artists who are forward thinkers and plugged in with technology. They follow the doctrine of Donna Haraway's "Cyborg Manifesto," which states that a cyborg is a creature in a technological, post-gender world free of traditional western stereotypes towards race and gender. (Adams, cited in Eyland 2017).¹²⁵

In these works, Adams means to reject race and gender boundaries altogether in a Marxian transcendence presumably made possible by the technological revolution of the twenty-first century. A companion collection to this digital portrait series, the accessories designed by KC Adams for said Cyborg Hybrids juxtapose traditional forms of Indigenous women's artistry and

¹²⁵ From, <https://www.umanitoba.ca/schools/art/content/galleryoneoneone/kc02.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:18 p.m. PT.

labour with contemporary technology in an attempt to disrupt, disturb, and challenge conventional notions of White/Indian, and more broadly, civilization and savagery. The accessories are clearly in forms identifiable as Indigenous in the fur-cuffed mitts and bone choker and the unmistakably Metis-style beadwork that adorns the ipod case, but are clearly contemporary in their style, as well as their use of or purpose for contemporary technology widely used by industrialized, urbanized (civilized) societies. These accessories might also be interpreted as resistance to the highly stylized Imaginary Indian outfits popular to the cosplay of rave culture, their monochromatic white aesthetic, so prevalent in this party scene, fluorescing ultra-violet under black lights.¹²⁶

In another photographic collection, *Cyborg Hybrid Spaces* (figure 18) KC Adams envisions an ideal living environment that strongly resembles the sets in Jack Grossman's (producer) and Woody Allen's (director) 1973 film, *Sleeper*.¹²⁷ Rendered in a minimalist 1970s mod style, Adams's imagined, ideal habitat for the contemporary cyborg hybrid is linear, uniform in its sterile and austere monochrome palette consisting of white walls, window treatments, carpeting, furniture, linens, and cabinetry—even the canvases on the walls are white, perhaps representing a millennial blank slate upon which the modern hybrid may paint their own portrait.

Although her work is intended to be emancipatory, Adams herself internalizes the civ/sav dichotomy by reiterating its cleavage between nature, which she describes as “the living,” and

¹²⁶ Link to images: <http://www.kcadams.net/Exhibitions.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:11 p.m. PT.

¹²⁷ United Artists, U.S.A.

technology which she describes as “progress.” Moreover, who is keeping all these whites “whiter than white”?¹²⁸ The upkeep of white fabrics and surfaces is labour intensive: hidden and



Figure 18: *Cyborg Hybrid Living Spaces* (Adams, 2006)

129

low-paid labour most often performed by Indigenous women and other women of colour. Consequently, in colonial contexts, the conspicuous curation of white fashions for the home and person often signal the wealth and leisure of its consumers (McKlintock, 1995; Stoler, 1996). Given these considerations, Adams’s vision of the Cyborg Hybrid lifeway represents an ambiguous response to settler-colonial pop-culture images of the halfbreed girl: while she rejects eurocentric social and behavioural norms prescribed to her gender and racial hybridity in her home territory, Adams simultaneously lends tacit support for the global economy that relies upon the systemic class and gender discrimination of Indigenous people(s) elsewhere.

¹²⁸ A jingle from an advertisement for Clorox bleach.

¹²⁹ From, <http://www.kcadams.net/Exhibitions.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:11 p.m. PT.

Distinguishing between colonial and subversive mimicry, Dee Horne describes the latter being as a process in which

the colonial mimic imitates *to become like* another while in subversive modes...the mimic imitates *to critique* another. While the colonial mimic imitates colonizers in an effort to access, take on, their power, the subversive mimic engages in partial repetitions of colonial discourse to contest its authority. (italics added. Cited in LaRocque, 2010, p. 122.)

Initially, what might appear to be resistance through mimetic performance may not be so subversive after all.

Resistance: A Curious Hybrid

The half-breed girl has long resisted her erasure, defamation and stereotyping. Pauline Johnson's nineteenth-century indictment of a two-dimensional figure designed as a foil and object lesson was just the beginning. Indeed, one's postcolonial sensibilities might be slightly assuaged by the following resistance mounted by Indigenous people themselves: "As a group, moviemakers so thoroughly abused the Indians, and so early, that in 1911 representatives of four western tribes journeyed to the national capital to protest their screen treatment to Congress and to President ...Taft" (Stedman, 1982, p. 157). However, as Pierre Berton lamented, when it came to the filmic defamation of mixed blood people(s) and specifically the Metis, "alas, they had no pressure groups to resist it" (1975, p.100). More recently, metisse writers, visual artists, poets, performers, and storytellers are using their own rhetorical tricks to upend the Euro-settler paradigm. Actualizing the worst fears of settler-colonial society concerning its ambivalent desire

for the mimesis of the colonized, mirroring the worst of the West rather than what it perceives as its best, seems to be a trend among contemporary metisse auteurs.

These dual processes—the awareness of the external, social abjection of the metisse in settler-colonial pop culture discourse, as well as that of an internal formation of the other/self, are clearly reflected in the works examined in this study. Images of the halfbreed girl are indeed absorbed by them, but what they do with them is complex and variable. The works studied here alternately, sequentially and/or simultaneously assimilate, eliminate and transform images of the halfbreed girl and/or elements of her—even recuperating and/or rematriating them—as the metisses negotiate their gender and ethnic identities, incorporating responses to this stereotype into their own embodiments of metisse-ness.

The notion that the formation of ethnic/gender identity operates, in part, at the subconscious level is a compelling enough reason for scholarly inquiry, but it is the more cognizant aspects of this process that interest me most. One form of resisting or challenging the master colonial narrative is to appropriate the encoded messages of the dominant culture and re-code them altogether, manipulating them in such a way so as to compose a completely new, even subversive, message (Brennen, 2012)—an exercise in heuristics that holds the potential to create new spaces for subaltern narratives (Dunbar, 2008; Huyssen, 2000; Ulmer, 1989).

In her work on identity formation among Canada's Metis, Cathy Richardson observes that "(r)elations of unequal power serve as foundational influences negotiated by Metis individuals in the creation of 'the sense of Metis self'" (2006, p. 57). Richardson considers their conscious attitudes and behaviours to be tactical responses to colonization, chosen by "sentient, 'responding' agents, rather than...[the reactions of] passive by-standers" (Wade, cited

in Richardson, p. 58) in their own socialization and assimilation. In examining the responses of Metis to various modalities of settler-colonial oppression, Richardson finds that “(r)esponse-based understandings of human behaviour offer important insights into the social and interactive processes of Metis identity creation in a climate of social oppression and violence” (p. 77).

Perhaps more importantly, Richardson also finds that, “alongside each history of violence and oppression, there runs a parallel history of prudent, creative, and determined resistance” (Wade, 1997, cited in Richardson, 2006, p. 58).

These abstract operations are made possible by the vantage point of the third eye, marking and making visible those interstitial spaces in colonial societies to which postcolonial theorist, Homi Bhabha, refers (1994). According to Bhabha, these conceptual spaces are generated in the very act of othering (1983), manifest in the expanse between the reflection in the settler-colonial looking-glass and that which is being reflected. It is in this gap that metisses engage with distorted and or fabricated images, both robust and vestigial, of the halfbreed girl—as well as with her conspicuous absences—to form a raced and gendered sense of self that I call the other/self.

We see this process in the works of Pauline Johnson studied here. For example, Johnson's (1892) “A Strong Race Opinion” is really as much a complaint against prevailing anti-miscegenation discourse as it is a critique of stereotypes in the fiction of her day, in which the predictable demise of the Indian Girl is used as a gratuitous plot device that neatly pre-empts any possibility of miscegenation and/or hybrid offspring:

The hardest fortune that the Indian girl of fiction meets with is the inevitable doom that shadows her love affairs. She is always desperately in love with the young white

hero, who in turn is grateful to her for services rendered the garrison in general and himself in particular during red days of war... she is so much wrapped up in him that she is treacherous to her own people, tells falsehoods to her father and the other chiefs of her tribe, and otherwise makes herself detestable and dishonourable. Of course, this white hero never marries her! Will some critic who understands human nature, and particularly the nature of authors, please tell the reading public why marriage with the Indian girl is so despised in books and so general in real life? (p. 3)

If not in life, in her fiction Johnson did attempt to engage with and animate (if not inhabit) the in-between space of metissage, following her critique, “A Strong Race Opinion” (1892) with the short fiction, *A Red Girl’s Reasoning* (1893). In this narrative, Johnson addresses issues of miscegenation and socio-cultural specificity in her rendering of the halfbreed heroine, Christine, a newly-wed country wife married into Red River’s Euro re-settler bourgeoisie. She also challenges what were then prevailing settler-colonial attitudes toward the viability of such marriages, when the mixed-race union in her narrative fails—not because of the incommensurability of the civilized and the savage, but because the marriage cannot withstand the ambient racism of settler-colonial Canadian society.

Johnson revisits this theme two decades later in *As it Was in the Beginning* (1913), but with much more pessimism. This time her Metisse heroine, Esther, is driven by her circumstances—not to the suicidal mania afflicting the eponymous Indian Girl of Johnson’s critique, but to the homicidal mania typical of the halfbreed girl that settler-colonials come to know and love/hate in the following years, poisoning her pretty, emphatically Aryan, but

faithless—and ultimately racist—fiancée. Read one way, Johnson's character Ester operates as what Bhabha (1994) describes as a site of interstitial resistance. A tale of colonial gothic, it represents Johnson's last, understandably bitter, retort to the unfair treatment of the metisse in popular Canadian fiction, namely, her imagined savagery, as well as her misfortune in love. Esther, the last Metisse Johnson creates, is a vindictive and jealous murderess, poisoning the lover who spurns her. In an attempt to deflect the otherwise automatic attribution of Esther's violence to her race, Johnson invokes the European adage, "hell hath no fury like a woman scorned", attributing her crime instead to the innate venality of her gender.

When read another way, these works are disquieting in that they represent glaring contradictions to Johnson's original lament about the treatment of the fictive Indian Girl and her doomed romances. Why do Johnson's Metisse characters never transcend this narrative boundary? The answer lies in the sensibilities of the settler-colonial Canada, in which the civ/sav dichotomy and the White/Indian binary along with it, have as much to do with class as they do with race. Through expository narrative, Johnson elucidates the predicament of her Metisse characters, who, once removed from their own cultural context, possess little or nothing of the cultural or economic capital they would need to marry successfully into Canada's Euro settler-colonial society.¹³⁰ Given the class hierarchies inherent to her settler-colonial audience, along with its exigencies and constraints, there are only so many places that Johnson's Metisse characters can go within these imposed frameworks. The title of Johnson's short fiction, As it

¹³⁰ The term, "cultural capital" comes from Bordieu P. *The Inheritors*. (1979) U.S.A.: U of Chicago P. In this work, sociologist Pierre Bordieu differentiates 'cultural capital' as social assets as opposed to real property, although these assets are often derived from, or linked to, wealth in real property. These social assets, or the absence of them, can maintain, promote, or inhibit social mobility in a stratified society. Examples of social assets include, but are not limited to, such behaviours as mode of dress, speech, level of education, and command of the elite's etiquette. Colloquially, individuals who display such attributes are described as "having 'class' or 'being 'classy'". Access to the social and commercial networks of the elite are critical social assets.

Was in the Beginning (1913) points to this rhetorical boundary, being in fact a doxology—adopted by the Anglican church as its creed—its invocation followed by the rejoinder, “and ever shall be.” This incantation would have been strongly familiar to Johnson’s European and Euro, re-settler audiences at the time (Strong-Boag & Gerson, 2000, p.22), representing, in this narrative context, modern colonialism’s internal repudiation, uttered by the abject other.

Nearly a century later, we find Andrea Menard, Metisse entertainer, similarly speaking back to the fantasies of empire in the musical score of her play, *The Velvet Devil*, in which her Metisse protagonist, Velvet, leaves her Metis sweetheart to find exploitation, abuse and ruin at the hands of her Euro re-settler Svengali-esque manager, as well as in Canada’s patriarchal society at large. Menard attempts to recuperate and rematriate aspects of the stereotypic halfbreed girl (2002), at times suffering, internalizing, and mimicking aspects of her, while at times exploiting and transmuting the misogynistic, heteronormative, patriarchal gender roles and sexual expectations attached to that image. Menard finds her mode of resistance in a fusion that allows her metissage to take the limelight, softening and blending the edges of the binaries that seek to abject her in her lyrics, her portrayal of her protagonist, the work’s title, and its narrative arc.¹³¹

In track 17, “A Pinch to Grow an Inch”, Menard works to reconcile and rematriate images of both the Madonna and the whore, fusing them into one entity. Like popular images of

¹³¹ “In George du Maurier’s 1894 novel *Trilby*, a young artist’s model named Trilby O’Ferrall falls under the spell of Svengali, a villainous musician and hypnotist. Svengali trains Trilby’s voice through hypnosis and transforms her into a singing star, subjugating her completely in the process. Svengali’s maleficent powers of persuasion made such an impression on the reading public that by 1919 his name was being used generically as a term for any wickedly manipulative individual.” From, <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/Svengali>. Retrieved: Dec. 4, 2018, 1:30 p.m. PT.

the halfbreed girl Velvet vacillates somewhere between the poles but, unlike her, she never goes to extremes:

I'm a scream, I'm a hoot
 I'd go to my death in my birthday suit
 I'm "A Pinch to Grow an Inch"
 I'm little bit lady and a little bit wench
 I am fine wine and a bottle of brew
 I'll have my cake and I'll eat it too
 I'm a bump and I'm a grind
 I'm made of muscle but I use my mind

Although Menard incorporates some of the more colourful aspects of the stereotypical halfbreed girl into the characterization of Velvet, the diva is able to keep her head about her, lacking the innate mental and emotional instability imagined to be characteristic of the halfbreed girl, the lyrics continuing: "I'm in trouble"—you'll never hear me say/I'm much too cautious/I never lose my way."

To her credit, Velvet does indeed find her way, but not without internalizing Eurocentric, heteronormative standards of beauty, behaviour and mode of appearance, while calculating its performativity as a site of power through which she can access wealth, celebrity, and freedom. For Menard's character, Velvet, high heels represent both a symbol of patriarchal power and site of female oppression in track 3, "If I Were a Man"("I'd make all my ladies wear high heels") as well as an unstable platform for her ethnic and gender emancipation in "Halfbreed Blues" (track 14). In this track Velvet sings, "with my head held high in my high-heeled shoes, I could yell

and scream and make my noise,” equating freedom with both urbanization and patriarchal, heteronormative performativity—a premise, among others, that she begins to question by the end of the song:

Damn rights I’m free.

Of course I’m free.

Oh yeah I’m free.

I think I’m free.

I hope I’m free.

Oh, please, let me be free.

In the show’s title track, Menard recuperates popular images of the halfbreed girl as an abject figure, re-imagining, re-defining, and re-positioning Velvet instead as an alpha female who, re-emerging after a long period of exile, is now to be given her due:

The Velvet Devil's awakening,

And crawling out of her cage.

No more house-broken hound dog.

The she-wolf’s found her stage.

The stereotype of the halfbreed girl—characterized by Menard as that of a nondescript “house-broken hound dog”—is given new life in this track, breaking free from its captivity as the domesticated, servile creature of settler-colonial yore. Evoking familiar pop-culture motifs of the lone wolf so often associated with the halfbreed (Malchow, 1996), the image of Menard’s she-wolf brings to mind that of DeMille’s Louvette Corbeau (figure, 6) as she poses seductively beneath the shadow of a wolf (read: husky dog). Menard rematriates this image, wresting it away

from its connotations of savage, ignoble bestiality to re-envision Velvet as an elemental, pagan deity to be worshipped:

If she howls at the moon

Fall on your knees

Venerate, celebrate, revere her name

She will let you be her shadow

Pairing the image of the Devil with that of the plush opulence of velvet, Menard recuperates demonic connotations typically associated with images of the halfbreed girl, softening and refining it, transmuting it into the sacred:

She is a devil, she is velvet

She is sacrosanct, a mystery

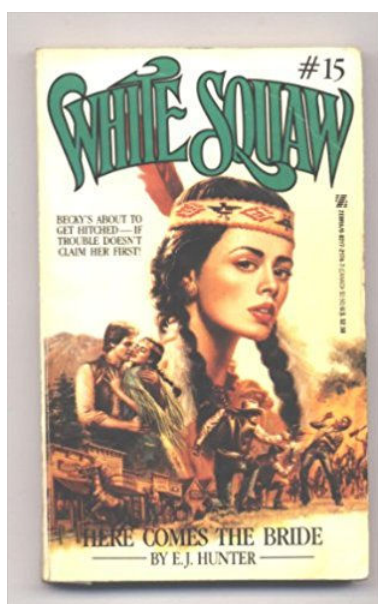
She'll forever be that way

Unlike the ersatz and wicked Dark Lady introduced in the lyrics of Cher's iconic hit single, Menard's depiction of Velvet's stage persona, The Velvet Devil, is instead a timeless enchantress, whose audience is willingly spellbound each evening as she reveals "one symbol at a time" while "singing in rhyme."

Marilyn Dumont, in response to the double-othering to which the White/Indian binary subjects her, similarly summons images of the halfbreed girl as gothic monstrosity, re-purposing the image, but rather than transmuting it, she likens her creative process to being possessed by an insistent, abrasive entity in the poem, "Half Human/Half Devil (Halfbreed) Muse" (1996). As we

have previously observed, the logic of the civ/sav dichotomy dehumanizes and demonizes the halfbreed girl in western imperialist discourse; to be a halfbreed is to be half-human, half-beast—if not half-devil. Here, Dumont recuperates and incorporates the primitive and/or demonic other as an essential half of herself, shifting from “giving up to giving over” (p. 51) to her inner Metisse demon/muse—an act of surrender necessary to break free from the White noise that is settler-colonial popular culture and its obsession with its White/Indian binary, along with its elision and abjection of any identity space that falls between.

Both Wendy Red Star and KC Adams set out to produce subversive works—the sort that seep out of the interstitial spaces inherent to settler-colonial societies, resulting in the sort of contempt that is the source of much anxiety and ambivalence regarding their desire to see themselves imitated by the colonized (Bhabha, 1994). Her work informed by vantages afforded by the third eye, Red Star’s (2016) digital image series, *White Squaw* (figure 19, top left, top right, and bottom right) openly mocks in its mimicry as it satirizes the cover art of E.J. Hunter’s pulp fiction novel series of the same name (figure 19, bottom left). Not liking what she sees in the eye of her beholder, Red Star recreates popular settler-colonial narratives and places herself in them, disrupting whatever assumptions underlie them. Red Star attempts to break, and break free from, the White/Indian binary in her digital image collection, *White Squaw*, (Figure 19), in which she responds directly to the images depicted in the pulp fiction series by American author E.J. Hunter (1987), whose work we encountered in an earlier chapter.



Cover art for original novel

by E.J. Hunter (1987)



132

Figure 19: Disrupting the White Squaw

¹³²From <http://www.wendyredstar.com/white-squaw#> Images retrieved June 19, 2017, 3:35 pm. PT.

Red Star sees no point in mimicking the ridiculous unless to satirize it, subverting the colonial gaze by lampooning its outlandish vision. As discussed in an earlier chapter, the label, White Squaw is a portmanteau of sorts, parsing out the White/Indian from the Princess/Squaw binaries only to paste them together as one odd, abutted entity that works to double and elide the metisse. In an interview regarding this work, Red Star identifies this series as her favourite, the objective of which is to prank Euro re-settler audiences in an attempt to get them to laugh at themselves in their own third eye experience. Indeed, the dominant culture set itself up too easily as the subject of Red Star's biting satire: in order to stage her critique, all she had to do was to find the nearest Target store, where she purchased one of many Indian costumes sold there.

Part of the *coup d'état* here is that by placing her racialized self in the picture, Red Star supplants the white woman supplanting the metisse, as well as forcing a wedge between the terms, White and squaw, (re)claiming this interstitial identity space and making the metisse visible. Another fairly significant response to the duality represented by the settler-colonial anti-heroine White Squaw is strongly and explicitly communicated in the image #13, "Track Tramp", by Red Star's noticeable and unambiguous hand gestures. Apparently, Wendy Red Star is not too keen on taking a squaw man either; in panel #15, "Here Comes the Bride" (figure 19, bottom right), Red Star, in the role of the White Squaw, weeps openly—and they don't look like tears of joy in anticipation of getting hitched.

Just as the prospect of playing squaw to any squaw man is unpalatable to Red Star, equally unappetizing is the role of the Indian Princess. In "Red Top Tramp" (figure 19, top right), Red Star looms over the action, looking on some scene just out of frame while eating what appears to be a tub of Land O' Lakes dairy spread. Red Star, ingesting this reflection of her

other/self, ridicules the settler-colonial appetite for eating the other (Hooks, 1992) in what Debra Root (1996) describes as the “cannibal culture” of the imperial West, in which European representations of Indigenous others are commoditized for recreational consumption. It appears that, like Dumont, if given the same choice-less choice between having to stomach images of the Indian Princess or that of the squaw, Red Star finds the former image easier to swallow and, ultimately, to subvert. Supplanting the White Squaw, Red Star shifts the balance of power with her satire, not only eating Land O’ Lake’s iconic, servile Indian Princess, but also eventually, inevitably, eliminating her, too.¹³³

Artist KC Adam’s (2006) *Cyborg Hybrid* series also mimics Western imperialist aesthetics—along with its raced and gendered standards of beauty—only to mock them. Intending to subvert the dominant paradigm rather than to simulate its normative values and behaviour, she illustrates the postcolonial conversation regarding the mimetic behaviour of the colonized, along with its potential for both assimilation and destabilization. Her work, with an aim to disabuse the colonial imagination of its fears concerning the potential subversion and the inevitable regression that troubles their otherwise desired mimesis of the halfbreed girl, spurns traditional settler-colonialist semiotics of white, attempting to reassign white as a semiotic resource to represent instead the permeable and nebulous boundaries of an ostensibly de-raced, de-gendered, post-modern, cybernetic space. Recapturing white—literally—is a strong motif throughout her work: not mimicking whiteness as a mode of standardized appearance, dress, behaviour and lifestyle but rather reclaiming white as an aesthetic that signals intersecting layers of hybridity, including Indigeneity. In Adams’s envisioned social space, white no longer implies

¹³³ This American brand is famous for its logo, an ‘Indian Princess’ on her knees, offering the viewer a platter upon which sits a brick of Land O’ Lakes butter, itself sporting an identical logo, for an effect of infinite regression, as in a hall of mirrors, giving the image the effect of timelessness.

a lack of pigment (read: stain) but denotes—both metaphorically and in actuality—white as the reflection of an entire spectrum of colour: an inverse rainbow, as it were, in an image that at once both signifies and transcends gender and race, if not class.

Adams also sets out to disrupt and de-centre the patriarchal, heteronormative gaze of the imperial West by mimicking/mockng its racist standards of beauty, particularly the aesthetic conventions of photography and fashion with regard to its representations of Indigenous people(s) in her (2006) series of photograph collections, titled *Cyborg Hybrids* (figure 20). Adams creates “glamorous and sexy photographs that give her subjects darker complexions, just as *Vogue* and *W* magazines do, but with the intention of imparting to them a more “aboriginal” look” (Eyland 2017). In an interview regarding the series, Adams describes how both the process and the work intend to flout the raced and gendered binaries fabricated by and for western imperialism:

I photographed artists who fit the *Cyborg Hybrid* criteria and had them wear white t-shirts with beaded text such as “AUTHORITY ON ALL ABORIGINAL ISSUES”, “INDIAN GIVER” and other slogans that would illustrate common Aboriginal stereotypical text. I also created white chokers for them to wear while I photographed them in stoic poses, mimicking photographs of Aboriginal people from the nineteenth and early twentieth century. I then digitally alter the photos to look like they could fit within a glamorous magazine.

(Adams, cited in Eyland 2017) ¹³⁴

¹³⁴ View the collections, *Cyborg Hybrids* at <http://www.kcadams.net/art/photography/Hybrids/hybridmain.html>

Adams poses her models in the stoic postures she associates with the savage photography popular among Western audiences in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Adams then tints the skin of the models dark brown, as well as altering them to resemble glamour shots from contemporary fashion magazines. The “defiant” poses of her models, along with the archaic, racist slogans and adages applied on the ubiquitous, contemporary T-shirt, are meant to “challenge the viewer to try and classify their identity” (Adams, cited in Eyland 2017).¹³⁵

In addition to creating equivalency between her photographic subjects and the models featured in popular fashion magazines, the juxtaposition of her androgynous models’ red, glossy lips with a minimalist look—the modest lines of the white costume, set against a white backdrop—creates a semiotic collision between the pure and virtuous Indian Princess (applied in capital letters on the T-shirt in one) and the savage squaw whose sexuality (like the fashion model) is highly commoditized.

In Adams’s vision, the halfbreed girl is neither and both simultaneously—and not necessarily female, genetically. Adam’s work, *Power* (2017), speaks directly to settler-colonial angst, not in an attempt to assuage, but to challenge—even provoke it. The greyscale photograph (figure 21) features what appears to be a woman’s face whose clear, brown eyes and pale pink lips have been tinted to provide emphatic dissimilarity to the stark, washed out monotones that dominate the piece.¹³⁶

¹³⁵ View the collections, Cyborg Hybrids at <http://www.kcadams.net/art/photography/Hybrids/hybridmain.html> View the photo, “Indian Princess”, fFrom the ‘Winnipeg’ set, *Cyborg Hybrid* collection at <http://www.kcadams.net/Exhibitions.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:11 p.m. PT. View “Scalping is in My Blood”, From the ‘Ottawa’ set, *Cyborg Hybrid* collection At http://www.kcadams.net/art/photography/Hybrids/Ottawa/Ottawa_total.html Retrieved: July 15, 2017, 3:38 pm. PT.

¹³⁶ View *Power* at, <http://www.kcadams.net/Exhibitions.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:11 p.m. PT.

These flashes of colour, along with the single braid—in a lateral bisection of the model's face—extruding from an otherwise generic head of long, brown, flowing, hair, are the only signs of the subject's racial hybridity. In a social identity that is bifurcated and all but silent/silenced, this clear-sighted, curious hybrid is passing right under the nose of settler-colonial society, even as it looks on. Homi Bhabha (2017) posits that mimesis effects a doubling of the other that fractures the power of the settler-colonial to draw and maintain the boundaries between themselves, the colonized, and their miscegenate progeny. If mimesis indeed represents such a double-edged sword, then Adams's work begs the question, "who has the power, now?"

VI. The Observations of a Four-Eyed, Halfbreed Girl

This thesis began with reflecting on my own socialization as a racialized, gendered, other-ized female in a settler-colonial society: one that, in no insignificant part, was both metaphorically and literally borne/born by my ancestors—Metis women. This idiosyncratic relationship to the dominant culture situates me/us/them within the national master narrative in a way that is truly unique among ethnic minorities in Canada: it is little wonder that the settler-colonial imagination has a vested interest in positioning metis womanhood in a particular way within its official birth story. Certainly, we see this process play out at the *macro* level, consistent with the various colonial projects of the imperial West, whose discourse sought to maintain its positional superiority, as well as that of its colonists, in relationship to the colonized other (Stoler, 1995; Stoler, 2002; McKlintock, 1995). Certainly, we have seen that the figure of the halfbreed girl represents a border-space in the settler-colonial imagination, embodying its ambivalence regarding miscegenation with the colonized other and its subsequent, mixed-race offspring (Brégant-Heald, 2010; Crolund-Anderson, 2007; Marubbio, 2009).

The fictive halfbreed girl, simultaneously fetishized and disavowed, is a representation of an abject group who inhabit abject zones, “peoples...whom industrial imperialism rejects but cannot do without”, consequently returning “to haunt modernity as its constitutive, inner repudiation” (McKlintock, 1995, p. 72). In the case of the halfbreed girl, this process of abjection rests on a set of intersecting binary oppositions endemic to Western imperialism’s packaged consciousness, operating to demarcate the halfbreed girl’s (and by extension, actual metis women) marginality on the settler-colonial landscape. It is the shifting of the halfbreed

girl along and between the Princess/squaw polemic and its attendant sub-binaries that allows the colonial imagination to perform the cognitive contortions necessary to reconcile and rationalize her seemingly contradictory states of being, while endeavouring to keep her in her social place. In these binary operations, we see the unnatural halfbreed girl, driven by the emotional and mental instability inherent to the bad mix of White/Indian ancestry, struggle to mimic the civility of settler-colonial society, only to inevitably regress into the savagery of her Indian ancestors.

Readers may wonder if the image of the halfbreed girl has changed with current times: after all, has Canada not made great strides towards raising its consciousness in the last several decades? The answer is yes, but not nearly as much as one would hope. As I initially posited, the diegesis of the halfbreed girl does indeed expand beyond anachronistic space to include modernity and urbanization, her narrative contexts changing slightly over time. Although the dominant narrative frame remains that of the frontier, the halfbreed girl, unlike her Indigenous cousins, appears in post-frontier settings in the developing nation as well, including that of well-established settler-colonial plantations, ranches, small towns, and even in the cottage country of a modern Canada. In the new millennium she has undergone one significant transition: in *Haven* and *Strange Empire*, at least, the halfbreed girl has been promoted from femme fatale, to anti-heroine, where the less savoury aspects of her character can be read as assets in certain contexts. In these narratives, the halfbreed girl can be a valuable ally in troubled times, when it suits her, serving as a feminized Tonto of sorts: an associate of the men in the white hats, and to the men in the black hats, a formidable enforcer.

However, while narrative contexts might become more sympathetic to her over time, the innate deviance (sexual or otherwise), volatility and inner conflict of the halfbreed girl remain constant, to greater or lesser degree. As a sidekick to the white hats, the halfbreed girl of the new

millennium no longer necessarily represents a natural threat to settler-colonialism and its dominant (Anglo) culture, her violence tacitly condoned when it benefits the re-settler in some way. She remains a deviant however, with regard to the West's normative behaviour, as well as its standard of beauty. While contemporary sexual mores soften her reputation a bit, now that slut-shaming is itself now shamed (in principle, if not always in practice), still, when juxtaposed to images of Euro re-settler women, the halfbreed girl is pictured as less attractive physically, but more aggressive and provocative sexually, retaining her preference for Euro re-settler males. You can feel sorry for the new and improved halfbreed girl—even ally yourself with her in a pinch—but she'll still screw you over in some way (break your heart, rob you, desert you, kill you). She may mean well, but all her good efforts come to naught. Kat Loving is death: not just to abusive misogynists, but also to the people she loves. While Jess Minion is useful at times, in the end, she is unstable and unreliable. Mack, whose lust for the Euro re-settler law man is unrequited and unfulfilled, is simply greedy, treacherous and violent. Ultimately, images of the halfbreed girl in settler-colonial, pop-culture discourse remain abject ones.

What are the implications for actual metisses, then, who are continually and pervasively defined by forces outside themselves? Answering the question I posed in the introduction, this study demonstrates that my formative experiences of being defined outside myself as a specific iteration of race and gender that I dub the halfbreed girl—as well as both my resistance and capitulation to it—are neither singular nor anomalous among metisses. Although this study's sample group is too small to generalize its findings to the broader metisse population, nor to a universal process of identity-formation, it is clear that the social identities of the metisse auteurs studied here were profoundly affected by images of the halfbreed girl, as well as by the

Princess/squaw polemic, and the sub-binaries upon which she oscillates: not only in their texts but, evidently, also in their lived experience in which those texts are grounded.

Here, the feminist maxim, “the personal is political” applies, in that metis women must contend with discourses that construct us in this way. As Tobing-Rony (2001) notes, people of colour in North American societies often become aware of their own social construction as ‘other’: a cognizance that she refers to as “the third eye”. This fractured gaze allows the colonized to observe the dominant culture as it labours to construct a taxonomy of others in an hierarchy organized around fifty (imagined) shades of brown, in which metisses are positioned abstrusely between “white, but not quite” (Bhabha, cited in Young, 1995; 174-175), and brown, but not red. It is this field of optics that we metisses must constantly, consciously (re)negotiate our social identities, choosing how (to what degree—if at all) to respond to images of the halfbreed girl in that process: an arbitration that resembles Medina’s (2009) concept of “brown ethnography”. Both of these contrapuntal gazes are evident in the works of the metisses studied here. They not only recognize the social construction of their particular sort of ‘othering’, but also incorporate elements of the halfbreed girl into their own embodiments of metisse-ness. However, their responses to these fictive (often defamatory) images are varied, layered, and complicated, at times resisting, adapting, or internalizing aspects of the halfbreed girl. Nevertheless, each metisse speaks back in one way or another to the predilection of settler-colonialism to abject them.

In the face of demonization Dumont tries to humanize herself by recounting her childhood experiences in Canadian public school in her anthology of poetry, *Memoirs of a Really Good Brown Girl* (1996): a broad, institutional experience shared by millions. Dumont red-washes that experience for the reader, however, overlaying its standardization with that of her

own, uniquely raced and gendered experience of assimilation and abjection, which is not at all pretty. In the next breath, Dumont embraces the demonic, re-cast as her half-breed, half-devil muse. Menard's answer to demonization is to simply invert any demonic imagery in the soundtrack to *The Velvet Devil* (2002), both in its narrative arc and in its title track, rendering it—and by extension, the Metisse—sublime.

While an adolescent Dumont internalizes the racism and misogyny of patriarchal, settler-colonial heteronormativity in “Squaw Poems”, her adult self defies them in “Blue Ribbon Children” (1996). For the most part, Johnson played along with these preconceptions in her performances, objecting to them in only in a few of her written works. For Menard (2002), it's not Velvet's sexuality *per se* that is unseemly, but its subjugation to the racist and misogynistic strictures of Euro settler-colonial patriarchy that is the shame. Similarly, Red Star's (2016) artistic installation, *White Squaw*, mimics the Princess/squaw and White/Indian binaries only to openly mock them, as does the work of artist KC Adams in her (2006) *Cyborg Hybrid* series, both metisses dismissing the either/or fallacy contained in internal logic of these polemics.

Considerations for Further Research

In the settler-colonial project to master the Indigenous other, the manipulation and occupation of conceptual spaces can also lead to the occupation of the physical Indigenous spaces they initially represent. A subject for further investigation is form of abjection in which the figure of the halfbreed girl is not only fetishized sexually in the Freudian sense, but also functions as a commodity-fetish in the Marxian sense. In settler-colonial, pop-culture discourse and in its social practice, the racial ambiguity of the halfbreed girl acts as a sort of mortise,

creating a conceptual permeability that re-settlers require to traverse identity boundaries, allowing them to slip into (formerly) very personal, very experiential, Indigenous spaces. Cher's performative embodiment of the halfbreed girl illustrates this transmogrification, a long-standing tradition in the visual and performing arts of the West, in which White thespians play Indian roles, further reinforcing the racial ambiguity of the mixed-blood character (Marubbio, 2009).

Not just a device of entertainers, this ethnic ambiguity enables the re-settler at large to use the trope of racial hybridity to appropriate and inhabit Indigenous identity spaces (Huhndorff, 2001). Through the commodity fetish, re-settlers effect a process of discursive metamorphosis, in which North American Indigenous ancestry becomes a product for conspicuous consumption, enabling any re-settler to abstract actual metisses, living and historic, and to grant false equivalency between their, lived, socio-cultural experience and its fictive re-settler, re-imagining.¹³⁷

Using mimetic behaviour rooted in simulacra of their own fabrication, these re-settlers lay claim to the half-breed girl's very identity, eliding actual metisses into a set of commodity signs that are consumed, assumed, interpreted, and re-interpreted by the colonizer, manifested in pop-culture texts and performances. Though the various fantasies and contradictions regarding the halfbreed girl that preoccupy the settler-colonial imagination are conducted under the ostensibly innocuous rubrics of cosplay and artistic licence, these social practices belie a genocidal agenda:

This process is ultimately intended to supplant Indians, even in areas of their own

¹³⁷ The burgeoning industry in genetic analytic services further commoditizes racial hybridity, with Native American DNA commonly appearing in the test results of Euro North Americans. Recent news stories have begun to question the scientific rigour and validity of these analyses. See Barrera, J., & Foxcroft, T. (2018, June 13). Lab's DNA results say this chihuahua has 20% Indigenous ancestry. Retrieved August 15, 2018, from <https://newsinteractives.cbc.ca/longform/dna-ancestry-test>

customs and spirituality. In the end, non-Indians will have complete power to define what is and is not Indian, even for Indians....Non-Indians will then “own” our heritage and ideas as thoroughly as they now claim to own our land and resources. (Pam Colorado, cited in Rose, 1992, p. 405)

Using this popular, settler-colonial ‘pass system’, Euro re-settlers like Cher are able to dislocate actual metisses from their own identity-space, enabling their migration into these now supposedly vacant locations, representing for settler-colonialism the final frontier of Indigenous territory. This last form of abjection completes the process of colonization by supplanting the colonized indigene—not only on her own land—but ultimately in her own skin (Churchill, 1992; Crolund-Anderson, 2007; Deloria, 1998; Huhndorff, 2001; Rose, 1992)—if not in actuality, then at least, discursively.¹³⁸

Another interesting phenomenon arising from this line of inquiry that has yet to be fully investigated is, what happens when the metisse returns to these colonized identity spaces, only to occupy them herself? Cher not only created a conceptual space *for* herself in settler-colonial pop-culture as a halfbreed girl, she created a simulacra *of* herself through her performance of that space, allowing others to step into, and perform ‘Cher-ness’—and by extension, halfbreed girl-ness—a long-cherished tradition at any function where dress-up is called for (and even in places where it is not).

¹³⁸ A reference to Canada’s notorious pass system in which status Indians could not travel outside of their legally designated reservations without permission from the local Indian Agent, represented by an official document (or, hall- pass) signed and stamped by him. See Brian Titley (1995). *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada*. Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press.



Figure 20: Halloween 2016 with 'Rey' & 'Cher'

Photo Credit: Ryan Gowan

In another pop-culture practice also not singular to myself, many metis women have stepped into Cher's bejeweled stiletto boots at Halloween, exemplified by my metisse daughter's uncanny performance (figure 20, right), juxtaposed against my Polish-Canadian daughter's Rey, from the *Star Wars* universe (left). This embodiment of metisse-ness, expressed as Cher, was intended to mock through its mimicry, but the image that captures it once again begs the complicated question, "who has the power, now"?

Outstanding Issues

One of central issues with which I had to contend was that the data planes for both tiers of my study were neither deep nor wide, resulting in small sample groups. As previous scholars have established, images of metis women in settler-colonial pop-culture discourse are scant and

works by metisse auteurs that respond directly to them are even more so, accounting in part for this study's brevity, and for focusing far more on its semiotic reading of images of the halfbreed girl, and less on metis women's responses to them. This outcome in itself represents a new horizon of research as metisses continue to produce expressions of metissage that grapple with images of the halfbreed girl. A further limitation is that the sample of settler-colonial, pop-culture texts excluded a variety of contemporary mass media formats, such as social media and graphic novels, circumscribing this study by era and the technology developed in it, along with the adaptations to social and cultural practice that accompany the advent of any new media (McLuhan, 1964).

An example of an author and her new media not included for analysis here is Katherena Vermette's graphic novel series, *A Girl Called Echo* (2017), of which the first installment, "Pemmican Wars", was released just before the completion of this study. Featuring a time-travelling, adolescent Metisse as its heroine, this narrative is set in present-day Winnipeg's impoverished North End, largely the territory of the city's urban Indigenous population, which is juxtaposed against the time/space of the historical Metis in peri-confederation Canada during the Pemmican Wars (1812-1821). In spite of the socio-political and economic upheaval in which the historic Metis are inexorably entangled, Vermette envisions a prosperous, peaceful, and ecologically sustainable Metis lifeway that is presented to her heroine, Echo, as an alternative to that of the urban social problem that is her current reality. Although the first issue of Echo's story appears to recapitulate some of the hallmarks of its halfbreed girl and its attendant binaries, Echo's socio-economic status is grounded in the all-too-real, and it is much too early in the overall narrative arc of the series to attempt any sort of meaningful textual analysis of Vermette's latest work.

Despite the relative brevity of tier two's analysis, it is clear that the metisses included here have been speaking their truths in various ways, all along. In the age of Truth and Reconciliation it is up to Canada's re-settlers to listen, and learning how "to 'read' and even how to 'see' their literatures and their methodologies" (LaRocque, 1999, p. 291), and to acknowledge the validity of their critiques, no matter how unsettling this experience may be:

"Canadians...must abandon pervasive and prevailing assumptions that western, in particular, Canadian historical and literary productions are inherently innocent and apolitical but that the Native "voice" is "bitter" and biased..." (LaRocque, 1999, p. 292). Rather than dismissing their discourses as mere, knee-jerk reactions to images of the halfbreed girl, and by extension, their social identities and supposed social place in the settler-colonial hierarchy, the works included in tier two, not to mention this thesis, can be read as metisses "re-defining our positions in Canadian life. Invariably, this may cause discomfort or anger in the readers" (LaRocque, 1999, p. 290). Why? Because this repositioning triggers the very boundary issues upon which Euro, settler-colonialism is established, and which continue to inform its ongoing positional superiority. As we know from the wisdom of Albert Memmi (1967), this sort of privilege is intensely seductive, addictive, and one with which those who hold it are loath to part.

LaRocque warns that works of fiction, like "much of imperialist writing," are "not just another story," pointing out a "dangerous tendency to tolerate, if not perpetuate, racism in scholarship in the guise of narrative and history" (1999, p. 293): a tendency that is "obscured by blinding eurosubjectivism. (1999, p. 292). What does it say about those of the Canadian literati—then, and now—who generally regard Scott's "morbid fascination with traits of a 'vanishing' race" (Cullingham, 2014, p. 28) to be the "only poetry worth reading" of the confederation era (Cullingham, 2014, p. 24)? No doubt, unaware, uninformed and/or well-

meaning fans of D.C. Scott (who are legion) will take umbrage to my critique of his work, jumping to defend and apologize for him. That Canadian society lauds—rather than being outraged, or even disturbed by—Scott’s open misogyny and violent, genocidal fantasies about metisses speaks directly to this obdurate gaze.

I respond to those apologists that at the end of the day, many Indigenous people do not care whether Scott’s actions and attitudes toward us were well-intended at best, or at worst, misinformed and misguided. Here, I refer these readers to a renowned Christian admonition about good intentions, and how the road to hell is said to be paved with them. In my view, when all is said and done, what really matters is how Scott’s defamation campaign against us shook down in the real world for us. All the good intentions in the world cannot reverse the damage Scott’s textual violence has done to generations of metisses: our histories, our lived experiences, our psyches. It’s time for Canadians to face their own demons, as it were, and acknowledge that Scott’s textual legacy—to metis women and Indigenous people(s) in general—amounts to no less than hate literature. When taken in tandem with the totality of Scott’s life’s work as a colonial overlord, which resulted in nothing short of genocide—textual, cultural and actual (in the form of pernicious legislation, and in the high death rates in Canada’s Residential School System) —how can one read his works otherwise?

The sort of deeply-entrenched eurosubjectivism described by LaRocque also tends to blind even the most sympathetic of re-settler Canadian authors and artists, who cannot escape the misogynistic, ethnocentric dogma that informs and shapes images of metisses in their works. For instance, even Canada’s beloved novelist Margaret Laurence appears to have been working out her own ambivalence toward the Metis, as well as an overt animosity towards Metis women. In order to combat such complacency, LaRocque advises “revisiting and in many cases

abandoning old heroes” (1999, p. 292), or “at the very least, [canonical literary] works... should be dissected, even excised instead of being accorded gothic proportions, as they commonly are in the Canadian literary tradition....” (1999, p. 293).

Following this call, as well as that of many Indigenous scholars before me, to decolonize our scholarship and its methodologies (Kovach, 2009; LaRocque, 1999; L. T. Smith, 1999; Wilson, 2008), I have tried to do so in this study. Using an unobtrusive, multi-disciplinary approach that endeavors to implement a, “scholarly way of respecting Aboriginal history and epistemology” (LaRocque, 1999, p. 294), this thesis draws from a wide range of literature, theory, and method in the humanities and social sciences, including film studies, visual/performing arts, literature, history, sociology, and psychology. Further, in studying the works of metis women auteurs, I address a group that is liminal in in mainstream, Western scholarship and in the Canadian master narrative, as well as shed light on, scrutinize, and challenge its popular representations of the group to which these women belong. My work here is but a mere start. In our own quest for truth and reconciliation, we metisses have much revisiting to do and idols to topple as we continue to define and re-position ourselves in Canadian society.

References

- Acoose, J. (1995). *Iskwewak: Neither Indian Princesses nor Easy Squaws*. Toronto: Women's Press.
- Adams, H. (1989). *Prisons of Grass: Canada from a Native Point of View*. Saskatoon: Fifth House.
- Adams, KC. (2006). *Cyborg Hybrid Accessories*. [digital image series]. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba. From, <http://www.kcadams.net/Exhibitions.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:11 p.m. PT.
- Adams, KC. (2006). *Cyborg Hybrid Living Spaces*. [digital image]. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba. From, <http://www.kcadams.net/Exhibitions.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:11 p.m. PT.
- Adams, KC. (2006). *Cyborg Hybrids*. [digital image series]. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba. From, <http://www.kcadams.net/Exhibitions.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:11 p.m. PT.
- Adams, KC. (2017). *Power*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba. From, <http://www.kcadams.net/Exhibitions.html> Retrieved: June 13, 2017, 2:11 p.m. PT.
- Adare, S., & Adare, S. (2005). In ebrary I. (Ed.), *"Indian" stereotypes in TV science fiction: First Nations' voices speak out* (1st ed.). Austin: University of Texas Press.
- Aleiss, A. (2005). *Making the White Man's Indian: Native Americans and Hollywood Movies*. Connecticut: Praeger Publishers.
- Anderson, A. (1996). *The Heart of a Woman: Leading First Nations on the Road to Recovery*. (Unpublished Master of Arts thesis). University of British Columbia, Vancouver, B.C. doi:<http://hdl.handle.net/2429/4743>
- Anderson, Karen. (1991). *Chain Her By One Foot: The Subjugation of Native Women in Seventeenth-Century New France*. New York: Routledge.
- Anderson, Kim. (2000). *A Recognition of Being: Reconstructing Native Womanhood*. Toronto, Ontario: Second Story Press.
- Bataille, G., & Silet, C. (1976). A Checklist of Published Materials on Popular Images of the Indian in the American Film. *Journal of Popular Film*, 5(12/10/2016), 171-182.
- Bataille, G., & Silet, C. (Eds.). (1980). *The Pretend Indians: Images of Native Americans in the Movies*. Iowa: Iowa State University Press.

- Bataille, G. M. (2001). *Native American Representations: First Encounters, Distorted Images, and Literary Appropriations*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Baudrillard, J. (1983). *Simulations* (Foss, Patton & Beitchman Trans.).
- Bauman, L. (Director). (2006). *Velvet Devil*. (Video/DVD) Saskatchewan, Canada: Westwind Pictures (Distributor). CBC Corp.
- Berkhefor, R. (1978). *The White Man's Indian: Images of the American Indian, Columbus to the Present*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Berton, P. (1975). *Hollywood's Canada: the Americanization of Our National Image*. Toronto: McLelland and Stewart Ltd.
- Bhabha, H. (1983). The Other Question. *Screen*, 24(6), 18-36.
- Bhabha, H. (1994). *The Location of Culture*. New York: Routledge.
- Bhabha, H. (2017). Of Mimicry and Man: The Ambivalence of Colonial Discourse. *MIT Press*, 28(4/29/2017), 125-133.
- Bird, E. (1996). *Dressing in Feathers: The Construction of the Indian in American Culture*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview Press.
- Bird, E. (1999). The Gendered Construction of the American Indian in Popular Media. *International Communication Association Conference*, San Francisco, U.S.A.
- Booth, George. (1880). Frontier Folk. *The International Review*, 9, 29–41. Retrieved from <https://www.gutenberg.org/files/37110/37110-h/37110-h.htm>, May 25, 1:21 p.m. PT.
- Brégant-Heald, D. (2010). Women in Between: Filmic Representations of Gender, Race, and Nation in *Ramona* (1910) and *The Barrier* (1917) During the Progressive Era. *Frontiers*, 31(2).
- Brennen, B. S. (2012). *Qualitative Research Methods for Media Studies*. Hoboken: Taylor and Francis.
- Brown, J. S. H. (1983). Woman as Centre and Symbol in the Emergence of Metis Communities. *Canadian Journal of Native Studies*, 3(1), 39-46.
- Buress, M., & Valaskakis, G. G. (1997). *Indian Princesses and Cowgirls: Stereotypes from the Frontier*. Montreal: Oboro.
- Campbell, M. (1973). *Halfbreed*. Atlanta, GA: Formac Publishing Co.

- Capps, A. & Dean, M. (1973). Halfbreed. [Recorded by Cher]. *HalfBreed*. Recorded by Cher. U.S.A.: Interscope Records.
- Carter, S. (1997). *Capturing Women: The Manipulation of Cultural Imagery in Canada's Prairie West*. London, Ontario: McGill-Queen's University Press.
- Carter, Sarah. (2008). *The Importance of Being Monogamous: Marriage and Nation Building in Western Canada to 1915*. Athapaska Alberta, Canada: AU Press.
- Cooke, K. (1984). *Images of Indians Held by Non-Indians: A Review of Current Canadian Research*. (Literature Review / Analysis No. QS- 3371- 000- EE- A1). Ottawa: Hon. Douglas C. Firth, C. M., Minister of Northern Affairs and Development, Research Branch. (Images of Indians Held by Non-Indians)
- Cooley, Charles. (1902). *Human Nature and the Social Order*. New York: Schribner's.
- Gordon A. & Corman, R. (Producers), & Corman, R. (Director). (1955). *Apache Woman*. *Official Trailer*. (Motion Picture) USA: American Releasing Corp.
- Gordon, Colin. (1980). The Confession of the Flesh. In *Power/Knowledge: Interviews and Other Selected Writings, 1972-1977, Michael Foucault*. New York.
- Coward, J. M. (2014). The Princess and the Squaw: The Construction of the Native American Woman in the Pictorial Press. *American Journalism*, 31(1), 71-99.
- Crolund-Anderson, M. (2007). *Cowboy Imperialism in Hollywood Film*. New York: Peter Lang.
- Crosby, M. (1991). Construction of the Imaginary Indian. In S. Douglas (Ed.), *Vancouver Anthology: The Institutional Politics of Art* (p 267-287). Vancouver: Talon Books.
- Cullingham, J. (2014). *Scars of Empire: A juxtaposition of Duncan Campbell Scott and Jacques Soustelle*. (Unpublished Ph.D., History). York University, Toronto, Ontario.
- Derrida, Jaques. (2016). *Grammatology*. (Spivak, Gayatri, Trans.). U.S.A.: John Hopkins University Press.
- De Mille, C. B. (Producer), & De Mille, C. B. (Director). (1914). *The Squaw Man*. (Motion Picture) USA: Famous Players- Lasky Corp.
- De Mille, C. B. (Producer) & De Mille, C. B. (Director). (1918). *Squaw Man*. (Motion Picture) USA: Famous Players Lasky Inc.; Aircraft Pictures, Corp.
- De Mille, C. B. (Producer) & De Mille, C. B. (Director). (1931). *Squaw Man*. (Motion Picture) USA: Metro-Goldwyn-Mayer.

- De Mille, C. B. (Producer) & De Mille, C. B. (Director). (1940). *North West Mounted Police*. (Motion Picture) California, U.S.A.: Paramount Pictures.
- Deloria, J. (1998). *Playing Indian*. London: Yale University Press.
- Devens, C. (1992). *Countering Colonization: Native American Women and Great Lakes Missions, 1630-1900*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Dickason, O. (1984). *The Myth of the Savage: and the Beginnings of French Colonialism in the Americas*. Edmonton: University of Alberta Press.
- Doxtador, D. (1992). *Fluffs and Feathers: An Exhibit on the Symbols of Indianness. A Resource Guide* (Revised ed.). Brantford, Ontario: Woodland Cultural Centre.
- Dragland S. (1994). *Floating Voice: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Literature of Treaty 9*. Concord, Ontario: Anansi.
- Duchemin, Parker. (2011). "A Parcel of Whelps": Alexander Mackenzie among the Indians. *Canadian Literature*, 8. Retrieved from canlit.ca, Wed, Feb. 20, 2012, 4:30 p.m. P.T.
- Dumont, M. (1996). Squaw Poems. *A Really Good Brown Girl* (pp. 18-19). London, Ontario: Brick Books.
- Dunbar, C. J. (2008). Critical Race Theory and Indigenous Methodology. In N. K. Denzin, Y. S. Lincoln & L. T. Smith (Eds.), *Handbook of Critical Indigenous Methodologies* (pp. 85-100). Thousand Oaks, California: Sage.
- Durill, J. (1974). Dark Lady. [Recorded by Cher]. *Dark Lady*. U.S.A.: MCA.
- Fanon, F. (1952). *Black Skin, White Masks*. New York: Grove Publications.
- Fanon, F. (1963). *The Wretched of the Earth*. New York: Grove Press.
- Fitzgerald, S. A. (2007). Hybrid Identities in Canada's Red River Colony. *Canadian Geographer*, 51(2), 186-201.
- Forbes, J. D. (1964). *The Indian of America's Past*. Englewood Cliffs, N.Y.: Prentice Hall.
- Foucault, M. (1985). *History of Sexuality*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Francis, D. (1992). *The Imaginary Indian: The Image of the Indian in Canadian Culture*. Vancouver, B.C.: Arsenal Pulp Press.
- Freeman, V. (2005). Attitudes Toward "Miscegenation" in Canada, the United States, New Zealand and Australia, 1860-1914. *Native Studies Review*, 16(1), pp.41-68.

- Fisher, Art. (1971, August 1). The Sonny And Cher Comedy Hour. United States: CBS.
- Finstad-Knizhnik (Producer) and Macdonald, G., & Fitz, C. (directors) (2014). Strange Empire. (Television Series). British Columbia, Canada: CBC.
- Friar, R. E., & Friar, N. A. (1972). *The Only Good Indian: The Hollywood Gospel*. New York: Drama Book Specialists.
- Gerson, C. & Strong-Boag, V. (2000). *Paddling Her Own Canoe: The Times and Texts of E. Pauline Johnson (Tekahionwake)*. Toronto, ON, CAN: University of Toronto Press.
- Giroux, H. A. (2016). Cultural Studies in Dark Times: Public Pedagogy and the Challenge of Neoliberalism. Retrieved from http://www.henryagiroux.com/online_articles/DarkTimes.htm
- Glass, A. (2006). On the Circulation of Ethnographic Knowledge. <http://www.materialworldblog.com/2006/10/on-the-circulation-of-ethnographic-knowledge/> Retrieved: December 18, 2009, 3:43 m. PT).
- Green, R. (1975). The Pocahontas Perplex: The Image of Indian Women in American Culture. *The Massachusetts Review*, 16(4), pp. 698-714.
- Green, R. (1988). The Tribe Called Wannabee: Playing Indian in America and Europe *Folklore*, 99(1), 30 <last_page> 55. doi:10.1080/0015587X.1988.9716423
- Griffith, D.W. (1910). *Ramona*. Biograph Co.
- Hall, Stuart. (1981). "Notes on Deconstructing the Popular." People's History and Socialist Theory. Ed. Raphael Samuel. Boston: Routledge and K. Paul, p.239.
- Hao, R. N. (2012). "Cowboys and Indians": Pedagogical Constructions and Interventions. *Cultural Studies ↔ Critical Methodologies*, 12(6), 509–512. <https://doi.org/10.1177/1532708612457639>
- Harrington, G. (2013). Mixed Bloods in Distress. In H. Markowitz, L. Howe & D. K. Cummings (Eds.), *American Indian Studies: Seeing Red: Hollywood's Pixeled Skin* (pp. 57-72). East Lansing, MI, USA: Michigan State University Press.
- Hilger, M. (1995). *From Savage to Nobleman: Images of Native Americans in Film*. Lanham, Maryland: Scarecrow Press, Inc.
- Hooks, B. (1992). Eating the Other: Desire and Resistance. *Black Looks: Race and Representation* (p 21-39). Boston: South End Press.
- Huhndorff, S. M. (2001). *Going Native: Indians in the American Cultural Imagination*. New York: Cornell University Press.

- Hunter, E. J. (September 1, 1987). Here Comes the Bride. *White Squaw Series*, #15.
- Hurd, D. A. (1997). The Monster Inside: 19th Century Racial Constructs in the 24th Century Mythos of Star Trek. *Journal of Popular Culture*, 31(1), pp.23-35.
- Huyssen, A. (2000). Present Pasts: Media, Politics, Amnesia. *Public Culture*, 12(1), 12–38.
- Johnson, E. P. (1892). “A Strong Race Opinion” on the Indian Girl in Modern Fiction. *Toronto Sunday Globe*. Retrieved from http://canlit.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/a_strong_race_opinion.pdf
- Johnson, E. P. (2016). A Red Girl’s Reasoning (Generic). Retrieved from http://canlit.ca/wp-content/uploads/2016/02/red_girls_reasoning.pdf
- Johnson, E.P. (2016). As it Was in the Beginning (Generic). Retrieved from <http://www.d.umn.edu/cla/faculty/tbacig/cst1030/1030anth/epauline.html>. Retrieved Sept. 13, 2013, 2:46 p.m.
- Kilpatrick, J. (1999). *Celluloid Indians: Native Americans and Film*. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press.
- Kovach, M. (2009). *Indigenous Methodologies: Characteristics, Conversations, and Contexts*. Toronto: University of Toronto Press.
- Kristeva, J. (1982). *Powers of Horror: an Essay on Abjection* Columbia University Press.
- LaRocque, E. (1975). *Defeathering the Indian*. Agincourt, Canada: The Book Society of Canada Ltd.
- LaRocque, E. (1983). The Metis in English Canadian Literature. *The Canadian Journal of Native Studies* Iii, 1 (1983): 3(1), pp. 85-94.
- LaRocque, E. (1988). On the Ethics of Publishing Historical Documents. In J. S. H. Brown, & R. Brightman (Eds.), *"The Orders of the Dreamed": George Nelson Cree and Northern Ojibwa Religion and Myth, 1823*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press. (pp. 199-203)
- LaRocque, Emma. (2001). Native Identity and the Metis: Otehpaysuak People. In D. Taras & Rasporich, B. (Eds.), *A Passion for Identity: Canadian Studies for the 21st Century* (pp. 381–400). Ontario: Nelson Canada.
- LaRocque, E. (n.d.). *Native writers resisting colonizing practices in Canadian historiography and literature*. National Library of Canada = Bibliothèque nationale du Canada. Retrieved from http://viu.summon.serialssolutions.com/2.0.0/link/0/eLvHCXMwtZ3PS8MwFMeD4k0PioqKg_wDs2uStetxrBsexuZ06klCfjSlOrKybgr-9ealbQ97xYSSB4JyXsh3_cJQpTcdp_zgQmlTY9FSktYpEYAkxoFrrQlzfGEU_caHxEt5NDgcgS

[5sOrkmzldVCeB7GU70HFAkMCXX2EwVqUWRI8zNKUQ_wTTGasC88MpTbudA6d24MvMdOxi0CtXgx1w4WMTtFx2nj6PkMHmT1HrxPP3cZfK8gErrC7-8KeszGmLQtvqG4TWSqcGHxliaAa1Bw8UucxsJqvNghki_Q22g4H9y3vR28rJESHCDPG-uG53X9cpXzcX8wnD_6pn9zwHPFleDTad8t1vMTJyymlLKIXKITAdJ4u_YpdPoKYam7TBpNklgTFlEFuaxSyqxHBRWiQ6_Ry36MudlXx7foylJNmbXQ4Wex-QH4QsvM](#)

- LaRocque, E. (2010). *When the Other is Me: Native Resistance Discourse 1850-1990*. Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.
- Laurence, M. (1974). *The Diviners*. Canada: McClelland and Stewart.
- Laurence, M. (1978). *The Loons. A Bird in the House*. Canada: McClelland and Stewart.
- Lundgren, Jodi. (1995). *Being a Halfbreed: Discourses of Race and Cultural Syncreticity in the Works of Three Metis Women Writers*.
- Lawrence, B. (2004). *Real Indians and Others: Mixed-Blood Urban Native People and Indigenous Nationhood*. USA: University of Nebraska.
- MacDonald, W. (Producer), & Nazzaro, R. (Director). (1956). *The White Squaw*. (Motion Picture). Promotional Material for Film. USA: Columbia Pictures.
- Macdougall, B. (2012). The Myth of Metis Cultural Ambivalence. In N. St-Onge, C. Podruchny & B. Macdougall (Eds.), *Contours of a People: Family, Mobility, and History* (pp. 422-464). USA: University of Oklahoma Press; Norman Publishing.
- MacKinnon, D. J. (2012). *The Identities of Marie Rose Delorme Smith: Portrait of a Metis Woman, 1861-1960*. Regina, Sask.: Canadian Plains Research Centre Press.
- McLeod, J. (2010). *Beginning Postcolonialism* (2nd ed.). Gloucester, Great Britain: University of Manchester Press.
- McLuhan, Marshall. (1964). *Understanding Media: The Extensions of Man*. U.S.A.: Signet Books.
- Malchow, H. L. (1996). *Gothic Images of Race in Nineteenth-century Britain*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press.
- Meyboom, J., Lacey, J., Harbin, L., & Kinnear, S. (Producers), & Crossland H. (Director). (Air Date: January 19, 2015). All That Glitters. Episode 11, Season 8 in *Murdoch Mysteries*. (Television Series). Canada: Genesis International.
- Marin, E. L. (1949). *Canadian Pacific*. Twentieth Century Fox Film Corp; Moulin Productions, Inc; Favorit-Filmverhleigh; ABC - Video; Carol Media Home; Comet Video; Kino Lorber; Nostalgia Family Video. Retrieved from http://www.imdb.com/title/tt0041223/?ref=ttfc_ql

- Marsan, L. (2010). Cher-ing/Sharing Across Boundaries. *Visual Culture and Gender*, 5, pp. 49-64.
- Marubbio, E. (2009). *Killing the Indian Maiden: Images of Native American Women in Film*. Kentucky: University of Kentucky Press.
- Matz, D. A. (1988). *Images of Indians in American popular culture since 1865* (D.A.). Available from ProQuest Dissertations & Theses A&I. (303565945).
- McKlintock, A. (1995). *Imperial Leather: Race, Gender and Sexuality in the Colonial Context*. New York: Routledge.
- Medina, H. M. (2009). *Brown Ethnography: Dirty Girls and Other Pop Culture Identities*. (Unpublished PhD). University of California, Ann Arbor, MI.
- Memmi, A. (1967). *The Colonizer and the Colonized*. Boston: Beacon Press.
- Menard, A., & Walsh, R. (2002). In Rozankovic A., *The Velvet Devil*. Canada: Velvet & Hawk Productions.
- Mikita, Andy, & Wheeler, Anne (Directors). (2015). *Strange Empire* [DVD]. U.S.A.: EOne Films.
- Monkman, L. (1981). *A Native Heritage: Images of the Indian in English-Canadian literature*. Toronto; University of Toronto Press, c1981. Retrieved from <http://isbndb.com>
- Monture, Angus. (1995). *Thunder in My Soul: A Mohawk Woman Speaks*. Halifax, Nova Scotia: Fernwood.
- Morris, P. (1992). *Embattled Shadows: A History of Canadian Cinema 1895-1939*. Montréal, QC, CAN: McGill-Queen's University Press. Retrieved from <http://site.ebrary.com.proxy2.lib.umanitoba.ca/lib/umanitoba/docDetail.action?docID=10175952&ppg=1>
- Negra, D. (2001). *Off White Hollywood: American Culture and Ethnic Female Stardom*. Canada: Routledge.
- Oshana, M. (1981). Native American Women in Westerns: Reality and Myth. *Frontiers: A Journal of Women Studies*, 6(3), pp. 46-50.
- Parker, S. G. (1893) *The Translation of a Savage*. New York: D. Appleton and Company. Retrieved From: *The Literature Network*. <http://www.online-literature.com/gilbert-parker/translation-of-a-savage/>. October 17, 2017.
- Pearce, R. H. (1988). *Savagism and civilization: a study of the Indian and the American mind*. Berkeley: University of California Press.

- Peterson, J. (1985). Many Roads to Red River: Metis Genesis in the Great Lakes Region, 1680-1815. In J. Peterson, & J. S. H. Brown (Eds.), *The New Peoples: Being and Becoming Metis in North America* (pp. 37-72). Winnipeg: University of Manitoba Press.
- Polkinghorne, D. E. (1988). *Narrative Knowing and the Human Sciences*. New York: NYU Press.
- Prats, A. J. (2002). *Invisible Natives: Myth and Identity in the American Western*. Ithaca: Cornell University Press.
- Preda, R. (2001). The Angel in the Ecosystem' Revisited: Disney's Pocahontas and Postmodern Ethics. *Critical Studies*, 15(1), pp. 317-340.
- Phinney, J. S. (1990). Ethnic identity in adolescents and adults: Review of research. *Psychological Bulletin*, 108(3), 499-514. <https://doi.org/10.1037/0033-2909.108.3.499>
- Red Star, W. (2016). *White Squaw*. Digital Image Series. USA. From <http://www.wendyredstar.com/white-squaw#> Images retrieved June 19, 2017, 3:35 pm. PT.
- Reece, C. (1999). *Red Power Women*. Vancouver, B.C.: Purple Turtle Productions.
- Richardson, Cathy. (2006). Metis Identity Creation and Tactical Responses to Oppression and Racism. *Variations*, 2, pp.56-71.
- Root, D. (1996). *Cannibal Culture Art, Appropriation, and the Commodification of Difference*. Boulder, Colorado: Westview.
- Rork, S. E. (Producer), & Dillon, J. F. (Director). (1932). *Call Her Savage*. (Motion Picture) USA: Fox Film Corp.
- Rose, G. (2012). *Visual Methodologies: An Introduction to Researching with Visual Materials* (3rd ed.). London: Sage.
- Rose, W. (1992). The Great Pretenders: Further Reflections on Whiteshamanism. In A. Jamies, & T. Halsey (Eds.), *The State of Native America: Genocide, Colonization, and Resistance* (pp. 403-422). Boston: South End Press.
- Royle, E. M. (Primiered October 23, 1905). *The Squaw Man* (Stage Play). Wallack's Theatre, Broadway, NY. USA.
- Rozankovic, A. (producer). (2002). Menard Andrea and Walsh Robert (writers). [Recorded by Andrea Menard. *Velvet Devil*. Canada: Velvet & Hawk Productions.
- Said, E. (1978). *Orientalism*. New York: Vintage Books.

- Schiller, H. (1970). *Mass Communications and American Empire*. New York, New York: Augustus M. Kelley.
- Schiller, H. (1973). *The Mind Managers*. Boston: Becaon Press.
- Scott, D. C. (1898). The Onondaga Madonna. (Generic). Retrieved from <http://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poems/onondaga-madonna> Retrieved: May 22, 2014, 1:36 PT
- Scott, D. C. (1906). The Half Breed Girl, (Generic). Retrieved from <http://rpo.library.utoronto.ca/poems/halfbreed-girl> Retrieved: May 22, 2014, 1:36 PT
- Schulburg, B. (Producer), & Leison, M. (Director). (1934). *Behold My Wife!* (Motion Picture) Paramount Pictures.
- Selznick, David O (Producer), Schodesack, Erenst B., & Cooper, Merian (Directors). 1933. *King Kong*. U.S.A: Radio Films
- Selznick, D. O (Producer), & Vidor, K. (Director). (1946). *Duel in the Sun*. (Motion Picture) Mexico: Selznick International.
- Smith, L. T. (1999). *Decolonizing Methodologies: Research and Indigenous Peoples*. New York: Zed Publications.
- Spivak, G. C. (1988). Can the Subaltern Speak? In C. Nelson, & L. Grossberg (Eds.), *Marxism and the Interpretation of Culture* (pp. 271-313). Chicago: University of Illinois Press.
- Spurr, D. (1993). *The Rhetoric of Empire: Colonial Discourse in Journalism, Travel Writing, and Imperial Administration*. Durham, North Carolina: Duke University Press.
- Stedman, R. W. (1982). *Shadows of the Indian: Stereotypes in American Culture*. U.S.A.: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Stoler, L. A. (1995). *Race and the Education of Desire: Foucault's History of Sexuality and the Colonial Order of Things*. United States of America: Duke University Press.
- Stone, B. (1971). Gypsies, Tramps and Thieves. [Recorded by Cher]. *Chér*. USA: Kapp Records.
- Titely, B. E. (1995). *A Narrow Vision: Duncan Campbell Scott and the Administration of Indian Affairs in Canada*. Vancouver, B.C.: UBC Press.
- Tobing-Rony, F. (1996). *The Third Eye: Race, Cinema and Ethnographic Spectacle*. United States: Duke University Press.
- Ulmer, G. (1989). *Teletheory*. New York: Routledge.

- Valverde, M. (1991). *The Age of Light, Soap and Water: Moral Reform in English Canada, 1885-1925*. Toronto: McClelland & Stewart.
- Van Kirk, S. (1980). *Many Tender Ties: Women in Fur-Trade Society, 1670-1870*. U.S.A.: University of Oklahoma Press.
- Van Kirk, S. (2000). What if Mama Were an Indian? In J. Noel (Ed.), *Race and Gender in the Northern Colonies* (pp. 369-382). Toronto: Canadian Scholar's Press.
- Vermette, Katherena. (2017). "Pemmican Wars" (Vol. 1). In *A Girl Called Echo*. Canada: Highwater Press.
- Wolfe, Patrick. (2001). Land, Labor and Difference: Elementary Structures of Race. *American Historical Review*, 106(3), pp. 866-905.
- Young, R. C. (1995). *Colonial Desire: Hybridity in Theory, Culture and Race*. New York: Routledge.
- Zukor, A. & Lasky, J. (Producers), & Melford, G. (Director). (1920). *Behold My Wife!* (Motion Picture) U.S.A.: Famous Players Lansky Corp.

Appendix A : Dumont, (1996) *A Really Good Brown Girl* (selected poems)

The Red & White

god only knows, Mary tried to say these things but
 her lips cracked and
 words fell out like
 mad woman's change

god only knows Mary tried but
 we all thought she was crazy
 a little twisted, Mary was
 in one of her spins again
 who knows who she would twist into it,
 like a hair in a french braid

god knows Mary tried
 to keep us clean and fed, respectable but
 all the bleach and soup bones in the Red & White couldn't keep our
 halfbreed hides from showing through

'Squaw Poems'

peyak

'hey squaw'

Her ears stung and she shook, fearful of the other words like fists that would follow. For a moment, her spirit drained like water from a basin. But she breathed and drew inside her fierce face and screamed till his image disappeared like vapour.

niso

Indian women know all too well the power of the word squaw. I first heard it from my mother, who used it in anger against another Indian woman. 'That black squaw' she rasped. As a young girl, I held the image of that woman in my mind and she became the measure of what I should never be.

nisto

I learned I should never be seen drunk in public, nor should I dress provocatively, because these would be irrefutable signs. So as a teenager I avoided red lipstick, never wore my skirts too short or too tight, never chose shoes that looked the least 'hooker-like'. I never moved in ways that might be interpreted as respectable. I'd be so god-damned respectable that white people would feel slovenly in my presence.

newo

squaw is to whore

as

Indian maiden is to virgin

Squaw is to whore

as

Indian princess is to lady

niyanan

I would become the Indian princess, not the squaw, dragging her soul after laundry, meals, needy kids and abusive husbands. These were my choices. I could react naturally, spontaneously to my puberty, my newly discovered sexuality or I could be mindful of the squaw whose presence hounded my every choice

nikotawasik

Squawman:

A man who is seen with lives with laughs with

'squawman'

A man is a man is a whiteman until

He is a squaw he is a squaw he is a squawman

Blue Ribbon Children

I was supposed
to be married, a wife
who cooked
large pots of potatoes,
chunks of steaming meat and
slabs of brown crusty bannock. I was supposed
to prepare meals
for a man who returned
every night like
a homing pigeon
to hot meals and a warm bed, slept
up against my flannel back and generous hips. I was
supposed to balance children like
bags of flour on my hip,
lift them out of
bathtubs, lather them
like butterballs, pack them safely
away in bed, then stuff them
into patched clothes for morning, and
feed them porridge as though
they were prizes at a fair, blue ribbon
children, like the red rose
tea he expected hot and strong
in front of him as we sat down for supper.

Half/Human Half/Devil (Halfbreed) Muse

Shutting off

a dripping faucet so the is no
 leak, no leak, not a drop
 my eyes want to push out, out
 through numb air, words write, wrists flare escaping
 numbness, no sound, no sound
 no movement, stuck, a blank
 wound in a rope, ball, tight, hard
 spun, a drill bit piercing
 earth, whirl of steel exhaling rock
 dust, drill bit biting, dog
 gnawing bone, gripping ivory
 hankering down on, grinding

giving up to giving over

lurch, lurching laconic
 dance, drum rattle
 gangley movement, offbeat, arm
 bent over head, leg
 straight out, head twisted and shift
 of body to next ferel contortion
 animal skin taut, blood
 paint, ochre skin, ash smell
 pebbles encased trapped
 in sound, pebbles rasp
 against thin dry skin
 a herd of rattles overtakes me

Appendix B: Lyrics to Menard's, *Velvet Devil* (Selected Tracks)

Credits

All Tracks written by Andrea Menard and Robert Walsh
Copyright 1998, Andrea Menard, Robert Walsh, SOCAN

From the Music album, [The Velvet Devil](#), released September 11, 2002

From: <https://andreamenard.bandcamcom/track/the-velvet-devil> Retrieved: June 24, 12:52 m. PT.

The Velvet Devil

The Velvet Devil's awakening,
And crawling out of her cage.
No more house– broken hound dog.
The she– wolf's found her stage.
If you bring down the house. Focus the lights.
Venerate, celebrate, revere her name
She will let you be her shadow

She is a devil, she is velvet
She is sacrosanct, a mystery, She'll forever be that way

The Velvet Devil is watching
You really should be aware
Her elemental persuasion
Uses earth, fire, water, air
If she howls at the moon
Fall on your knees.
Venerate, celebrate, revere her name
She will let you see her shadow

She is a devil, she is velvet
She is sacrosanct, a mystery, She'll forever be that way

At night, she will reveal, One symbol at a time
And hold you under spell, the Velvet Devil sings in rhyme

She is a devil, she is velvet
She is sacrosanct, a mystery, She'll forever be that way

Halfbreed Blues

I was born the privileged skin and my eyes are light, light brown.
You'd never know there's Metis blood raging underground.
Let me tell you a story about a revelation.
It's not the color of a nation that holds the nation's pride.
It's imagination, it's imagination inside.

I was told that my skin would allow me to walk
On the street where the people are free.
So I left my soul in my loved ones hands
And I turned my back and walked away.

With my head held high in my high- heeled shoes,
I could yell and scream and make my noise.
Then one day I met a man, he looked like me
And he had soft beaded skins upon his feet.

Well he looked right through me with his weathered eyes
And he asked me if I was free.
He said, "Sister, sister". He said, "Sister, don't walk away."
I said, "Brother, brother". I said, "Brother, don't bother me today."

Well, he looked right through with those weathered eyes
And he asked again if I was free.
Damn rights I'm free.
Of course I'm free.
Oh yeah I'm free.
I think I'm free.
I hope I'm free.
Oh, please, let me be free.